

THE WOMEN'S PRO BONO INITIATIVE (WPI)

www.womenprobono.org

OUR VISION

A Uganda free of violence and discrimination against women and girls.



WHO WE ARE

In July 2018 the Women's Probono Initiative (WPI) began providing free legal services to women who cannot otherwise access legal representation in Uganda. Given that Uganda is a patriarchal society, male-centered dominance at the workplace, in families and society at large has created special problems that make it difficult for women to report issues of abuse, violence, discrimination and social inequities that can otherwise be challenged in a free and democratic society.

For instance, national statistics in Uganda indicate that more than 1 in 5 women experience sexual violence and that at least 22% of women in Uganda report that they have experienced sexual violence (UDHS, 2016); 77.7% of children in primary schools and 82% of students in secondary school have experienced some form of sexual violence (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2016).

In a 2019 report by the Uganda Parliament's Committee of inquiry into allegations of sexual violence in institutions of learning in Uganda, the committee noted that there's a culture of silence and norm not to report cases by women due to beliefs that 'men can not be rejected'. These traditionally entrenched beliefs are also reflected in some discriminatory laws and practices such as the Customary Marriage Act, 1970 that legitimizes polygyny, inadequate systems to regulate medical service provision to women and children, social acceptance of domestic violence among others.

In addition to providing free legal representation, WPI serves as a knowledge hub for research and knowledge management on women's rights, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), provision of free legal advice and impact litigation with a bearing on women and girls.



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UDHS, 2016

78%

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82%

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Ministry of Education and Sports 2016

OUR APPROACH

We advance women and girls' rights through awareness creation for human rights, legal representation, research and knowledge sharing.

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

Our lawyers have the skill and expertise to provide:

- Direct legal representation
- Offer legal advice to walk-in clients
- Assess community needs and identify potential legal challenges
- Develop and pursue advocacy goals and litigation strategies to reform practices that target and penalize women and girls we serve

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- We are involved in research to inform national advocacy campaigns.
- Analysis of laws, practices and policies that have an impact on women and girls to inform the Impact Litigations and cutting edge advocacy initiatives.

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS CREATION

Our team has expertise to:

- Train communities on their rights and responsibilities and in turn equip community members with knowledge and skill on how to find redress within their communities.
- Develop community based mediation-mechanisms that can be utilized outside court.
- Document community practices that inform impact litigations and national advocacy campaigns.

HOW TO HELP

To know more about the Women's Pro Bono Initiative (WPI) and our work, please contact us:



www.womenprobono.org



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**Women's
Probono
Initiative**

Your rights, Your life