

CHHREAA STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026



CHHREAA

CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

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FOREWORD

Established in 2000 and registered in 2006, the Centre for Human Rights Education Advice and Assistance (CHREAA) is a non-governmental organisation working across Malawi promoting and protecting human rights. At the core of CHREAA's mandate is the provision of paralegal services, community awareness and empowerment, litigation, child protection and advocacy for law reforms. Over the years CHREAA has made strides in changing the lives of the poor and marginalised in accessing justice.

We are motivated with the belief that injustice to one person is injustice to all of us. We have been able to advocate for the outlawing of the Rogue and Vagabond Law which has helped save many lives in the country. Our two-pronged approach namely advocacy coupled with litigation in cases has helped us tread in the justice system. But with justice still not easily accessed especially among the poor and marginalised groups in Malawi coupled with the adverse of COVID-19 CHREAA continues to embark on resource mobilisation and increased evidence-based advocacy building on its successes. CHREAA will continue to provide services to people in need of justice. CHREAA sees herself expanding and reaching out to more lives than ever before. At the time of writing, there is further evidence of the challenges faced in accessing justice— lack of representation, lack of knowledge of the law and human rights, long distances to justice agencies, corruption in the justice system among many others. Misconceptions especially about people in custody still need to be dealt with; for instance, prisoners are totally condemned which results in limited support towards their welfare among the society and service providers. No wonder government support is also not as expected.

Progress in improving access to justice for all remains with a lot of gaps that require filling. Advocacy has played and will continue to play a vital role in bringing about the positive changes that make a real difference to the rights, standards, care, and services to which people are entitled.

CHREAA continues to work in partnerships and networks to bring authentic perspectives on all aspects of access to justice but also involvement of the larger population so that its operations and programmes are need based. This Strategy sets out a bold ambition for CHREAA as it embarks on its new chapter as outstanding not-for-profit organisation in access to justice for the poor and vulnerable groups. It is presented at an important and challenging moment. Just like the global development landscape faces fundamental change in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, a pandemic whose course remains unclear, Malawi has not been spared. CHREAA believes and hopes that development partners and other donors will continue supporting this cause. I am delighted to commend this new Strategy for CHREAA.

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Executive Director/Board Chairperson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHREAA rests on the premise that development can only be realized with inclusivity in access to justice for all. CHREAA has been working in the justice system for over 19 years and the previous strategy that run from 2016 expired in 2020. CHREAA has successfully implemented promotion and protection of human rights interventions over the years. This strategic plan galvanizes experiences over the period and sets out the new roadmap to realize its goal effectively and efficiently in alignment to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 and national plans of action. It reinforces people-centeredness. The strategy will run over the five (5) year period of 2021 to 2026. It will focus on the vulnerable and marginalised groups, including persons living with disabilities or with HIV and AIDS.

In this period CHREAA will continue to aim at achieving the following key performance indicators

- Increase in awareness of minority rights by the Malawi population
- Reduction in inconsistencies in the application of law through comprehensive research and timely dissemination of results to relevant stakeholders
- Increase of access to legal representation of marginalized groups
- Increase of access to SRHR to prisoners, female sex workers, adolescents/young women and LGBTIQ

The strategy undertakes to increase CHREAA's physical presence by expanding beyond the current reach to physically have presence in the other regions of Malawi besides the south while continuing to undertake media advocacy across the country. CHREAA will work on minimizing barriers that people face in accessing justice. Thus, CHREAA will strengthen existing partnerships in different thematic areas such as gender-based violence, child rights and child protection and will embark on establishing strong regional networks within Malawi. CHREAA will maintain and even improve on compliance to her strategic partners' requirements and will formalize more partnerships at national level e.g. with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare. In respect to policy, CHREAA intends to develop its media policy further and improve other prevailing policies and systems (finance, human resource, HR policy, sexual harassment, fraud and anti-corruption, constitution, child protection policy) for efficient and effective operation.

CHREAA will work more on advocating for law reform, increased advocacy in access to justice for the poor and marginalized groups, accountability to the vulnerable, responding to emerging issues related to violation of human rights thereby pushing for justice. Therefore, in the next 5 years there will be emphasized continuity of the current objectives with a more magnitude with a focus on child protection; prison reforms, prisoners' education, law reforms, public education, litigation, capacity building of relevant stakeholders in the justice system, and exploring alternative ways of resource mobilization.

Understanding dynamics in the environment, CHREAA will keep abreast with time and will continually check the political, economic, and social contexts while considering emerging issues such as COVID-19 pandemic. Networks with similar organizations will be strengthened. Mechanisms for sustainability will be put in place especially through working with government structures at different levels, community structures and the public while lobbying with parliament will also form critical part of the strategic period. The monitoring system will be strengthened and become more systematic.

Existing organizational policies will continually be strengthened and reviewed to align with changing landscape and demands. Besides, CHREAA will be more creative, innovative, proactive, and dynamic.

INTRODUCTION

Goal 16 of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the importance of access to justice in ensuring the protection of fundamental human rights and the development of peaceful and inclusive societies. Within this broader framework, paralegals working at the intersection of formal and informal justice contribute substantially to access to justice and the development of just, peaceful and inclusive societies. There is a growing consensus that realizing the 2030 Agenda's commitment to ensure access to justice for all will require more people-oriented approaches, grounded in an understanding of people's needs, interests and challenges faced when receiving different kinds of justice services.

This Strategy builds on the achievements, lessons learned and grounded experience of the Centre for Human Rights Education Advice and Assistance (CHREAA) over 19 years of its existence and implementation of the just expired Strategic Plan which ran between 2016 and 2020 in improving the accessibility and inclusiveness of justice system in Malawi. In the past two decades, CHREAA complemented the Government of Malawi in promoting justice for the vulnerable and marginalized sections of the Malawi population. There are plenty of case-studies that document successes in the justice system and in as far as human rights promotion and protection are concerned especially in serving the poor and marginalized population of the Malawian society that CHREAA has achieved so far. CHREAA has been highly instrumental for instance through the Kafantayeni judgement. The Strategy marks a more grounded human rights approach for CHREAA, focusing much on people in custody and the victims but also considering emerging issues in recent times such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is an exciting opportunity to develop CHREAA as a sustainable player in the justice system advocating for equal access to justice for the poor across Malawi. This Strategy also reflects the views from extensive consultation, especially among our most important stakeholders – sister civil society advocacy groups that we partner with within Malawi, government ministries, departments, and agencies, and CHREAA staff. In August 2021, CHREAA hired a consultant who did a range of remote, inter-active discussions and interviews with our key stakeholders across the country, including CHREAA staff, program beneficiaries as well as donors. Consultation with stakeholders and donors confirmed the unique national role that CHREAA plays in human rights advocacy and services for the most vulnerable groups in Malawi especially those in conflict with the law. Delivery of this Strategy will be assessed using a results framework based on CHREAA's Theory of Change and key performance indicators. The Strategy will be subject to an independent external review at the mid-term and end of strategic period of implementation.

In this new strategic period CHREAA will endeavour to navigate complex pathways to justice to address current challenges and improve paralegal support to marginalized people including women; create an enabling environment for sustainable engagement with the justice system and seek to advance policy dialogue and distil lessons for programming and research to help realize SDG 16.

Accordingly, CHREAA's 2021–2026 Strategic Plan reinforces the importance of adopting a people-centered approach to justice programming which aims to empower justice seekers, putting their human rights at the center of justice systems, and fosters "reforms and innovations that will lead to greater access and inclusion, and produce fairer and more satisfactory outcomes for the rights holder.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Vision: CHREAA envisions a Malawian society that upholds human rights, justice, and the rule of law

Mission: To promote and protect human rights by assisting the vulnerable and marginalised people in Malawi to access justice through civic education, advocacy, legal advice, and assistance.

This Strategy seeks to position CHREAA as an essential and unique part of the eco-system working towards making justice a reality for all. Focus will be on those least able to exercise and enjoy their rights in accessing justice – the vulnerable and marginalised groups, including persons living with disabilities or with HIV and AIDS. Through this, CHREAA aims to be the promotor of justice in Malawi than ever before. CHREAA can reach out to more districts physically and continue to reach out nationally through media advocacy on the most challenging settings and on the most challenging legal and justice issues. We will seek to intensify our focus on supporting groups in challenging contexts where access to rights and justice is denied and we can add real value. This includes hard to reach areas where the right to access to justice remains difficult as justice agencies are far. This we believe is key to bringing about sustained and sustainable improvements in access to justice for the poor and marginalized groups of our population. Thus, we will continue to focus on neglected sections of the Malawi society in as far as access to justice is concerned i.e. Gender-based violence, challenging stigma and discrimination, including for sex workers and LGBTI groups, the youth, the elderly, among other groups. Within these focus areas of accessible and inclusive justice, CHREAA will explore opportunities for new approaches and respond to challenges that we will continue to identify as priorities for action.

Specific attention will be focused on emerging and cross-cutting themes that impact on access to justice and well-being, such as health, youth empowerment, inclusion, and COVID-19. We are cognisant that social change intersects a variety of different movements, including gender, racial and climate justice. We appreciate this intersectionality and will continue to build collaborations with partners who share our values to make positive change. We will adapt our tools and processes to ensure positive response in a sustainable and rapid manner to mitigate new and emerging threats and protect those likely to be most at risk. The current Covid-19 pandemic clearly demonstrates the threats facing our society and demands responses that support local capacity and resilience.

GOALS

CHREAA's overall goal is to promote access to justice for the poor and marginalized. CHREAA believes that if rights holders are mobilised and empowered to hold duty bearers accountable to increase finance for and spending towards access to justice and inclusion; and if rights holders are mobilised and are actively participating in advocacy for access to justice; and if human rights is defended and protected; and the poor and vulnerable groups are sensitized and given opportunities to engage and speak out against injustices; and if justice players capacity built on technical issues of promoting justice and human rights and carry out evidence-based advocacy; and if the media is involved in publishing information about the injustices, then duty bearers will put in place functional policies, strong institutions and legal

frameworks and ensure accessible and inclusive justice because rights holders, human rights defenders, CSOs and the media hold them accountable.

CHREAA assumes that the political environment will be conducive for operation in the promotion and protection of human rights; and that information will be available and accessible for citizens to hold duty-bearers accountable.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

1. % increase in awareness of minority rights by the Malawi population
2. % reduction in inconsistencies in the application of law through comprehensive research and timely dissemination of results to relevant stakeholders
3. % increase of access to legal representation of marginalized groups
4. % increase of access to SRHR to prisoners, female sex workers, adolescents/young women and LGBTIQ

TARGET GROUP

- People in conflict with the law both in custody and outside
- Victims
- Families and communities
- Justice agencies (Police, Courts, and prisons)

CONTEXT

Since the year 2020 the environment has been dominated by the global shock of the Covid-19 pandemic, likely the impact will continue into the period of this strategy. The pandemic has also affected donor funds flow to development programming, as the donor countries are greatly affected economically such that most development funds including for access to justice have been diverted towards prevention and response to the pandemic. The pandemic will aggressively affect developing economies like Malawi that have big informal sector with no mechanisms for cushioning such shocks.

Political: Malawi is a young democracy and has had a multiparty system since 1994. Before this system change, the concept of civil society was limited to faith-based organisations and public awareness of rights and political participation was non-existent. In June 2020, Malawi elected a new government led by the Malawi Congress Party (MCP).

Human Rights: Human rights in Malawi has gone through periods of both exacerbation and improvement. Malawi adopted a constitution but has not been fully enforced by the different political regimes. Reports of numerous cases of the state's violation of human rights have been reported, such as: the security forces killing innocent individuals including persons living with albinism; torture, sexual abuse, and inhumane treatment of prisoners; and arbitrary arrest or detention. Until 2019, Malawi has been characterised by lack of participatory governance due unawareness on human rights by citizens.

Economic context: Real gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 5.7% in 2014 but slowed down to 2.5% in 2016 after two consecutive years of drought, which adversely affected the performance of agriculture, which accounts for about a third of the country's GDP. Flooding in southern districts, followed by countrywide drought conditions caused a further decline in agricultural production. This has impacted on the Government's capacity to have resources available for most sectors of government including the Judiciary and the Police Service.

Social context: Encouraging progress has been made in terms of human development over recent years. However, poverty and inequality remain stubbornly high in Malawi. Poverty has been increasing in rural areas where 85% of the population lives, compared to urban areas where it fell significantly from 25 to 17%. A key obstacle to reducing poverty is low agricultural productivity. Most of the poor remain locked in low productivity subsistence farming. This social context means many Malawians cannot afford legal fees charged by lawyers.

Access to justice: The Danish Institute for Human Rights study 'Expanding Access to Justice for the Poor: Malawi's Search for Solutions, A Comparative Analysis with Other Select Informal Justice Systems' points out several challenges faced by most Malawians in trying to access justice. Most Malawians cannot access the formal state mechanisms for resolving civil disputes. Consequently, they use non-state institutions and draw on the processes available in the 'informal' or 'primary' justice sector. For those who live in rural areas, the closest Magistrate Court might be 25 to 40 kilometres away and most cannot afford public transportation which is also rarely available in their setting. The poor and marginalized may be unable to access the justice system due to lack of knowledge. Courts are under-funded, and judicial procedures may be inaccessible for those who lack legal representation, which is generally too expensive for the poor.

Malawi's "Vision 2020" buttressed the aspiration by Malawians to have a fair and equitable distribution of income and wealth. To this effect, the vision highlighted the need to reduce disparities in access to land, education, employment and business opportunities between urban and rural people, men and women, people with and without disabilities. However, it is evident that inequalities in Malawi are still growing, and the impacts are not only devastating welfare of the poorest people but preventing the largest chunk of the population from escaping poverty. Inequalities also threaten the country's overall economic growth, fuels corruption and robs others of access to justice. However, there are still gaps in the implementation of laws that promote access to justice and address social injustices. Besides, certain laws remain archaic needing review.

CHREAA will delve into developing alternative strategies to widen and sustain access to justice for the poor and vulnerable. There is an opportunity to influence positive changes including getting rid of bad legislation, development of pro poor policies, development programmes, and protection of human rights and the rule of law. CHREAA and stakeholders aim to be strategic and had already started engaging the new government to influence these changes.

Conflict analysis: Malawi is in general a peaceful country, which has never been at war. However, structural causes of inequality and much of the population living in poverty in certain instances leads to violent incidents throughout the country. Tension tends to rise before, during and political elections. This was last seen during the electoral campaigns in 2019/2020 with the result of looting, property being destroyed, sporadic incidents of violent demonstrations.

Gender Analysis: Malawi ranks 145/188 on the Gender Inequality Index (GII), reflecting high levels of inequality in reproductive health, women’s empowerment, economic activity, and political representation. The proportion of seats held by women in national parliament was 16.7 percent in 2018, declining from 21 percent in 2010. Malawi’s position is lower than the regional average of 24 percent (WDR, 2018) posing a challenge to maximum representation and deliberation of women and girls’ issues. The Government of Malawi has shown commitment to eliminate Gender Based Violence. Malawi is party to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The country’s Constitution prohibits discrimination of persons in any form and obliges the State to promote gender equality. GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) risks share a common root.

Rights deficits: The context analysis has identified several rights that are being violated, and which motivate CHREAA and stakeholders for action. Given the above analysis and current level of rights deficit, CHREAA and stakeholders will address the following problems:

- Gender inequality due to women’s poor access to assets (financial, social, political, etc),
- Youths (10-24years) are equally excluded and marginalised regardless of being part of a majority group (constitutes 17% the population)
- Increasing inequalities, due to poor financial management, inequitable distribution of resources, centralised decision power and discrimination of the most vulnerable

SWOT/PESTEL ANALYSIS

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good relationships with donor partners and developed trust in the donors that they entrust CHREAA with funding for other organizations. CHREAA also receives funding due to trust from traditional donors-such as OSISA. • Wider and long-time community presence; • Strong partnerships-relationships with key stakeholders within the criminal justice system; • Committed and royal staff that is rich in variety of skills; adaptable extensive knowledge with expertise • Specialised and focused think tank in legal and paralegal information and service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of financial sustainability • Lack of career development • Lack of personal development in human resource, motivation • Inadequate data management system • Limited funding in litigation...and limited manpower (numbers) in this area • Activity based funding which is not sustainable-limited continuity

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong advocacy strategy • Established, high integrity, trust in the populace • Strong experience in the criminal justice system especially in execution of high profile cases • Good leadership, dedicated and experienced 	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased public awareness of human rights governance issues; • Increased donor's support and focus on governance and human rights initiatives; • Increased political will on the part of government to improve governance and human rights; • Increased donor's interest in minority rights • Availability of relevant legislation • Good relationship with stakeholders • COVID-19 aiding advocacy and potential for funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor fatigue; • Stigma against minority rights; • Political interference in CSOs' activities; • Inconsistent foreign policy may strain diplomatic relations with donor partners hence affecting smooth implementation of projects; • COVID-19 affecting lives besides restrictions that adversely impact projects implementation • National legal policy changes • Limited implementation of judgements

PESTEL

<p><u>POLITICAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political interference in CSO's activities; • Uncertainty surrounding diplomatic relations with donor countries; • Unfavourable legislation may hinder implementation of projects. 	<p><u>ECONOMICAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrink in funding due to global economic meltdown. • Currency fluctuations affects implementation of programs; • Inconsistent economic policies by the government impact negatively on planning of activities;-organizations have to declare amount and purpose of funding which sometimes lead to government putting the funds on hold
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<p><u>SOCIAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma attached to marginalized groups poses challenges in implementation of projects; • Prejudiced perception of CSO's by the community at large; and governance institutions • Negative attitude portrayed by the community at large towards implementation of controversial programs aimed at protecting minority rights I.e LGBTIQ 		<p><u>TECHNOLOGICAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments in the social media and internet applications is making it easier to advocate for human rights abuses; • Easy and effective lobbying through the social media and the internet; • Effective mobilization of resources and funding through the internet; • Easy coordination of activities made possible by mobile networks, internet and electronic monitoring. • People posting things that are contrary to the ethics • Misinformation/Dissemination of information-abuse • Inaccessibility to technology • Information is easily disseminated 	
<p><u>LEGAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfavourable laws enacted to stifle activities of CSO through change of governments; • Laws within the criminal justice system that impedes progress in implementing projects that are aimed at reforming the system to be responsive to human rights issues by the CSO's • Personalities among judicial staff-liberal, conservatism, pro human rights 		<p><u>ECOLOGICAL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor ecological practices by other agencies like prison services result in wanton cutting down of trees and pollution of rivers I.E prisons which use firewood for cooking. • COVID-19 	
Strategic Objective	Our 2021 Reality	Our 2026 Vision	Long term strategies
To increase awareness of minority rights in Malawi by 65% by year 2026	Laws are still unfavourable, there is a long way to go for mindset change among the populace. CHREAA is doing civic education through community sensitization, radio programs etc.	Those that are minorities able to demand their rights and the public able to promote and respect rights of minorities.	Intensify advocacy activities-community awareness and media campaigns Advocate more on implementation of laws regarding minority rights Empowerment sessions/intervention for minority groups

To reduce inconsistencies in the application of law through comprehensive research and timely dissemination of results to relevant stakeholders	Doing research e.g. on prisoners' rights and dissemination and yet to roll out another research. May have need for legal action and litigation	Implementation of the research results based on recommendations	Advocacy Consultative meetings with policy makers and relevant stakeholders Litigation
To increase access to legal representation of marginalized groups from 10% to 60% by 2026	Targeting human rights interest cases due to funding issues	Enough capacity to allow more people to have access	Get more funding to fund legal costs -do more resource mobilization More presence on the ground by CHREAA (physical)-offices in additional districts
To increase access to SRHR to prisoners, female sex workers, adolescents/young women and LGBTIQ	Continuing advocacy Prison sanitary pads Provision of condoms and family planning	Availability of SRHR services in all districts and to all primary target groups	Intensified resource mobilization
Programme Results	What are we doing?	What should we be doing?	Long term strategies
Successful litigations	Successfully representing the marginalized	Undertake more litigations in line with demand	Increase number of lawyers among staff through recruitment
Accountability from the public	Managing demand and achieving more results through increased awareness	Maintaining standards and continue positively responding to demand but also increased services	Increased service provision and participatory processes from planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
Corporate objectives	How are we funded today (2021)?	How will we be funded in 2026	What are the long- term strategies to enable us to achieve this?
	Through partnerships, grants OSF, OSISA, UN Fund Voluntary for Victims of Torture, EU, Mort Foundation, SALC (Partnership), PORTCUS, DVV	Through same means+grants and partnerships. Will have expanded to more funders. Currently qualified by ED to seek funding from charity organizations in US-	Will write several foundations/sponsors in the US, will publicise our ED status through social media and reaching out to different donors

	International. ARASA, Malawi Bail Project	will widen the net e.g for areas needing other support such as projects, salaries where other projects cannot fund	
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Geographical coverage

CHREAA is implementing its projects in Blantyre, Mwanza and Chikwawa districts. Besides, CHREAA undertakes advocacy across the country through media campaigns.

Reduction of demand side barriers

- Toll free is limited to only TNM and only those with handsets-will lobby for introduction of toll-free lines on other networks
- Limited coverage i.e. only physically available in 3 of 28 districts- Intensify fundraising to support expansion to have office presence in more districts in a phased manner
- Frustrations (on the part of CHREAA) emanating from the justice system- Intensify advocacy strategies, engagement meetings to gain political will from the powers that be-policy makers/decision makers
- Lack of funding leading to limited representation coupled with lack of financial sustainability-intensify resource mobilization, diversification of resource mobilization- e.g. building and renting
- Stigmatization e.g. for sex work, treatment of survivors for example for those defiled-increased sensitization, awareness, and empowerment workshops/sessions
- Inaccessibility of legal information due to ignorance-intensify sensitizations, awareness
- Lack of human and other resources-explore more resource mobilization strategies

TEAM/STAFFING AND SKILLS

CHREAA has eighteen staff members in total i.e. the Executive Director, 7 paralegals, 1 Project/Paralegal Coordinator, 1 Programme Manager, 1 M&E Manager, Finance and Administration Manager and Officer, Litigations Officer, Office assistant, 1 driver and 2 guards). To beef up capacity CHREAA does also engage interns.

Capacity (number) especially for paralegals and lawyers is limited to cater for the districts as cases are still high. This will call for additional recruitments and thus the need for more financial resources.

The paralegals (X males and X females) are well trained with relevant skills in the field; and CHREAA will continue to provide on the job training to keep up with rising demand. These paralegals are highly experienced in providing basic advice and assistance to individuals who cannot afford lawyers, or do not know how to access the justice system or protect their rights. They have been empowering justice seekers to tackle problems. Besides, they also provide complementary legal services such as mediation, conduct community legal education, and undertake advocacy work. They are well grounded in knowledge of relevant statutory law, customary law, and gender rights; mediation, negotiation, and reconciliation; case filing and

investigation; advocacy; community education; and understanding of local government processes.

Paralegals together with the M&E Manager undertake research, interviewing, taking, and recording statements, documentation for following up on cases in court, and the other justice agencies. The value of paralegal support to case investigation and record-keeping activities is twofold: on the one hand, paralegals serve as a link between the people and lawyers working on a case; on the other hand, case-related data collection and documentation activities by paralegals provide a valuable source of information that can contribute to evidence-based policy and programming, leading to systemic changes. The case-related data gathered by paralegals is analyzed to identify patterns and common experiences among justice seekers, allowing the identification of gaps in justice delivery as well as law and policy. Paralegals also help in networking and coordinating with other stakeholders; they play a strategic role in linking justice seekers, particularly marginalized groups, to other organizations, associations and networks, and formal and informal justice actors. By working with these stakeholders, paralegals connect individuals with relevant services, including lawyers and health through the One Stop Centre (OSC); gather support for effective advocacy; and connect with parliament members to leverage political pressure towards the resolution of a case or the reform of laws.

FINANCING AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

CHREAA receives funding from donors. Currently we have six (6) main donors namely OSISA, OSF, and funding is mainly through solicited proposals and support from traditional donors. In the current strategic period, CHREAA will diversify resource mobilisation strategies by including unsolicited proposals through reaching out to potential funding agencies including philanthropies and the corporate world. We will build synergies with similar organizations and strengthen relationships with current donors. We will focus on those that we resonate with their goals and values. We will maximize use of community of practice to share best practices that will lead to partnerships that are mutually beneficial. We will embark on strengthening coalitions and networks. We will take advantage of our uniqueness which makes us stand out among sector players. CHREAA will clearly define roles and responsibilities for resource mobilisation among stakeholders within the organization from the board to staff so that they will become focused.

The goal for this strategic period is to maintain a diversified funding base and to keep donor funding stable. CHREAA will work towards a continuation of the funding from current funders and will focus on further developing good relations with UN agencies, USAID funded institutions. CHREAA's ambitions for funding are either to maintain or scale up current projects funding levels.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

To ensure CHREAA is on track monitoring and evaluation will form part of the strategic plan. Management will use reports against its annual plans to review progress towards meeting the strategic aims and objectives. Management will ensure that everyone who is involved in the implementation of the strategic plan is documenting appropriately to help in progress assessment.

Thus, it will be made clear at the very beginning, at the implementation stage of the strategic plan, what systems and structures are required. And indicators will be set well in advance.

The strategic plan will be monitored bi-annually and will have a mid-term review and end term evaluation. All stakeholders at all levels including target population will be involved in monitoring i.e. including lawyers, paralegals, the Executive Director, as well as the Board and partners. Communication link that is already there through phone and email, written reports, supervisory visits, and ongoing trainings and meetings will continue to be emphasized. A consultant will be hired to do the evaluation at the end of the strategic period. All internal and external changes will be checked continually, and adjustments will be made accordingly.

An analysis of regular operational and financial reports of CHREAA's activities will form part and parcel of this strategic period. Clear instruments and procedures will be developed to evaluate aspects such as the functioning of referral or filing systems.

CHREAA's M&E integrates participation and critical thinking into the design, development, and implementation of activities. To continue producing accurate documentation and reporting but also being evidence based CHREAA will continue capacitating its staff and stakeholders to ensure diligence in data collection and compilation.

Value for money

To uphold value for money CHREAA will continue to improve its procurement processes at different stages and ensure specific projects are budgeted according to specific activities. The monitoring and evaluation system remains an integral and critical aspect of CHREAA. Continuous and periodic assessments will continue to be adhered to, for checks and balance. Different organization levels will be accountable to each other on resource management. CHREAA will continue to be audited annually. Will continue to encourage to do more than what the funding can manage e.g. in litigation, funds for two (2) cases to cater for more than two.

To further enhance quality of programmes and service delivery CHREAA will continue to ensure that every staff is accountable to their work and will introduce systematic appraisal and performance management. Monitoring of projects will be enhanced including quarterly or monthly visits by heads to each project. Capacity of staff will be improved through trainings and career development.

Risks and mitigation measures

- Donor funding is unpredictable or fatigue-diversify funding sources and mechanisms
- Pandemics e.g. COVID-19 and natural disasters versus donor funding reliance-diversification of information dissemination e.g. use of IEC materials, media, toll free line, adopting stipulated measures by WHO and Gov Min of Health, working online (some virtual meetings)
- Change of government/politics (tripartite elections)-advocacy and lobbying for certain policies, online meeting especially for office and media, acceleration plans
- Unfavourable laws-lobbying
- Destabilised economy-monitoring fluctuations
- Closure of justice agencies

LOOKING AHEAD (WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS)

CHREAA's work has been valued with high esteem among stakeholders and the populace. Our work adds value to Government work, complementing government in different areas such as child justice, prison services, general education of the populace in knowledge of the justice system, litigation, among others. CHREAA has been known to help improve accountability in the justice system and are results oriented. As such there is high demand for the services from CHREAA. Our work has largely been commendable by helping in prison reforms as well as reduction in prison population and improved observance of prisoners' rights both right to fair and speedy trial and advocacy on reforms at all levels in the criminal justice system. CHREAA has also been applauded for promoting health and education in prison.

In this strategic period (the next 5 years) CHREAA will strengthen existing partnerships in different thematic areas such as gender-based violence, child rights and child protection and will embark on establishing regional networks within Malawi. CHREAA will maintain and even improve on compliance to her strategic partners' requirements such as SALC and ARASA. Besides emphasis on working partnership with the Ministry of Justice, CHREAA will formalize more partnerships at national level e.g. with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare. In respect to policy, CHREAA intends to develop its media policy further and improve other prevailing policies and systems (finance, human resource, HR policy, sexual harassment, fraud and anti-corruption, constitution, child protection policy) for efficient and effective operation.

We will continue to embark on our current objectives and areas of intervention, ensuring that they are more effective with a more magnitude. Due to the high demand we would want to expand to more districts to have greater physical presence especially those not represented by most NGOs (with less NGO presence) and want to be seen as the leading human rights institution. We have been known to be concentrated in the southern region and will aim at expanding northwards beginning with having offices in the cities across the country. CHREAA will aim to get challenges head-on. We will engage the state more, especially the Ministry of Gender regarding child rights.

In terms of intervention CHREAA will continue with:

Child protection work where attention will expand to linkages with other partners for safe homes for children with attention to girls who are trafficked and do a little more on child welfare and mental issues. Also continue with prevention and rehabilitation. Much focus will however be on prevention through community and public awareness and education.

We will do more on litigation through recruiting of additional lawyers. We will engage courts more so they are willing to continue working with us.

We continue with capacity building of various actors and emphasize systems strengthening. will do more trainings of police prosecutors to build more confidence and we will thus avoid working in silence. Thus we will continue working on prosecution so that government workload is lessened e.g. replication of the Chagaga case.

We will embark on strategizing alternative ways of resource mobilisation. Strategic partnerships with donors will be strengthened, will continue to use donor funds with modesty and prudence for increased accountable for continued donor support. Intensify search for donors to expand.

To ensure that all this is realized effectively without many hurdles CHREAA will always be alert in checking how government bureaucracy works so as to align for better results and make improvements where necessary. Will be much alert on policy direction knowing that policy can be fluid and change anytime. We will also check out pandemics such as COVID-19 which highly affect the economy and contributes to donor fatigue. Sensitization and awareness interventions with the public will be enhanced while at the same time continually building the capacities of relevant stakeholders for improved knowledge of the justice system in general and relevant laws. This will ensure that the public become more aware so that they able to report cases but also support in different areas to ensure justice is done and within reasonable period.

Besides working with people who are in conflict with the law such as those in custody i.e. prisoners where education on their rights will continue to be strengthened and expanded, CHREAA services will emphasize victims support so as to strike a balance through provision of psychosocial and economic empowerment apart from medical and litigation. CHREAA will devise mechanisms for the sustainability of such support such as economic such as systematic monitoring.

CHREAA will strengthen its networks and relevant players in the justice sector for more collaboration and coordination of all its projects and programmes for improved effectiveness and efficiency.

CHREAA will ensure that there is specialized focus among staff in expediting issues but also have focal persons for different fields of intervention through establishment of team leaders for instance a team focused on child custody issues.

CHREAA will not tire in repealing bad policies and strengthening existing weak policies but also push for the implementation of good policies as would be from time to time. Will develop advocacy policy to provide key linkages that will ensure stronger arguments. Outreach will be made to other similar organizations to support our advocacy. We will continue to research and document and analyze the political context and climate but also learn position of other stakeholders both allies and those that may be seen to have opposing developments. CHREAA will continue to lobby parliament through the legal affairs committee for enactment of relevant laws. Existing organizational policies will continually be strengthened and reviewed to align with changing landscape and demands. Continue with informal monitoring mechanism to help in the fulfilment of human rights standards in prisons. Creativity, intensify media campaigns, improved visibility, being professional in responding to issues. Be dynamic, move with time.