



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



A community discussion with local leaders on the citizen rights and access to legal services. Photo by Martin Tindiwensi for USAID Rwanda.

DUFATANYE KUBAKA UBUTABERA

LET'S STRENGTHEN ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Rwanda's justice system faces lengthy case adjudication timelines due to resource constraints, a limited number of judges, insufficient courtrooms, and a steady increase in filings. The significant case backlog prevents citizens from resolving disputes in a timely fashion.

This infringes their legal rights and denies Rwandans access to justice. USAID Dufatanye Kubaka Ubutabera Activity ("Let's Strengthen Access to Justice") works on increasing the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and trains mediators in traditional dispute resolutions. This helps resolve disputes before the cases go to court and enter the overburdened formal justice system.

Through this activity, USAID also works on expanding the use of the integrated electronic case management system, trains justice sector officials on its use, and provides legal aid services to low income and marginalized groups. These efforts speed up the adjudication of cases and their resolution once they enter the formal justice system. The activity is a champion in its advocacy on Rwanda's legal reforms, particularly in the Criminal Justice Reform.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve citizens' knowledge of their rights,
- Expand access to quality legal services,
- strengthen the Criminal Justice Policy and Alternative Dispute Resolution,
- Train the Rwandan justice system actors to use the integrated electronic case management system, and
- Expand legal aid services to low income and marginalized groups.

RESULTS TO DATE

- Three million Rwandans provided with knowledge of their rights under the law,
- About 100,000 Rwandans provided with free legal services,
- Around 1,000 individuals provided with legal advice, mediation, orientation, and referrals to through Mobile Legal Aid Clinics,
- More than 150 justice sector actors trained on the use of the electronic case management,
- More than 195 "Abunzi" (traditional method) mediation committee members trained and equipped with toolkits to on gender rights, key laws, and mediation techniques,
- At least 200 people received gender-based violence services including health, legal, psycho-social, shelter, and hotline services,
- Around 65,000 citizens received legal aid services through Information and Communication Technology platforms, including a toll-free call number,
- At least 200 people provided with pre-trial legal aid,
- Around 17,000 detainees educated on prisoner's rights,
- About 50 prison paralegals trained and supported to address 300 individual legal queries from prisoners in four target prisons,
- Around 200 detainees' legal issues resolved,
- Around 1,000 detainees brought to group counseling sessions—the same number reported trauma relief following these sessions,
- At least 300 prisoners/detainees assisted before courts,
- Extended DNA services to about 30 vulnerable people, and
- Held annual Inter-University Moot Court Competition offering law students a comprehensive understanding of court processes.

ACTIVITY VALUE: US \$3 million

DURATION

2021–2026

ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

Nationwide

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

Legal Aid Forum

KEY COUNTERPARTS

Ministry of Justice, Rwanda Correctional Service, National Public Prosecutor Authority

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