



**WLAC**

**WOMEN'S LEGAL AID CENTRE**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**2021**



## 1.0 ABOUT US

The Women's Legal Aid Center (WLAC) is a private, voluntary, Non-Governmental, non-partisan and non-profit making organization. The organization is a successor to the Legal aid scheme under Shirika la Uchumi la Wanawake Tanzania (SUWATA), which was the Legal Aid Scheme for Women. SUWATA legal aid scheme for women was founded in 1989 officially registered in 1994 under Companies Act. Cap R.E 2002. In 2019 WLAC complied with Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Act No.3, 2019 and obtained a certificate of registration **00NGO/R1/0043**. The founding members are professional lawyers who volunteered to provide legal assistance to women in need of legal aid service on *pro bono* basis. Members of the organization are individuals and institution (WLAC established paralegals).

WLAC has its headquarters in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam and branches in Kigoma (Kasulu & Kibondo districts) and Kagera in Muleba district. WLAC has established 23 paralegals organizations. The organization has been providing legal assistance to Women and Children in Tanzania for more than 30 years of experience. WLAC is proud of being a pioneer of Paralegal, Police Gender and Children Desks and Mobile Legal Aid in Tanzania.

### VISION

*A society that respect and promotes women's and children's rights.*

### MISSION

*Our Mission is to work towards promoting women and children rights through civil and socio-economic empowerment; access to justice; and advocacy for pro-gender legal and policy frameworks in Tanzania.*

### WLAC VALUES

WLAC core values are:

*Integrity, Equality, Transparency, Accountability, Professionalism, Voluntarism and Volunteerism.*

### Safeguarding and protection policy at WLAC:

Safeguarding' refers to protecting women and children from any kind of misconduct or harassment including - sexual harassment, oppression, intimidation, humiliation, violence, discrimination, neglect and exploitation

## 2.0 WLAC OBJECTIVES:

The following are some of the WLAC Objectives:

- i) To provide legal aid services to women and children so as to safeguard their rights and improve their livelihoods;
- ii) To facilitate the establishment and strengthening of paralegal units across Tanzania to foster community-based education on legal and human rights, and to improve timely access to quality legal aid;
- iii) To advocate for change of discriminatory policies, laws and cultural practices which promote and sustain gender-based violence;
- iv) To prepare and publish educational materials related to women and children's rights;
- v) To develop and strengthen partnerships with like-minded organizations at the local, national and international level;
- vi) To prepare informational through radio and television programs and liaise with the print media on issues related to gender equality and women and children's rights;
- vii) To prepare radio programs and liaise with the media in order to provide the masses with education about the law, gender-based violence, and human rights; and
- viii) To conduct seminars, workshops, and conferences on different topics related to women and children's rights to different segments of the population.



### 3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Board of Directors has a pleasure to present the Report by those charged with Governance and Audited Financial Statements for the Women's Legal Aid Centre (WLAC) for the year ended December 31, 2021.

Tanzania went through grief time by loss of President Dr. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli who passed on March 17, 2021, WLAC Board and management pray that he rest in peace. On March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the then Vice President Hon. Samia Suluhu Hassan was sworn in as the President of the United Republic of Tanzania. This is a remarkable history to have the first female president in Tanzania. WLAC believes that this is the beginning of seeing more women advances into influential political positions. It is also an inspiration to young female generation that everything is possible and there is no limit to pursue their dreams in top leadership position.

Despite the sudden change of leadership, WLAC continued with the work as guided by the Strategic Plan (SP) 2021- 2025. Focusing on improving women welfare and social justice in Tanzania by addressing the three strategic aims namely: Legal Empowerment and Advocacy for Reforms; WLAC is striving to improve access to justice to women, children and refugees through provision of legal aid services, legal education and providing a hub for client's psychosocial support and identifying issues that affects women and children. The identified issues will be researched upon and the report will be an evidence to advocate for reforms which will be pursued through litigation cases, strategic meetings and advocacy at national and international level through ratified treaties that the country is bound to abide to i.e. Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Women and girls in Tanzania face enormous challenges, including barriers to economic productivity, a lack of decision-making powers, and access to productive assets such as land, gender-based violence, and harmful practices. This demonstration of inequality and discrimination is boosted by social norms and beliefs which devalue women and girls. According to the Tanzania Demographic Health and Survey of 2015-16, almost four in ten women have experienced violence; while one in five has reported having suffered sexual violence in their lifetime from the age of 15.

Through examples and data from client's report, for the year 2021 WLAC clients profile shows that 55% of cases reported are married and least of clients are divorced. Majority of Married clients reported cases on divorce, child maintenance and separation. The major issues in these cases are

Gender Base Violence (GBV) related to physical, economic and sexual violence. Inequality between men and women due to unequal gender power relations and traditional gender stereotypes manifests itself in the form of men's violence against women. WLAC continues to work to ensure that women and men, girls and boys have the same rights and access to all basic needs.

Additionally, COVID 19 pandemic is still a challenge Worldwide, whereby The Government of Tanzania joined global advocating for vaccine and other preventive measures. The country has also taken into account the World Health Organization (WHO) precautions on preventive measure including wearing masks. WLAC continues to adhere to all precaution protocols as directed by the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender and Children in Tanzania.

Despite of the challenges WLAC successful implemented its project through the three strategic aims:

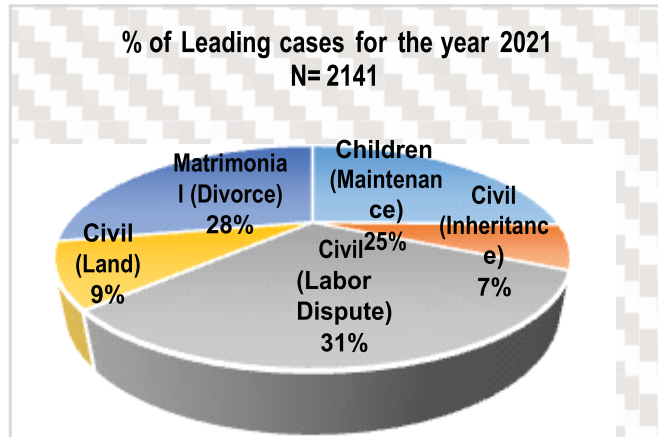
- a) *Legal Aid and Advocacy for reforms;*
- b) *Enhanced community awareness engagement in civic and socio-economic rights; and*
- c) *Institutional sustainability and diversification.*

As a result of the interventions carried out in 2021 WLAC has assisted 3493 new and 3935 ongoing cases of women, children and refugees to access justice through legal aid mobile in Dar es Salaam, Muleba Kasulu and Kibondo districts. For advocacy for reforms on legal framework on women's rights, WLAC worked together with networking partners in conducting research to establish legal argument on widow's property rights violation upon death of a husband. The findings will facilitate filing of the strategic litigation on widow's property rights. Additionally, bylaws to promote gender equality and stop GBV treatments printed and disseminated in Hanang and Karatu Districts. The bylaws have been instrumental in addressing the GBV and restore the social harmony within the community. Further to that WLAC has increased awareness to the community on Women's right, Land and Property rights, Children rights, Refugee and labor rights through different forums, training to trade unions leaders and radio adverts through EFM and Clouds FM radio and it was approximately 4M people were reached with the disseminated messages.

## 4.0 STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

### 4.1 STRATEGIC OUTCOME ONE:

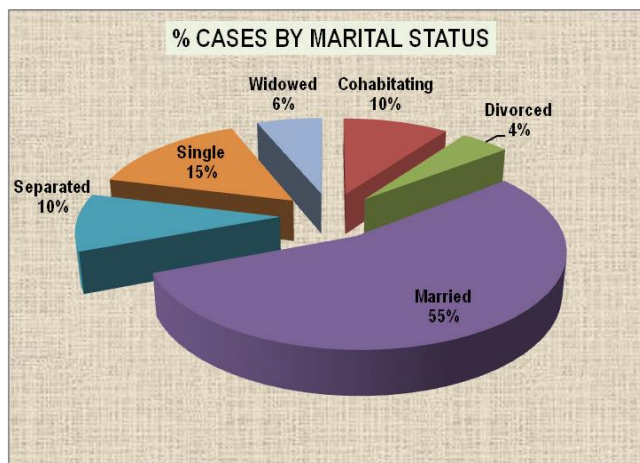
4.1.1 Access to Justice for Women, Children and Refugees is broadened and improved:



**OUTPUT ONE:** Legal Aid is efficiently offered by WLAC through stationed legal aid clinics, mobile legal aid, hotline, remand home visits

#### ❑ Legal assistance provided

For the year 2021, 3,493 new and 3,935 ongoing women, children and refugees receive legal aid services. Compared to 2020, WLAC assisted 2,576 new clients and 2,429 ongoing clients. Service rendered includes legal advice, case follow up, reconciliation, legal drafting, and clients coaching for self-representation.



### Increased cases related to land and property rights.

For the year 2021 over 70% of cases were around issues of employment, land, matrimonial and children support. COVID 19 effect escalated to affect more women and children in terms of child support, unfair termination for those who were under employment. Nevertheless, economic crisis leads to child neglect by their fathers hence women had no option apart from seeking legal readdress.

#### Legal Assistance provided by Paralegals

A total of 749 clients received legal aid from Arusha Women Legal Aid & Human Right Organization (AWLAHURIO) and Tabora Paralegal Centre, the most leading cases were matrimonial, child maintenance and inheritance. Legal Education offered to 163,509 community members in Tabora and Arusha regions.

Table 1: Cases received from Paralegal Centre

Paralegal Unit	Clients attended	Finalized cases	Legal Education to community
Arusha Women Legal Aid & Human Right Organization(AWLAHURIO)	507	4	6,000
Tabora Paralegal Centre	242	11	157,509
Total	749		163,509

Source: Reports received from paralegal centers 2021

#### 55% of Matrimonial cases reported have more than one GBV issues

For the reporting period WLAC clients profile shows that 55% of cases reported are married and least of clients are divorced. Majority of Married clients reported cases on divorce, child maintenance and separation. The major issues in these cases are GBV related to physical, economic and sexual violence.

#### Legal education offered through Bulk SMS

A total of 23,318 people were reached with legal education on women's rights through one-to-one discussions with legal aid clients, media, bulk sms, and publications disseminated to the public.





#### ❑ **Empowered paralegal for community justice:**

WLAC provided training on children and women safeguarding to a total number of 21 paralegals who attended the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The training strengthened Paralegals roles and services to the community member. Child protection has been one of WLAC areas of emphasis to ensure that Children are given their rights and opportunity to realize their dreams.

❑ **Clients Forum conducted.** Women enhanced their knowledge on Women's right, Inheritance land and property rights. One of the forum member used the knowledge to protect her right to live in a matrimonial house pending hearing of the appeal filed by her ex-husband and execution of the judge met which granted her 40% of the matrimonial house.

#### **Knowledge is power; women need empowerment to get the courage to defend their rights!**

A Client obtained 40% share of her matrimonial Asset. Unfortunately, the husband, aggrieved by the Kinondoni District court decision appealed against the decision claiming that the house is owned by a church property and not a matrimonial asset. The Client was forced out of the house without her share. She approached the Client's forum member, who advised her to stay in the house until her demands were fulfilled. The Client is living in the house, waiting for the decision of **the Appellate court**.



4.1.2 Advocating for reformation and enforceability of the policy and legal frameworks, including the country's constitution, on the right of women, children and refugees

❑ **Research conducted on identified issue:** WLAC in collaboration with professor Johanna Bond and her students from Washington and Lee University School of Law worked to finalize report on legal argument on widow's property rights upon death of a spouse

❑ **Advocacy through strategic meetings with the Judicial and Land tribunals:** WLAC deploys constructive engagement to law enforcers to influence changes in practice and enforcement of the laws. Through that intervention timely justice served to most of our clients

#### **My own son was about to make me “homeless”**

*“A client's husband died and her own son was appointed to administer the estate of the deceased. In the course of administration, the client's son wanted to sale all properties in a family claiming that they belong to his deceased father. In efforts to protect her rights the client was referred and was assisted to write a complaint letter about the client's son conduct towards his mother and how he intended to disown his mother of her share of matrimonial property. Upon receiving the letter, the magistrate summoned the client's son and ordered him to stop the sale of property. Thereafter the Magistrate summoned the whole family and ordered the client to be given her matrimonial house, farm and business desk”.*

❑ **Strategic partnership with Police on Women and children Protections:**

#### **Monitoring to Police Gender and Children Desks on children cases (PGCD'S)**

WLAC conducted monitoring visits to Seven (7) police stations in Kinondoni, Temeke, Ilala, and Kigamboni Districts in Dar es Salaam region. The PGC visited are those working with schools which are project beneficiaries for the purpose of assessing the case reported and how WLAC can assist with legal aid service. The most cases reported are rape cases at Mbezi Luis police station.

## ❑ **Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

WLAC continued to monitor the implementation of the CEDAW Convention through the advocacy on women's, children and Refugee rights in Tanzania. For the period under review it was noted that the country is not yet scheduled for the reporting. [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/MasterCalendar.aspx?Type=Session&Lang=En](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/MasterCalendar.aspx?Type=Session&Lang=En)

WLAC will continue to make follow up to the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MHCDGEC) and visiting the website for country reporting schedules.

## ❑ **Advocating for establishment of a pilot Mobile Court at Nyarugusu Refugee Camps**

WLAC advocated to Judiciary on the establishment of a mobile court which will serve the Refugees and the host community in Nyarugusu Refugee Camp. The Mobile court will enhance the access to justice to refugee and community members in their locality instead of travelling to attend court session at District Court out of the camp. The availability of the mobile court will serve time and resources incurred to access justice.

## ❑ **Press conference: Labour Day:**



**Photo:** WLAC Executive Director, during press conference as part of commemoration of Labour Day at WLAC Building, Dar es Salaam.

As part of the Advocacy to advocate for the better working conditions for workers WLAC held press conference during Labour Day; the event took place at WLAC Building, at Kinondoni District Dar es Salaam. National Labour Day theme was “*Masilahi Bora, Mishahara Juu, Kazi iendele*” (“Improved Benefits, Higher Wages. The press conference objective was to highlight the importance of workers in building national economy, sharing the project success and the change that the project has made to the society. Further to that it pointed out the Government roles toward protecting the rights of workers. The event broadcasted with 9 media houses coverage (EFM Radio, ITV, Mwananchi Newspaper, EATV, MICHUZI Blog, Radio One, The Guardian Newspaper, Nipashe Newspaper and Wasafi Media)

### ❑ African's Child Day: Advocating for child protection



WLAC commemorated African child day with a purpose of advocating for children protection. The event involved 350 children and 40 teachers 10 schools which WLAC works with in the project of protecting the rights of the child. The event was officia by District Assistant Secretary (DAS) Ms. Stella Msofe. The DAS insisted on protection of children rights and commended on WLAC intervention in schools.





**The National theme:**

**“Tutekeleze Ajenda 2040: Kwa Afrika inayolinda HAKI ZA MTOTO”**

Drawing competition held on protection of children to attain their dreams was conducted and all children were awarded presents.



**“Children are next generation its our duty to protect and guide them  
to realise their dreams”**

**WLAC for children we stand**

## 4.2 STRATEGIC OUTCOME TWO:

Enhanced community awareness engagement in civic and socio-economic rights:

OUTCOME: A well informed community that takes action against violation of women, children and refugees rights

### □ Awareness rising on advocacy issues on women and children issues

Community awareness widows' property rights where their marriage ends by death of a husband. This was done through dissemination of posters and booklets on widow's rights during mobile legal aid conducted in Muleba district and during the commemoration of International widow's day.

*Indicator of Success from Awareness Rising activities: Prevention of early marriage*

*During awareness creation in Bungu ward society were given education concerning efforts to end up gender violence, a girl child approached paralegals and Legal officer seeking assistance as she was about to be forced to get married without her consent. The Paralegals took measures to ensure such violence does not happen. Community law enforcers i.e. Villages Chairman and Village Executive Officer (VEO) together with social workers at district level were involved. Parents were summoned to discuss the matter on prevention of violation of the child's right that was about to happen. The parents were warned and educated on their responsibilities to their children and that marriage was called off.*



**Photo:** Awareness raising on Law of Marriage, Law of the child specific on maintenance to women who attended clinic at Bitare Clinic Health Center:





**Photo:** Awareness raising on Law of Marriage, Law of the child specific on maintenance to women who attended clinic at Bitare Clinic Health Center:



**Photo:** Community awareness raising on inheritance law at Nengo village in (Biturana ward)



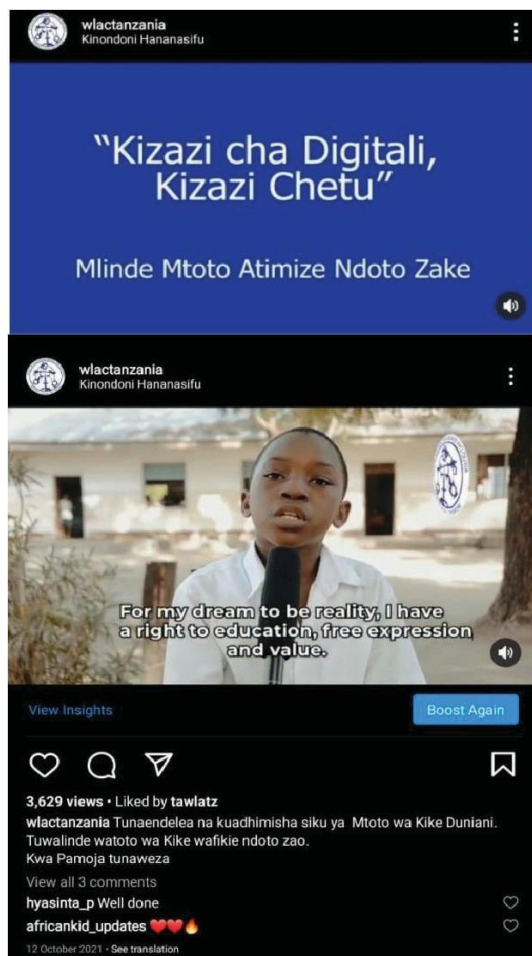


**Photo:** Community awareness raising at Kasulu

**Improved dissemination of tailor made awareness messages through Media and Social Media:**

WLAC interventions and information dissemination through social media is reaching out to the community.





WLAC commemorated International day of girl child to amplify Girls voice on their rights and protection. The National theme was *"Kizazi cha Digitali Kizazi Chetu."* WLAC made a short video documentary that was aired through Instagram and a total number of 3,620 views were reach. WLAC promoted the video and it reached 9,219 people.

#### 4.3 OUTCOME STRATEGY THREE:

Institutional Sustainability and Diversification Outcome: Institutional capacity and sustainability of WLAC are strengthened

## ❑ **WLAC Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

WLAC general meeting was conducted on May 29, 2021 with great attendance from members. The General meeting received and approved the annual report 2020 together with the audit report. Further to that the following agenda tabled for discussion.

- Appointed new auditor
- Celebrated the outgoing board members (Advocate Nakazael Lukio Tenga and Advocate Lucy Nambuo who served the organization since its inception. This was a remarkable leadership and dedication toward serving women and children in Tanzania.

## ❑ **Staff Affairs,**

- Staff retention and Turnover:  
WLAC managed to maintain a total number of 41 (21 Female & 20 Male) staff in all office (Kinondoni, Muleba, Kasulu and Kibondo Districts).
- Recruitment and Interns placement:  
WLAC engaged 24 interns who have graduated from different Universities i.e. University of Dar es Salaam, and Mzumbe. The interns are providing support to lawyers on research but also learning different legal practice from lawyers.  
With the support from Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) WLAC also recruited 12 interns who were placed at interfaith paralegal units i.e. Kasulu, Babati, Mbulu, Kigoma, Ikwiriri, Kibiti, Mafia, Kibondo, Hanang', Kilwa and Zanzibar

## ❑ **Audit**

- Internal Audit:  
For the year 2021, WLAC conducted internal audit on quarterly basis and the reports was shared to the Board Audit Committee and recommendations forwarded to the Board for further action.

## ❑ **Compliance with Law.**

- Monthly contribution submitted to HESLB, NSSF and WCF as required by Law.
- Monthly tax returns for PAYE and SDL and annual tax returns are normally submitted to Tanzania Revenue Authority.



## 5.0 PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR 2021

### 5.1 Main Achievements and Development for the year 2021

- ❑ Increased awareness and adherence children's rights and to procedure in handling children cases in courts and other relevant authorities.
- ❑ Through WLAC 's support on access to justice for children in conflict with the law at Kigoma region a total number of one hundred and fifty-four (154) cases involving two hundred and eighty (280) children were arraigned before the court and represented by the Advocates from WLAC. Out of 154 cases, 142 cases were finalized and 12 cases are still pending. 142 cases involving 268 children were finalized.
  - **35** cases children were convicted for conditional discharge and in some cases parents were ordered to pay compensation to the victims. The reasons for the children to be sentenced for conditional discharge was due to the fact the prosecution proved their cases beyond reasonable doubt. **23** cases children were acquitted prosecution failure to prove their cases beyond reasonable doubt
  - **60** cases were dismissed for want of prosecution. The accused children were discharged by the court due to non-appearance of prosecution witnesses. **21** cases the children were discharged from the charges after the prosecution side withdrawn the charges against the accused children. **3** cases children were convicted on their own plea of guilty.

*Client X successful prosecuted her Matrimonial Civil Appeal No. 106/2020 In the High Court of Dar es Salaam and was awarded ten Million shillings (TZS 10,000,000/=) as her share of matrimonial property, TZS 50,000/- per month for child maintenance and TZS 300,000/= for contribution of school fees for the child*

- ❑ 37 women successfully claim their land and property rights through court and livelihood through income generating activities.
- ❑ WLAC has assisted **3,493** new and **3,935** ongoing cases on women, children and refugees to access justice through legal aid
- ❑ WLAC reached over **4** Million community members through media engagements on Women's right, Legal right, Labor rights, Women's land and property rights messages which were aired through Clouds FM (*Malkia wa Nguvu*), Efm (*Mwanamke wa Shoka*) and other radio programs including social media platforms.

- ❑ Enhanced Women, children and refugees improved knowledge on their legal and human rights and due procedures through training, awareness events and IEC materials
- ❑ 135 cases were resolved through reconciliation sessions conducted at legal aid clinics in which 242 Children received maintenance, education and medical care, and three couples were reconciled and continue living together.

## 5.2 Moving Forward 2022

WLAC is guided by the three strategic aims under the Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Therefore, programs will focus on addressing three strategic aims namely: Strategic Aim 1: Legal Empowerment and Advocacy for Reforms. Strategic Aim: Enhance community awareness engagement in civic and socio-economic rights and Strategic Aim 3: Institution sustainability and diversification: Improved financial resource, Governance and program diversification for sustainable development



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