



Introduction

The report reflects the other engagements of GAMCOTRAP outside its project activities. The activities involved international networking and fundraising, Local partnership, Public relations activities with the embassies as well as home visits and follow ups to cases of violence against women and girls reported to the office. It also presents the developments at organizational level. We are happy to express our appreciation to all our partners for this year; namely Inter Africa Committee, FOKUS through the Norwegian Association of Female Theologians – NKTF, Save the Children Sweden Dakar Office, the Open Society Initiative of West Africa, Future In our Hands and all the local partners in government and civic society organizations working on women's rights.

GAMCOTRAP's Objectives

To create and raise the consciousness of men, and women about traditional practices that negatively affect the health of children and women whilst encouraging positive practices. In addition, we aim to protect the rights of children and women by involving them to participate in decision-making processes.

1. To carry out research into traditional practices that affect the sexual and reproductive health of women and girl children in The Gambia.
2. To identify and promote traditional practices that improves the status of girl-children and women.
3. To create awareness on the effects of harmful traditional practices on the health of girl-children and women, in particular FGM, nutritional taboos, child/early marriages and wife inheritance.
4. To promote and encourage the education of girls at all levels.
5. To sensitize and lobby, decision and policy makers, about socio-cultural practices that are harmful to the health of girl-children and women.
6. To promote and protect the human rights of girl-children and women
7. To create awareness on international and national instruments that address discrimination and violence against girl-children and women.

8. To solicit funds locally and externally for the purpose of carrying out the above objectives.
9. To influence policies in promoting and protecting women and children's rights
10. To use the rights based approach into our activities and
11. To promote the political participation and representation of women in elective decision making positions.

GAMCOTRAP's Mission

To create awareness about traditional practices in The Gambia, We aim for the preservation of beneficial practices as well as the elimination of all forms of harmful traditional practices.

GAMCOTRAP is committed to the promotion and protection of women and girl children's political, social, sexual, reproductive health and educational rights

We support any national and international declaration protecting these rights, in particular the Convention on the elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), as well as the African Protocol on Women's Rights and all other treatise that address gender inequality.

Activities

GAMCOTRAP and its partners have one of its greatest achievements in over two decades of struggle to bring about positive change in our communities. Over sixty-four communities and eighteen Sheroiners have champion the first public declaration of their intention to stop Female Genital Mutilation at the Independence Stadium on the 5th of May 2007, and over a thousand people attended.

Pic of Celebration

There have also been monitoring and consultation meetings in the different project sites. This year GAMCOTRAP also presented alternative support to Circumcisers who have declared their intention to stop FGM to engage in petty trading and other small scale enterprises.

Pic of AEO

Table on No. of people trained / reached; region, and by gender, age.

Phone in feedback

GAMCOTRAP has also under gone two Audit exercises and evaluations on its projects. There has been significant improvement in its financial management and it has two publications, the Accounting and Financial procedures; and the Personnel and Procedures manuals published with the support of Save the Children Sweden Dakar office. The outcomes of the audit and evaluation exercises has improved the financial management and information systems of the organization.

The organization has also held it strategic planning meeting for the period 2008- 2011 and is pursuing its implementation. Several new projects are in the pipeline for the coming year and it is optimistic that as it continue to have support from its partners, the organization will be building on the successes registered as well as face the challenges of meeting the new and increasing demands for the coming year, working closely with our parent body the IAC to secure funds for the projects for 2008 to 2011.

Pic of strategic planning

In November 2007, the 16 days of activism programme brought together one hundred women from Ebo Town and surrounding communities were target for a one day open forum to discuss sexual and reproductive health issues and traditional practices affecting women and children such as FGM and well as the Conventions on the rights of women and children.

Pic of Ebo Town women

The organization have reached 657 young people (382 female -275 male) both in and out of school respectively in the year under review. They held training workshops in Basse,

Tujereng as well as in five Senior Secondary schools in Central, Lower and North Bank Regions.

Pic of Youths

International Networking

GAMCOTRAP through networking has been invited to participate in international Meetings and training workshops specifically related to women's rights issues, building alliances with the media and religious leaders as well as their capacity in addressing harmful traditional practices as well as academic interactions. As a result, GAMCOTRAP has participated in the following international programmes.

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Local Partnership

GAMCOTRAP received partnership requests from civil society organizations, government departments, as well as international organization working in The Gambia. The staff participated in training programmes as participants and resource persons on issues related to women's rights and traditional practices. In March GAMCOTRAP in partnership with other local NGOs through the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations – TANGO celebrated International Women's Day.

A very significant partnership amongst the lot for this year is with the Law Reform Commission, which enabled GAMCOTRAP to suggest possible areas where the law can help women to achieve their legal rights and to live non-violent, abusive lifestyles.

Visitors

Many individuals who are interested in the work of the organization from different parts of the world have visited the office. This year forty-eight visitors and nine research students were received at GAMCOTRAP office. Requests are also made from British students, independent researchers from Spain etc. This group is dominated by Norwegians. Some of the local visitors are students and researchers interested in using the Library for research in areas such as women and children's rights, sexual and reproductive health, in particular FGM. These include students from Gambia College.

Monitoring Visits

Partners from African Women's Development Fund –AWDF, Inter African Committee, Norwegian Association of Female Theologians, Save the Children Sweden Dakar Office made follow up visits to the organization to monitor progress in project implementation and to plan for the way forward.

Cases reported to the Office

Women have been referring to GAMCOTRAP office, seeking advise, guidance and support on a daily basis, regarding matters of Violence Against Women, Personal Status Law etc. One of the significant case reported to the office this year concerns the rights of women who sell Ice block at Brikama in the Western Region for their economic development. GAMCOTRAP supported the women to seek redress with the concerned parties and this has resulted to access to space from Brikama Area Council to continue to earn their living from selling Ice block. The group has registered as a community based organization and GAMCOTRAP assisting with the drafting of the constitution and provided technical guidance for the group.

Pic of Ice Block Seller at the identified place in Brikama

GAMCOTRAP's bridge building programme to protect girls from overseas

GAMCOTRAP has been working with partners in some European countries to share information and track girls brought to The Gambia for Circumcision.

There has been a significant drop in the number of domestic violence cases reported. However, there has been an increase in the number of cases reported to protect girls from FGM from Spain, Germany, America and Britain. So far all the girls involved have been protected. It involved home visits to engage the extended families living in The Gambia.

Diplomacy & Public Relations

GAMCOTRAP has continued to build its public relations with the diplomatic corps and this was manifested in the number of diplomat that attended the celebration of the first Dropping of the Knife initiative held at the Independent Stadium in Bakau in May this year.

The American Embassy in Banjul has nominated the Executive Director of GAMCOTRAP, Dr. Isatou Touray for the Woman of Courage Award for 2008.

Media

The media has been used effectively in our out reach activities throughout our advocacy work during the year. This support to the activities of GAMCOTRAP has increased awareness about gender based violence and women's rights. Generally, both the Private Print and electronic media and the national media have continued to give support to the organization. There has been significant use of the community and private radio in particular in engaging the public on women's political participation in the local government elections. Meanwhile, GAMCOTRAP has nominated Point Columnist and Reporter, Sarata Jabbi and Principal Producer at Gambia Radio and Television Services, Fatou Jobe to attend a training workshop for the Media personnel in Addis Ababa in November.

Pic of Sarata and Fatou

Fundraising and Networking

The Executive Director, Dr. Isatou Touray has represented the organization at different fundraising meeting in to support African Women's rights organizations. Similar meetings were held in South Africa, Senegal, Ethiopia and Ghana.

Pic of Dr., & Berhane

International Interns

GAMCOTRAP received international interns from America, Brussels and Spain. Their interest ranged from organizational development to understanding the socio-cultural issues for intervention at field level.

Organizational Development

Equipment

The organization continues to maintain its vehicles and office equipment under good conditions.

Staff Situation

Apart from the core staff, GAMCOTRAP has forty –eight Community Based Facilitators - CBF, who are volunteers trained to follow up on the advocacy work at community level and to monitor progress in the campaign against FGM, violence against women and other harmful traditional practices as well as give support to families to want to stop FGM. There are plans to employ full time Finance and Administrative Officer in the coming year.

Headquarters

Since it has embarked on building its head office for sustainability, GAMCOTRAP continues to look for support to fulfill its sustainability plans.

Conclusion

While there has been significant success in the implementation of planned activities in 2007, there are challenges as well. The organization was faced with the dramatic drop in the exchange rate of foreign transfers made for projects and this has direct implications for already planned activity budgets.

Financial Report for 2007

Partner	Amount received in GMD	Amount budgeted in Foreign currency
Inter African Committee	453,195.29	\$25,000
Save the Children Sweden Dakar office	1,749,195	\$60,000
FOKUS	3,444,871.37	872,590 NOK (
Equality Now	430,000	10,000 Pounds
OSIWA	695,974.55	\$26,165
FIOH	451,200	-
ABC	89,495	-
AWDF	454,550	\$20,000
Private		175 Pounds
Private		300 Euros
Private sponsor for girls via GAMCOTRAP		150 Euros