



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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### **ACRONYMS**

ARDHO: Association Rwandaise Pour La Defense des Droits De L'homme

**CSOs**: Civil Society Organizations

**DNA**: Deoxyribonucleic Acid

**GBV**: Gender Based Violence

ICT: Information Communication technology

**IECMS**: Integrated Electronic Case Management System

IMRO: Ihorere Munyarwanda Organisation

**JCHR**: Joint Committee on Human Rights

LAF: Legal Aid Forum's

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

**NUDOR:** National Union of Disability Organizations of Rwanda

**SDG**: Sustainable Development Goals

**ToT**: training-of-trainers

**UN**: United Nations

**UPR**: Universal Periodic Review



#### **FOREWORD**

It is my pleasure to share this report highlighting the Legal Aid Forum's (LAF) work and impact in 2024; a year that reaffirmed our commitment to advancing people-centered justice and supporting a system that responds to the everyday legal needs of Rwandans, especially those who are vulnerable or underserved.

Since our founding in 2006, LAF has remained guided by a clear mission: to promote and support the provision of accessible, quality legal aid services through inclusive, locally led, and rights-based approaches. Our vision is of a Rwanda where justice is not only guaranteed in law, but realized in people's lives—where legal systems serve all individuals with fairness, dignity, and responsiveness.

In 2024, we continued to strengthen our role as Rwanda's leading non-state legal aid provider, with 38 active members ranging from civil society organizations and legal aid clinics to professional associations and faith-based initiatives. Together, we worked to make legal support more available through direct services, community outreach, and targeted awareness efforts. This included legal representation for 274 cases, legal advice to 4,274 individuals, and legal education that reached over 6 million people via community outreach campaigns, our ICT platform "1022" and TV/Radio Talk shows—all designed to bring legal services closer to where people live and work.

We also worked to address deeper challenges within the justice system. We provided training to 653 justice actors, supported civil society organizations with subgrants and technical assistance, and contributed to key legal and policy reform processes. Our engagement extended to Rwanda's human rights reporting obligations, where we partnered with both government and civil society to build capacity and encourage meaningful participation.

Throughout the year, we welcomed various international partners, researchers, and delegations interested in understanding our approach to legal empowerment and access to justice. These exchanges were not only an opportunity to share our experience but also to learn from others and strengthen collaboration.

At its core, our work is about building a justice system that works with people and for people—one that reflects lived realities, removes barriers, and gives individuals the confidence and tools to claim their rights. This report reflects the steps we took in 2024 toward that goal.

I extend my sincere appreciation to our members, partners, and communities for their trust, collaboration, and shared belief in justice that serves everyone. Together, we will continue working toward a Rwanda where justice is accessible, fair, and rooted in people's needs.

Me Andrews Kananga Executive Director

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#### INTRODUCTION

The Legal Aid Forum was established in 2006 to create a platform for organizations committed to providing legal aid to indigent and vulnerable populations in Rwanda. It was founded through a collaborative initiative of 30 civil society organizations that recognized the importance of sharing information, exchanging best practices, and working together in capacity building, research, and evidence-based advocacy.

Since then, LAF has grown into the country's leading non-state legal aid provider, bringing together 38 members, including national and international NGOs, professional bodies, university-based legal aid clinics, and faith-based organizations. The Forum supports legal aid delivery across a broad range of legal areas, acknowledging the interconnected nature of legal challenges and the need for holistic, people-centered support.

LAF's 2023–2027 Strategic Plan is structured around four interlinked strategic objectives, illustrated in the diagram below. These objectives are designed to complement one another, with many of the Forum's activities cutting across multiple pillars. For example, training for LAF members contributes both to strengthening knowledge systems and to the broader institutional development of the legal aid sector.

- LEGAL 1. EMPOWERMENT
- 2. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT
- 3. HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION AND PROTECTION
  - 4. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Legal assistance and representation
- Legal education and awareness on rights
- Researches for evidence-based advocacy
- Capacity building for justice actors, members and staff
- UPR Monitoring
- Engaging with human rights treaty bodies & human rights mechanism
- Legal Aid Civil Society Fund
- Grants making and fundraising



# PERFORMANCE BY LAF SECRETARIAT

#### 1. COMMUNITY LEGAL EMPOWERMENT

Community legal empowerment is a core area of focus for the Legal Aid Forum. It prioritizes access to justice for vulnerable and marginalized populations by combining free legal services with rights awareness and practical tools for navigating Rwanda's legal system.

#### 1.1. Legal representation

Legal representation is a critical service for vulnerable individuals who would otherwise be unable to navigate the formal justice system. Whether facing criminal charges, civil disputes, or violations of fundamental rights, many cannot afford a lawyer or access procedural protections without assistance. By offering free legal representation, LAF ensures that justice is not reserved for the privileged, but is available to those most in need

In 2024, LAF provided legal representation to **274 cases** both in and out of court. The beneficiaries included **128 men and 146 women**, with 12 of the cases involving media freedom and the rights of 11 journalists. Among the total cases, 90 were criminal matters and 184 were civil cases, illustrating the wideranging legal challenges faced by communities across Rwanda.

#### 1.2. Legal advice

For many vulnerable people, timely legal advice is the first and only lifeline they have to resolve a dispute, prevent injustice, or seek protection. Whether it's a woman facing an unfair land grab, a survivor of GBV, or a community member entangled in a local dispute, free legal guidance helps individuals understand their rights, evaluate their options, and access available remedies. Through paralegals, community mediation, and the 1022 hotline, LAF brings legal support closer to the people, ensuring those in remote or low-income settings can get help without cost, intimidation, or delay.

To ensure broader access to legal assistance, LAF has institutionalized multiple entry points for legal advice, collectively reaching **4,274 beneficiaries** in 2024—**1,774 men and 2,500 women**. These services were delivered through:



**688 cases** handled via the national toll-free legal aid call center (1022)



**129** walk-in consultations



**3,449 cases** supported by paralegals, including 801 cases resolved through community mediation



8 cases referred via email



Legal Aid Call Centre at the Legal Aid Forum: Call Centre Lawyers providing legal advice to legal aid seekers

#### 1.3. Legal education

Legal education is fundamental to empowering individuals to claim and defend their rights. Many people in Rwanda—especially in rural and marginalized communities—lack basic awareness of the laws that protect them. By investing in mass awareness campaigns and grassroots education, LAF helps ensure that people understand their rights and legal procedures. Legal literacy increases confidence, prevents exploitation, and promotes more active and informed civic participation.

In parallel to legal aid provision, LAF continued to invest in legal education and awareness-raising, ensuring that people not only receive legal support but are also empowered to understand and exercise their rights. In 2024, an estimated 6,225,269 people were reached through legal awareness activities. These initiatives tackled key legal topics—including family law, land law, gender-based violence, and procedural law—and were delivered through radio and TV talk shows, paralegal-led awareness programs, and the toll-free helpline (1022), among others.



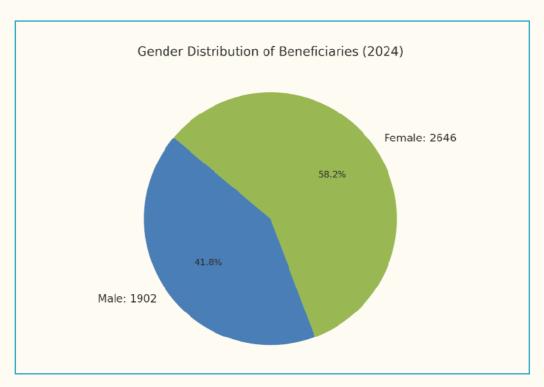
A community-based paralegal in Eastern Province conducting legal education on Family and Land Laws

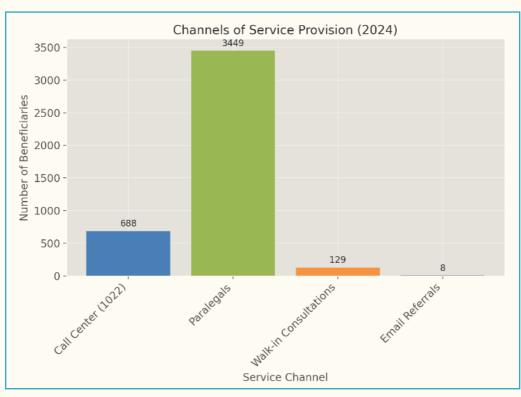
#### 1.4. Facilitating DNA testing

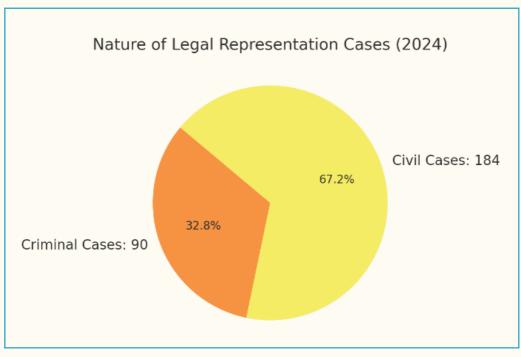
Scientific evidence, like DNA testing, is often out of financial reach for those who need it most. This disproportionately affects low-income women and teen mothers pursuing legal recognition of paternity or child support. Without access to such evidence, their cases may be dismissed or delayed, further entrenching injustice.

To eliminate financial barriers to justice for women and teen mom, LAF supports free DNA testing services for vulnerable individuals involved in legal matters where scientific evidence—such as paternity testing—was required. Through partnership, in 2024 LAF facilitated **19 beneficiaries** (13 women and 6 men) to access DNA testing services.

By combining direct legal aid, community-based services, legal education, and strategic partnerships, LAF's community legal empowerment strategy continues to close the justice gap for thousands across Rwanda. This work not only addresses urgent legal needs but also fosters lasting change by equipping individuals and communities with the tools to protect and advocate for their rights.







#### **IMPACT BEYOND NUMBERS**

#### A toll-free call opened the door to Justice for Miss Pendo

One early morning, a distraught Miss Pendo Rita called LAF's toll-free line, 1022, seeking legal advice and assistance. Her husband had filed for divorce, accusing her of abuse, and was demanding custody of their two children. While Pendo did not oppose the divorce, she was determined not to lose her children. As an unemployed mother of two, she could not afford legal representation to defend herself against the serious allegations that threatened to cost her custody, deny her alimony, and leave her without a share of their marital assets.

During the pretrial process, Pendo appeared in court unrepresented, overwhelmed by confusion and emotion as she struggled to understand the legal proceedings. The judge advised her to find a lawyer, but in her state of distress, a friend named Claudine—herself a former beneficiary of LAF's legal aid—reassured her that help was available through LAF

Without hesitation, Pendo called LAF's legal aid call center 1022 again. With great emotion, she explained her case to a legal officer who quickly assessed her situation, requested the necessary documents, and assigned her a lawyer, knowing that the next court hearing was scheduled for the following week.

At the subsequent court hearing, Pendo appeared confidently, now represented by LAF's pro bono lawyer. Empowered by professional support, she faced the charges head-on. The court ultimately found that her husband had failed to prove the abuse allegations against her. The divorce was granted on the grounds of factual separation—not abuse—and the court awarded full custody of the children to Pendo. Additionally, the judge ordered an equal division of marital assets and mandated that her husband pay RWF 100,000 in alimony.

Today, Miss Pendo lives with her two children in their own home and receives the court-ordered alimony from her ex-husband. In her own words, she testified:



"I can only thank God for what LAF did for me. The lawyers were very intelligent, and they treated me with respect. May God bless them. I honestly had no hope that anyone would listen to me unless I paid them. Yet I had no money to defend myself at all. I was about to lose everything, including my children."





Miss Pendo Rita's story is a testament to the life-changing impact of accessible legal support, ensuring that vulnerable individuals are not left to face the challenges of the legal system alone.

#### Justice reclaimed and a home restored: A widow's story of triumph

Mukanjishi Vestine, a resident of Gasabo District in the City of Kigali, spent over a decade fighting to reclaim her family's land after a neighbor, Mr. François, violated a land-sharing agreement made in 2012. Vestine, who is also a widow, shared how she had agreed to lease a  $20\text{m}^2$  portion of her land to François for the construction of a commercial building. As part of the agreement, she allowed him access to two doors, while retaining a separate entrance for her family's use and survival. However, François went beyond what was agreed. He forcefully took over the portion of land that had not been leased to him and destroyed all the crops Vestine had planted. Taking advantage of her vulnerability as a poor widow, he assumed she would never have the means to pursue justice.

In 2013, Vestine reported the matter to local mediators in her village. Unfortunately, they consistently sided with François due to his influence and reputation in the community. Determined to protect her rights, Vestine began

searching for legal support. Private lawyers were unaffordable, but in 2024, she learned about LAF's pro bono legal services during a legal education session held in her village. She approached Haguruka and was assigned a lawyer who assisted her throughout the court process.

With the help of this dedicated pro bono lawyer, the court ruled in Vestine's favor on 12 July 2024. She regained ownership of her land—a decision that secured her family's livelihood, enabled them to renovate their home, and restored their dignity in the community.



Vestine graciously agreed to share her story as a testament to the impact of the project. She expressed deep gratitude to Haguruka and to the donor supporting the pro bono legal aid initiative. In her words:

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"Never in my life did I imagine that I would one day get justice and have my property returned to me. The entire village used to mock me, telling me to give up because I'm just a poor widow and could never win a case against a wealthy, well-known man. But look at God using people I had no connection with at all to fight for me. The lawyer who represented me handled my case with such dedication, as if I were paying him millions. At times, I feared I'd be asked for money in the end, but no! Everything was handled with professionalism, compassion, and completely free of charge. May God bless the lawyer who made this possible."

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Mukanjishi Vestine's journey is a powerful reminder of how access to free legal aid can transform lives. It underscores the critical role of grassroots legal education and the importance of supporting vulnerable communities—especially women—in their fight for justice and dignity.

#### **Promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution**

One of LAF's core strategies in 2024 was to raise public awareness about ADR mechanisms, particularly among communities and legal aid providers. Through targeted awareness sessions, citizens were informed about how to use mediation and plea bargaining as alternatives to formal court proceedings. These sessions emphasized the benefits of ADR, including affordability, timeliness, reduced adversarial tension, and stronger community relationships—especially important for poor or marginalized individuals who often face barriers in accessing the formal justice system.

In addition to awareness-raising, LAF provided technical and strategic support in the conceptualization and operationalization of Rwanda's first dedicated ADR Centre, which was officially launched in August 2024. The centre was developed in close partnership with the Ministry of Justice, and the Judiciary of Rwanda and is now co-managed by the Legal Aid Forum and MINIJUST, reflecting a strong collaboration between civil society and government.

The ADR Centre provides a centralized and accessible space for resolving disputes through non-judicial processes. It includes designated rooms for mediation sessions and plea bargaining, where parties can resolve cases in a confidential, neutral, and professionally supported environment. By offering a structured and supportive setting, the Centre enables justice actors—including mediators, prosecutors, legal aid providers, and the parties involved—to engage in constructive dialogue and reach mutually acceptable solutions.



Justice Sector actors officially launch the ADR Centre in Kigali

The Centre is also envisioned as a hub for ongoing learning, innovation, and best practices in ADR, helping to professionalize alternative dispute resolution in Rwanda and make it a more integral part of the justice system.



## **KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

Under its strategic objective on knowledge management, LAF seeks to be a knowledge hub on access to justice. By producing evidence-based insights, contributing to national legal and policy development, and strengthening the capacity of justice actors, LAF supports a more informed, responsive, and accessible justice system.





During the official launch of the research report on digitalization of Rwanda and Kenya's justice sector

#### 2.1. Research and Advocacy

In 2024, LAF launched a comparative research study conducted in partnership with Kituo Cha Sheria (Kenya), examining the impact of digitization on justice delivery, using Rwanda and Kenya as case studies. The findings highlighted Rwanda's significant progress in integrating ICT into its justice sector, positioning it as a potential model for other countries. The report also emphasized the role of digital tools in improving efficiency, accessibility, and transparency in justice delivery across the two countries. The launch of this study created a valuable platform for regional justice actors to exchange insights and recommendations on how technology can support inclusive justice systems.

Beyond research, LAF played an active role in shaping legal and policy frameworks through the provision of written and oral legal opinions on various draft laws and national policies. In 2024, LAF reviewed and submitted legal input on the following legislation:

- The Law Governing the State of Emergency
- The Law on Prevention and Punishment of Cybercrimes
- The Law Determining Offenses and Penalties in General

LAF also contributed to the development and review of key policies, including the National Legal Aid Policy, the Media Policy.

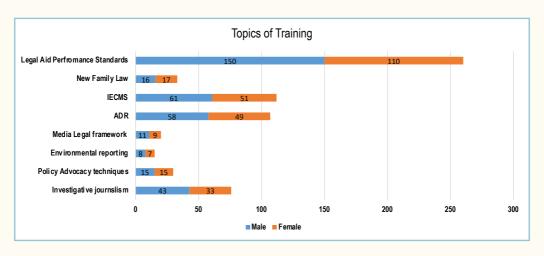
Additionally, LAF was invited to present expert opinions before the Rwanda Parliament's Chamber of Deputies, demonstrating the organization's role as a trusted contributor to legislative dialogue.

Together, these efforts reflect LAF's ongoing commitment to using knowledge and advocacy to support legal reform, promote justice sector coordination, and ensure that national frameworks are aligned with the needs and rights of the people.

#### 2.2. Capacity Building

Capacity building remains a core pillar of the Legal Aid Forum's strategy to strengthen justice systems in Rwanda. As part of our broader commitment to knowledge development and improved service delivery, LAF places a strong emphasis on enhancing the skills, professionalism, and accountability of justice sector actors—particularly legal aid providers who serve as the first point of contact for many citizens seeking legal support. Our goal is to ensure that every individual, regardless of their background or means, can access quality legal services delivered by competent and trusted professionals.

In 2024, LAF's capacity-building efforts reached 653 individuals, including 291 women and 362 men, across a broad range of legal and human rights. The training sessions targeted key groups such as judges, lawyers, legal aid providers and journalists, equipping them with up-to-date legal knowledge, tools for better case handling, and a stronger understanding of their role in ensuring access to justice.





A pictorial of various capacity-building sessions conducted by LAF in 2024



# HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION AND PROTECTION

Under its strategic objective on Human Rights Promotion and Protection, LAF focuses on strengthening the role of civil society and fostering inclusive engagement with national, regional, and international human rights mechanisms. Our approach focuses on galvanizing civil society participation to ensure that the voices of vulnerable and marginalized communities are represented in efforts to improve the human rights situation in Rwanda.

In 2024, LAF provided targeted training to 119 representatives of civil society organizations working with vulnerable groups—including women, older persons, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQI+ individuals. These trainings focused on building participants' knowledge of human rights frameworks and mechanisms, with the aim of strengthening their ability to advocate for the rights of the communities they serve.

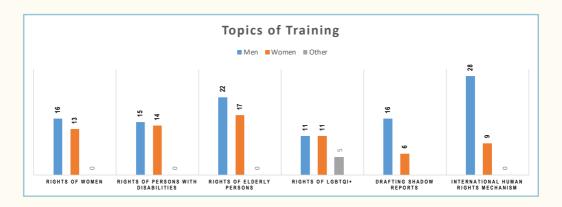
LAF also conducted a training-of-trainers on international human rights mechanisms for 37 members of the Rwanda Civil Society Coalition on UPR. Following the training, coalition members were supported to cascade the knowledge to their respective constituencies, thereby broadening grassroots understanding and engagement in human rights advocacy.

In partnership with the Ministry of Justice, LAF also conducted specialized trainings for members of the national treaty body reporting taskforce. These sessions focused on enhancing participants' capacity to draft shadow reports, ensuring that civil society and government actors are equipped to contribute meaningfully to Rwanda's international human rights reporting obligations.





Representatives of the UPR CSO coalition actively participating in the ToTs held in Sept 2024



To promote collaboration and public engagement, LAF organized a national event to commemorate International Human Rights Day. The event brought together a diverse group of CSOs, government institutions, and development partners, providing a platform to showcase efforts, share experiences, and reflect on both progress and challenges in advancing human rights. It served as a space to reinforce stakeholder collaboration and renew collective commitments to human rights protection in Rwanda. Click here to watch a <u>Highlight: The Celebration of International Human Rights Day 2024</u>.



UN Resident Coordinator delivering remarks during LAF's event commemorational International Human Rights Day



Through these initiatives, LAF continues to advance a more informed, coordinated, and empowered civil society—one that is equipped to raise awareness on human rights issues, support Rwanda's national reporting obligations, and confidently engage with regional and international human rights mechanisms to promote accountability and the protection of rights for all.



## **INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

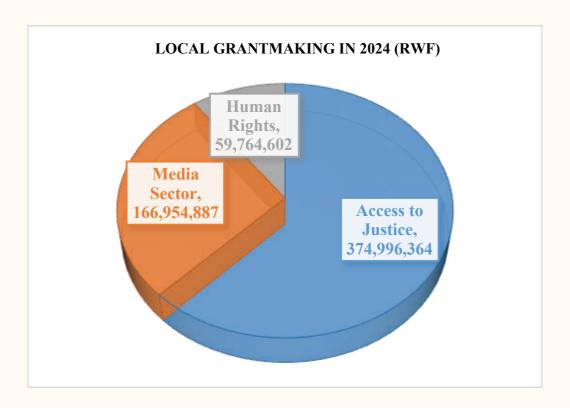
Under this strategic objective, LAF prioritizes local grant making to strengthen its membership network and maximize the reach of legal aid and human rights services across Rwanda. This approach enables member organizations to lead localized interventions that are grounded in community needs and realities, while also contributing to national efforts to expand access to justice.

In 2024, LAF provided grants to 6 member organizations (Rwanda Bar Association, Haguruka, Lawyers of Hope, ARDHO, Human Rights First) as well as Dignite en Dentention to implement legal aid projects targeting underserved populations. These grants supported the delivery of community-based legal services and reinforced the presence of legal aid providers in areas where formal justice systems remain less accessible.

It is also worth noting that LAF members also benefited from all the capacity-building initiatives delivered throughout the year. These included technical trainings for legal aid providers aimed at improving service delivery, legal knowledge, and institutional practices.

Furth more, LAF provided grants to Association of the Rwanda Journalists and the Association of Rwanda Female Journalists, to support capacity-building in media professionalism, particularly around ethical reporting and gender mainstreaming.

In addition to supporting legal aid and media work, LAF provided grants to five members of the Rwanda Civil Society Coalition on UPR (NUDOR, IMRO, Kanyarwanda, Impamo Media and ARDHO). These grants aimed to support the dissemination of human rights knowledge at the community level, following a training-of-trainers (ToT) conducted by LAF.



Coalition members who participated in the ToT were subsequently supported to cascade that training to their own constituencies, helping to broaden grassroots understanding and engagement with international human rights mechanisms. Through this local grant making strategy, LAF continues to strengthen the capacity, coordination, and reach of its member organizations.



# **FINANCIAL REPORT**

No	Items	Consolidated budget Rwf	Consolidated expenses Rwf	Balance Rwf	% of variance
	Office costs				
	Running and personel costs	801,072,781	798,593,992	2,478,789	100%
	Sub-Total Office costs	801,072,781	798,593,992	2,478,789	100%
	Activities:			-	
<b>SO1</b>	Community Legal Empowerment	427,922,623	376,098,888	51,823,735	88%
1.1.	Pro Bono Advice Clinics	186,118,805	178,003,714	8,115,091	96%
1.2.	Scale up Grassroots Legal Empowernment in Rwanda	199,651,225	180,198,336	19,452,889	90%
1.3.	DUFATANYE KUBAKA UBUTABERA ACTIVITY	42,152,593	17,896,838	24,255,755	42%
SO2	Knowledge management (capacity building & research)	249,660,490	243,893,955	5,766,535	98%
2.1.	DUFATANYE KUBAKA UBUTABERA ACTIVITY	204,560,467	202,898,208	1,662,259	99%
2.2.	Conflict resolution and mediation in Mahama Refugee Camp and Host Community	45,100,023	40,995,747	4,104,276	91%

SO3	Human right promotion and protection	928,423,468	415,381,586	513,041,882	45%
3.1.	Dushishoze mu bwisanzure Bwo Gutanga Ibitekerezo	217,644,644	111,462,908	106,181,736	51%
3.2.	Empowering Rwandan Media for Environmental Advocacy	82,447,549	38,128,129	44,319,420	46%
3.3.	Entrenching the culture of Human Rights in Rwanda though mainstreaming recommendations from international Human Rights mechanics	127,682,957	87,406,228	40,276,729	68%
3.4.	Supporting the media sector in Rwanda: Enhancing the implementation of the new media policy and legal reforms	213,398,350	103,171,651	110,226,699	48%
3.5.	Strengthening the capacity of Civil Society to become actors of change for improved Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law	287,249,968	75,212,670	212,037,298	26%
504	Institutional Development (Subgrantees)	616,326,811	601,715,853	14,610,958	98%
4.1.	Supporting the media sector in Rwanda: Enhancing the implementation of the new media policy and legal reforms	166,954,887	166,954,887	0	100%
4.2.	Pro Bono Advice Clinics	114,635,200	100,625,120	14,010,080	88%
4.3.	DUFATANYE KUBAKA UBUTABERA ACTIVITY	274,736,724	274,371,244	365,480	100%
4.4.	Strengthening the capacity of Civil Society to become actors of change for improved Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law	60,000,000	59,764,602.00	235,398	100%
		0.000.000.000	4 (27 000 202	EOE 2/2 110	74%
	Sub-Total activities	2,222,333,392	1,037,090,282	365,243,110	7470
	Sub-Total activities  Total		2,435,684,274		81%



## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

In 2024, LAF continued to strengthen its public relations efforts to increase visibility of its work, raise awareness on access to justice and human rights issues, and engage a broader range of stakeholders. Our communications aimed to ensure that the public, partners, and policymakers remain informed about our initiatives, achievements, and the services available to communities across Rwanda.

These efforts created opportunities not only to share best practices, but also to learn from other contexts, strengthen partnerships, and contribute to broader conversations on access to justice both nationally and internationally.

#### **Media and Public Outreach**

Throughout 2024, LAF engaged with both national and community media to raise awareness on key legal issues, including land rights, family law, gender-based violence, and access to legal aid. These aimed at empowering the general public to know their rights and consequently assert them.



LAF Senior case management Officer participating in a radio talk show on Radio Rwanda, discussing family law, alongside representative from member organization HAGURUKA.



Flyer advertising the radio talk show

Furthermore, LAF continued to use its social media platforms and website to share updates, promote legal awareness, and highlight community-level activities. We used our Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to feature our events, showcase impact stories, and direct citizens to services such as the 1022 legal aid helpline. These platforms also served to spotlight member organizations and share relevant publications.





#### **Regional and International Representation**

In 2024, LAF represented Rwanda's civil society at major international forums, including the UN Civil Society Conference, the High-Level Political Forum in July 2024 and the Summit of the Future in September 2024. These platforms allowed LAF to share Rwanda's experience in advancing access to justice and contribute to global conversations on SDG16, human rights, and inclusive governance. Our participation also helped strengthen partnerships with international networks and justice actors from across the Global South.



Left to right: Executive Director of LAF at the 2024 UN Civil Society Conference and HLPF



Director of Programs at LAF attending the Summit of the future



Standing at the far left: LAF Head of Legal Empowerment Unit attending the 81st Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

#### **Peer Learning and Best Practice Exchange**

As part of its visibility and knowledge exchange efforts, LAF welcomed several high-level delegations and international partners in 2024, creating opportunities to share best practices and explore areas of collaboration. Among the guests was a delegation from the Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) of the British Parliament, who engaged with LAF to learn more about Rwanda's approach to legal assistance and protection for refugees and asylum seekers. LAF also hosted the Director of Pro Bono from Clifford Chance to discuss the progress of an ongoing pro bono legal project, as well as the operation and impact of LAF's legal aid call centre (1022).



Executive Director of LAF and members of JCHR discussing legal assistance to refugees and asylum seekers.







Clifford Chance Director of Pro Bono Mr. Tom Dunn's courtesy visit to the legal aid call Center at LAF office

Engagement with Regional and international NGOs included discussions with Willow International, centered on resource sharing and potential collaboration to strengthen referral pathways for comprehensive victim assistance, particularly in cases of exploitation and abuse. LAF also met with Footprint to Freedom, a survivor-led organization working to end human trafficking, to exchange insights on innovative community strategies and survivor-centered approaches in the fight against trafficking in persons





Left to right: Courtesy visits from Willow International and Footprint to Freedom organization respectively.

In the area of human rights education, LAF organized interactive courtesy visits for the Black Law Students Association of the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, focusing on Rwanda's evolving human and civil rights frameworks, including recent constitutional and legislative changes aimed at addressing



Courtesy visit of the Black Law Students Association of the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School

These courtesy visits provided meaningful platforms for mutual learning, reinforced international connections, and underscored LAF's role as a credible source of experience in advancing access to justice, legal aid, and human rights protection.

#### **IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**







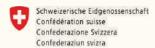












Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC



C L I F F O R D C H A N C E







