



HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE OF SOUTH AFRICA ANNUAL REPORT

ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED AMIDST



COVID 19 PANDEMIC



2020

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Acronyms

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and People's Rights
ACSA	ActionAid South Africa
CBO's	Community-based organizations
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
COVID-19	Corona Virus
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
FoAA	Freedom Of Assembly and Association
GBV-F	Gender Based Violence and Femicide
GNWP	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
HRF	Human Rights Forum
HURISA	Human Rights Institute of South Africa
ICNL	International Center for Not-for-Profit
IPID	Independent Policing Investigative Directorate
ISHR	International Service for Human Rights
NICD	National Institute for Communicable Diseases
PAP	Pan African Parliament
PPE's	Personal Protective Equipment's
SAHRC	South Africa Human Rights Commission
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers' Union
SANDF	The South African National Defence Force
SAPs	South African Police Services
UNISA	University of South Africa
WHRDs	Women Human Rights Defenders

Introduction of HURISA

Human Rights Institute of South Africa, hereby referred to as HURISA, is a Non-Governmental Organisation established out of the Institute for the Study of Public Violence, founded in June 1993 by Judge Richard Goldstone, now retired. The Institute served as the research and documentation arm of the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry, regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation. On a visit to Norway in 1992, Mr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, the anti-apartheid revolutionary leader and the first black democratically elected Head of State, requested assistance from the Government of Norway to set up an effective system to monitor the politically motivated public violence that was threatening South Africa's transition from apartheid to a peaceful constitutional democracy. The Government of Denmark supported the Goldstone Commission to set up a Witness Support Unit for coordination of its investigations. When the Goldstone Commission's mandate ended in 1994, the name of the organisation changed to the Human Rights Institute of South Africa, with its main objective being the provision of human rights, peace and democracy through education, primarily in South Africa and annually to a different region of the continent each year. HURISA is a registered Section 21 Non-Governmental Organisation governed by its Articles of Association.

Vision:

Vision- to create a culture of human rights where people know, understands, and promotes human rights and responsibilities within their communities

Mission

Mission- to become the leading service provider of human rights, support through the development and delivery of equality training, advocacy, monitoring and research that respond to the specific human rights needs in Africa.

Preface

This report is dedicated to a dear friend and Community Human Rights Defender and Founder of the Rural Women Movement, in KZN Province, Late Sizani Ngubane. We honor her great sacrifices in impacting lives of many including the Youth, Land, Extractive, GBV activists, among others. In her last advocacy work promoting protection of women and children's rights living in rural areas in KZN Province. She has left a big void in many hearts of people and counterparts working in difficult environment where gender-based violence, poverty, land rights continue to be a daily challenge. Human Rights Institute of South Africa collaborated with Rural Women Movement in the high peak of the global pandemic in 2020. This was with a view of impacting human rights activities for women and children living in vulnerable communities. Voices of Women in the frontline of COVID19 pandemic assisting communities comply with protocols were raised to be recognised as essential service providers. Women entrepreneurs and informal traders were provided the financial support to design face masks to distribute to volunteers, health centres and GBV shelters in communities.

On 7 October 2020, she reported a horrific attack and sexual violence ordeal a family of Ntombi Myeni experienced. This is the information she provided.

A multiple sword ordeal for Ntombi Myeni. The day started as Normal on 09/09/2020 for Ntombi Myeni who 65 years is old. She stays together with her 11 female members of her family. They were all not aware that the night of Wednesday was going to be like a nightmare for the whole family.

She was held on gun point by seven males armed with assortment of weapons. Cell phones and cash was demanded and taken from her. She had only R600 in her pocket, which was taken away. She was forced to stay on the bed for three hours.

This is her home where all the attack and repeated rape took place and it lasted for 3 hours. Looking closer the square like white mark on the yard is Ntombi's late husband's grave. He passed on in June this year and Ntombi is still moaning the loss.



Whilst held on the bed under a violent and abusive guard of four men, three males were repeatedly busy raping her 21-year-old and 15-year-old daughters. The ordeal lasted for 3 hours. A 12-year-old managed to escape and sought safety in the nearby river where she managed to hide till the following day.

Ntombi has since vacated her home and sought refuge to the relatives. She is afraid to death to go back to her home. The two girls raped by different males were eventually forced to wash themselves in front of the criminals to destroy evidence.

No trace up to so far but the matter is still under investigation. On my arrival no counselling had given to the traumatised raped girls as well as the other kids who witnessed the incident. Ntombi is currently looking for whatever possible help.

This family needs whatever possible help but especially the new shelter, food and clothes. The underwear's and clothes of evidential value were taken away by criminals to destroy evidence.

The site to build a new home has been identified with the help of Induna. Local municipality has not yet responded.

In my intervention this is what I have done for this family up to so far:



Land has been allocated to this family to build on. Local community members have prepared the building site by levelling it. Two rooms will make a difference for this family. The R10 000 I am still holding for them is enough to build two room walls now I am trying to get a roof plus builder's fee which altogether could amount to R20 000.

May her legacy live for many generations and her hopes for a better life for women and children living in rural areas come into reality.

May Her Precious Soul Rest in Eternal Peace

Executive Summary

The year 2020 imposed unprecedented hardships due to the global COVID 19 pandemic. South Africa National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) identified its first case of COVID19 on 5 March 2020. This was from a 38-year-old man returning to South Africa following a trip to Italy with his wife and other eight people. It is now over 12 months since President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the State of National Disaster and placed the country under lockdown for 21 days from 27 March 2020 to 16 April 2020. Since then, a five-level lockdown measure was introduced with strict hygiene protocols, including controlled movement of people and crowds to mitigate the pandemic. However, many people in our society suffer most due to the pre-existing historical context of inequality, characterised by the haves and have nots. Appalling living conditions continue to be a way of life making enforcement of hygiene protocols an unaffordable luxury than a necessity. Therefore, the lockdown devastated them more than others. It intensified their strive for livelihoods and exacerbated high unemployment, poverty, GBV and Femicide in communities.

The government was commended for responding swiftly to the pandemic in considering stimulus for supporting the hard hit individuals and communities by the lockdown with humanitarian aid and grant relief. However, this positive response was overshadowed by the insidious corruption embedded in state institutions and local municipalities. The President also allocated R641 Million for deployment of the SANDF to cooperate with the South African Police Services in maintaining law and order and border controls to curb the COVID-19 pandemic. This budget was increased to R4.9. billion.

Unfortunately, it seemed from the earlier overwhelming goodwill extended to the government by the citizenry, matters reached such a low point that many people questioned the constitutionality and lawfulness of some of government's decisions. The security force contradicted what was originally understood to collaborate with the SAPs in committing heinous crimes in communities, including murder and assault of civilians. As early as 3 April 2020, the media was reporting that at least eight people had been killed by security officers.¹

By the time President Ramaphosa relaxed the lockdown from Level 5 to Level 4 (allowing limited movement and some businesses to operate), reports indicated that almost 100 cases of police brutality were being investigated.²

In one of the most disturbing incidents, police and the military were accused of killing Collins Khosa, a resident in Alexandra township, described as South Africa's most densely populated township. Security officers allegedly found him drinking alcohol in his yard and assaulted him following an altercation. Khosa later died of this injury.³ The family approached the Constitutional Court on an urgent basis for orders to prevent further brutality by security forces, and for the Court to order the SA National Defence Force adopt a code of conduct. The Court however refused to hear the matter arguing that there were no good grounds for seeking direct access to it.⁴ The family has since taken the matter to the High Court in Pretoria.

HURISA monitored enforcement of lockdown measures, focusing impact on the disadvantaged communities living in squatter camps, shack dwellers, informal settlements, townships, rural communities, including homecare centres for the elderly, people with disabilities, women, children, youth living in violent environments and the unemployed during the

¹ Suné Payne, Daily Maverick, 7 May 2020, *Police reportedly using sjamboks, hammers and irons to assault people, committee hears*. Available at <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-05-07-police-reportedly-using-sjamboks-hammers-and-irons-to-assault-people-committee-hears/>. See also Daneel Knoetze, Citizen, 3 April 2020, *Eight people allegedly already killed by police during lockdown - more than the virus*, <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/crime/2265100/eight-people-allegedly-already-killed-by-police-during-lockdown-more-than-the-virus/>

² Daneel Knoetze, GroundUp, 6 May 2020. *Covid-19: Slain Alex man's case highlights failures of police and army watchdogs*. Available at <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/slain-alex-mans-case-highlights-police-oversight-failings/>

³ This case was widely reported in South Africa mainstream and social media. See e.g. SABC, *Family of Alexandra man allegedly killed by soldiers doesn't trust SANDF probe*. <https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/family-of-alexandra-man-allegedly-killed-by-soldiers-doesnt-trust-sandf-probe/>

⁴ Franny Rabkin, Mail and Guardian online, 27 Apr 2020. *Khosa case: Going straight to the Constitutional Court isn't always the right path*. Available at <https://mg.co.za/article/2020-04-27-khosa-case-going-straight-to-the-constitutional-court-isnt-always-the-right-path/>

initial 21 days. The organisation advocated government and responsible departments, to accredit CSOs as essential service providers, in upholding a culture of human rights during this period, such as, equal treatment of all citizens with

human dignity, particularly in executing duties akin to preventing COVID19 spread in supplying essential services such as safe water, soap, face masks to the needy.

HURISA produced a simplified resource on Disaster Management Act empowering CBOs to use in monitoring the SAPs and Army in curbing coronavirus and document human rights violations. Human rights violations were reported to the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), Independent Policing Investigative Directorate (IPID). HURISA continued updating communities and partners with information, available services and contact details for reporting human right violations.

Current & Post COVID19 Modalities Adopted

HURISA adjusted its programme to align with the new COVID 19 environment. The organisation introduced a new way of working remotely after government announced 21-day national lockdown. Personnel have been supported with mobile data bundles to access online platforms in performing duties since March 26, 2020. This drastic change has not been easy to adapt in terms of performing duties remotely. The organisation has also recognized the value of adjusting its programme to extend support to needy individuals and communities, particularly as donor funding was gradually shifting away from human rights and going towards humanitarian support.

Summaries highlighting Human Rights & COVID19

National activities

HURISA designed a tool to monitor civic space by data collection and information of human rights violation, freedom of association, assembly, expression amid COVID 19. Disadvantaged communities were prioritised, especially, the townships, informal settlements, squatter camps, where infrastructure is lacking for clean water, sanitation, abject poverty, high unemployment and endemic GBV-F and crime. Schools' conditions were also assessed to highlight schools that were non-compliant with COVID19 protocols.

This was a pilot project implemented over a period of three-months supported by CIVICUS from May-July 2020. The initiative inspired HURISA to contribute food parcels to needy individuals, families, and supported women informal traders design face masks by women as a way of securing livelihoods.

The project addressed the following seven thematic areas; women participation in public space; law enforcement brutality; gender-based violence and femicide; evictions; corruption in distribution of humanitarian aid (food parcels, grant relief); protection of frontline workers with PPE's and reported these to national human rights

institutions such as Commission for Gender Equality, South African Human Rights Commission, and Independent Policing Investigative Directorate.

The project was conducted at Lekwatini local community based in Mpumalanga Province, Orange Farm which is situated in the south of Johannesburg and Alexandra Township based in the central part of Johannesburg. Collaborations for replication of activities of this project were proposed with the Rural Women Movement. The project also included a public relation, information dissemination, community radio stations, journalists, and social media which assisted greatly with publication of human rights violations.



Webinars and articles

Five webinars were conducted raising human rights violations, shrinking civic space within and beyond South Africa. The [first webinar](#) was conducted in collaboration with Human Rights Forum a grass roots platform raising voices from the ground. This was with a purpose of mourning the cruel and brutal murder of women and children and advocating for action. The opportunity was provided to discuss the root cause of the disproportionate GBV-F that amid the pandemic. Recommendations were presented to Commission for Gender Equality as advocacy points to raise with the government including ensuring safe schools amid COVID19 and recovery plan.

COVID-19 exacerbated women's lived realities and abusive relationships because they were trapped with their abusers. Women's month offered the opportunity to reflect on women's achievements, the struggles women face and the important role they play in the society. WHRDs were also honored for their bravery in advocating for enabling environment that continue holding the government accountable to human rights, peace, and social justice. As a follow up to this campaign, articles were issued during National Women's Month, [International Women Day and Human Rights Defenders Day](#).

The [second webinar](#) commemorated the First Anniversary of the Human Rights Forum. The convening of this event coincided with many political economic and social challenges facing the country.

When the forum was established in 2019, a research on South Africa's human rights landscape was launched. The forum assessed whether the human rights trajectory of the country was aligned with commitments safeguarded in the Constitution and ratified regional and international human rights treaties. Corruption was identified as deep rooted in the society and state institutions. Furthermore, living conditions of communities particularly the historically marginalized were exacerbated by crime, poverty, unemployment, and gender-based violence. The webinar reinforced collaborations for amplifying voices from the ground as a way of promoting human dignity and respect of voices from ground.

HURISA Founder, Judge Richard Goldstone and HURISA Chair of Board of Directors, Dr Zonke Majodina, Prof Somadoda Fikeni from UNISA, Dr Marjorie Jobson, former HURISA Programmes Manager, Venetia Govender, also former HURISA Board of Directors and Ester Mtatyana a Unionist and Regional Director of SAMWU presented invaluable and inspiring presentations.



Judge Richard expressed that corruption has exacerbated poverty and inhuman living conditions of the poor. Their dignity is at the centre of the bill of rights. “You can’t live in human dignity if you don’t have food to eat, a roof over your head, safety and security for your family”. He encouraged the CSOs to make a difference: Without civil society incriminated criminal law would not have been recognized at the extent of gender related crimes that are perpetrated on women during conflicts. There were cases of rapes being recognized as genocide. Lessons were also drawn from the CSOs massive movement on “Black Lives Matter” due to police brutality in USA. Many countries promote the “Black Lives Matter” branding, and this has influenced the call for racial justice. The CSOs were encouraged to be robust and continue creating a vibrant democratic culture and address the gaps between the state and local communities. The country needs amplified voices *to see the change we want because our voices matter!*

The [third webinar](#) was conducted through support from Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) for publicity and engagement on evidence collected from communities through focus group discussions and key informants interviews organized for multi-stakeholders working on WPS.

The assessment intervention provided stakeholders working in peacebuilding the opportunity to raise voices from the ground with a view of analyzing the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. These ranged from implementation of WPS resolutions, leadership roles played by women in responding to the crisis. This time of radical uncertainty propelled most in learning new responses such as providing humanitarian aid, food parcels, making face masks as well as hygiene products to women, children, elderly, people with disabilities and refugees.

Women volunteered as essential service providers supporting communities comply with COVID-19 protocols. However, their altruistic contributions in the society are often undocumented or under-valued in both public and private sphere. It was based on this backdrop that the assessment presented this opportunity to acknowledge their continuous work in attaining sustainable peace regardless of harsh circumstances. Lessons and strategies initiated to prevent conflict and strategies to build safe societies and recovery plans for post COVID-19 contributed to outcome of the 20th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the Peacebuilding Architecture Review, and 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Platform Action

Dr Zonke Majodina- Board of Directors Chairperson provided the keynote address and encouraged South Africa to improve irregular reporting status on its obligation under CEDAW and implement concluding observations of the CEDAW Committee. The Committee commented on patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes persisting in South Africa sustaining subjugation of women in both public and family sphere. She also described the traditional practices and norms such as *Ukuthwala*, abduction and forced marriages of women and young girls to older men, including, *Ukuhlola*,

polygamy, unconstitutional. The African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights recommended South Africa to outlaw this traditional practice.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women also recommended South Africa to initiate mandatory training for the judiciary, judges, prosecutors, and magistrate courts on CEDAW and through its Optional Protocol, to increase training on GBV, gender-based stereotypes in general during her mission in South Africa from 4-11 December 2011, but little has been done to change the status quo.

The [fourth webinar](#) was convened in conjunction with Human Rights Forum and Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission as the keynote speaker. This virtual dialogue was first of its kind to capacitate the grass roots and community based human rights defenders with constitutional obligations safeguarding participation in public policy making, access to information, transparency in procurement of COVID19 vaccines. The webinar brought together diverse CSOs groupings, ranging from community-based activists, human rights defenders, survivors of COVID19, traditional practitioners, faith-based organisations, academia, environmentalists, and healthcare experts. The programme provided space for candid expression of views and efforts to curb the pandemic. While transparency was emphasized in the procurement of COVID19 vaccine and equity in the rolling plan, alternative remedies offered by traditional practitioners and healers were also part of the dialogue. Participants were educated and inspired by the number of people that survived the pandemic after following use of traditional healing knowledge of indigenous herbs and plants. Information was also provided about these traditional plants and where to access from local pharmaceutical companies and chemists around the country.

Speakers set good foundation for knowledge, education regarding the vaccine and traditional plants used by several communities to prevent COVID19. Speakers included Mkhulu Zola iThongo Health & Wellness, Mkhulu Shumilezinsizwa Simelane from Ikhambi Lesiswe Traditional Healing, Gosame Choabi from South African Council of Churches, Gauteng Province, Solly Tladi Centre for Environmental Solutions in Alexandra, Landiwe Mathibela Human Rights Forum Mpumalanga Province, Cathy Kodiemoka , Human Rights Institute of South Africa, Gogo Dithaba tsa Metsing Human Rights Forum North West Province, Zandi Jiyane from Freedom of Expression Institute Gauteng Province, Bafana Khumalo from Human Rights Forum Mpumalanga Province and Advocate Bongani Majola, Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission.

The fifth webinar was conducted for the purpose of empowering CBOs, GBV activists, WHRDs to monitor implementation of Articles 1, 2, 5 & 6 of CEDAW for drafting the CSO CEDAW Shadow Report. The webinar created a platform for sensitization of participants for advancing women's rights from national, provincial, and district levels. The collection of data and information started in December 2020. Over 100 participants attended.

CSO CEDAW Coalition

A coalition of CSOs has been established to develop CSO CEDAW Report. This coalition is comprised of CBOs, WHRDs, GBV experts, representatives of sex work, trafficking, LGBTI+Q, people with disabilities, women living in rural areas, informal settlements, migrants, academicians and CGE. The Coalition formed a Steering Committee for providing leadership roles and guidance in the drafting of Shadow report. These include Albertina Sisulu Human Rights Advice Centre, Foundation for Human Rights, International Peace Youth Group, Social Justice, Sonke Gender Justice, Sweat. Each partner solicited information from constituency groups they engage with, as well as assessed the impact of CEDAW in the lived realities of women in South Africa. This diversity of stakeholders enriched engagements held in platforms aimed at collecting valid and accurate information. Awareness has been raised on key human rights challenges affecting women across the country, such as women living in rural areas, economic and social battles, the plight of youth, disproportionate gender-based violence, femicide, hate crimes, and trafficking in women and children. The coalition also stimulated debates in scrutinising the state report and educated many groups to use international mechanisms for increasing accountability at the grass roots.

Regionally

African system of human rights

HURISA strengthens the African system of human rights and uses its observer status with the African Commission to prepare reports of human rights situations and statements are presented in Sessions of the Commission. HURISA is also the ACHPR Support Group Member on Guidelines on Freedom of Association and Assembly in Africa and submit reports to the Special Rapporteur on HRDs and Focal Point of Reprisals. This highlighted the plight of women and girls on the receiving end, besides the existence of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol /the Protocol).



HURISA Colleagues: Tshepo Legodi presenting statement on freedom of expression, Thomas Marishane presented the state of freedom of association and assembly in South Africa and beyond, Cathy Kodiemoka presented on the state of GBV-F in South Africa and reprisals against HRDs.

Although significant progress is made through ratification of the Protocol by 42 States Parties, the statement encouraged States that are still behind with ratification to submit their instruments of ratification before the end of 2020. This strengthened the AU and United Nations mechanisms advancing women's rights, peace and security espoused in the African Women Decade 2010-2020, promoting gender equality. The organisation also presented a statement highlighting the human rights and democracy, freedom of expression and non-compliance by states with obligations under the African Charter on Human and People's in COVID-19 context.

As the AU dedicated the year 2020 to Silencing the Guns, recommendations were presented to the African Commission to urge state parties address proliferation of guns, prevent conflict of wars and address use of rape as a weapon of war in the continent.

Advocacy statements calling ACHPR intervention against abduction, forced disappearances, extra judicial killings of WHRDs in Zimbabwe. The Commission adopted a resolution on Zimbabwe urging ending reprisals of HRDs cooperating with the African system of human rights. HURISA also advocated against South Africa xenophobic attacks of refugees, migrants, asylum seekers. The Commission is reviewing HURISA request for intervention.

African Union

HURISA was invited by the African Union Department of Political Affairs to be on a panel to present an analytical statement on human rights and COVID19 in the SADC region. The panelists included Focal Points from five sub-regions, including Central Africa, East Africa, West Africa. North Africa and SADC region. Representatives of National Human Rights Institutions were also part of this interactive webinar which attracted over 200 participants.



Pan African Parliament

HURISA is the Chairperson of the CSO Forum on PAP. The CSOs advocated PAP to conduct a virtual meeting for interaction with the PAP Committee Members, including Committee on Health, Women, Youth and justice. This was with a view of lobbying PAP members to increase state accountability in the region for infrastructure development, for provision of basic services such as clean water, sanitation, roads, housing and combating corruption. The webinar also attracted over 200 participants from the continent. PAP invited ideas for development of an AU policy for collective respond to pandemics. Research was also considered for assessing the impact of measures, including compliance with Abuja Declaration for allocation of at least 15% of their annual budgets to improve the health sector in African villages and communities against COVID19. However, financial support to undertake these initiatives is yet to be discussed with donors to be explored.

Publications and Research Studies

Guidelines on FoAA

HURISA produced a study report on the situation on Freedom of Association and Assembly in DRC, Malawi, Lesotho and South Africa. The report is translated into French and Portuguese languages and these copies are available online after they were launched by the ACHPR Special Rapporteur on HRDs and Focal Point on Reprisals

Human Rights & Covid19

HURISA produced a publication on human rights situation and democracy under the COVID19 context in collaboration with Ditshwanelo – The Botswana Centre for Human Rights and Transparency Resource Centre based in Lesotho. The publication was launched through online platform and over 60 participants attended from the SADC region.

Civic Space

HURISA conducted a research study on the CSOs and HRDs operative environment in South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The report was launched online and over 40 participants attended.

SADC

HURISA presented a statement during the 16th Civil Society Forum contributing to the Common Action Plan, increasing CSO participation in regional integration processes. The statement emphasised these key issues.

- *The SADC Declaration Treaty recognise the civil society as a key stakeholder in the region and to fully involve in regional integration.*
- *Concern at the shrinking civic space to foster closer relations in communities and associations and people in the region in advancing objectives of the treaty founded on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The achievement of SADC goals requires renewed commitment to place the people of the region at the centre of development through transmission of democratic, legitimate, and effective institutions promoting respect of human rights and rule of law.*
- *Civil Society is calling SADC leaders to defend the shared political, economic, and social values of the treaty with the aim of building peace, security, and stability in the region. To support positive actions towards poverty eradication, non-discrimination and create jobs for the people in the region.*
- *Advocacy for establishment of the SAC National Committee at national level to sustain voices of the people and oversee implementation of common political values, policies, and programme.*

HURISA produced a country position paper analysing Democracy & Human Rights in SADC: COVID19 Lockdown & Basic Rights and presented at the Zimbabwe Crisis Coalition Annual Conference on Civic Space. The paper analyzed the state of human rights in South Africa in the context of COVID19. It also provided key steps followed by Governments in responding to save lives of citizens. The regional peers and regional policy makers adopted strategies that contribute to states efforts to curb COVID19 pandemic.

International Actions

HURISA submitted a report to the UN Special Rapporteur on gender-based violence against women in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The submission of the report was made public on the UN Special Rapporteur's website.

Funding

HURISA was supported by a range of donors to implement human rights activities in South Africa and beyond. The donors allowed HURISA to adjust its project plan and activities to account COVID19 pandemic, which introduced social distance protocols. lockdown measures and humanitarian aid. This period also provided advantages in our resilience approached and also challenged the organisation to shift its paradigms and learn new ways and strategies for impacting human rights that led to achieving more results in a difficult environment. HURISA is grateful to the generous support provided by the following donors, Webber Wentzel, CIVICUS PANAF, ICNL, ISHR, GNWPB ActionAid International.

Positive Results

SARS has issued HURISA a PBO Certificate that will allow private bodies and institutions funding the organisation to claim rebate from SARS.

The organisation held a strategy planning meeting in January 2021 to review the impact of its human rights strategies amid COVID19. The plan itself list outstanding and proposed activities which implementation concluded in March 2021. The strategy plan consists of specialized activities conducted by the organisation for many years. However, a review of the five plan 2015-2020 is due for paving way in mapping a 2021-2024 Strategy Plan.

Conclusion

HURISA has survived in operating under severe climate of COVID19 pandemic. Surprisingly, the funding situation was much better than what we are experiencing this year. However, the new year only starts in April, as prescribed from financial perspective. But we are hopeful of receiving positive response from some of the donors we approached. The

organisation needs to undergo review, evaluation process conducted by a professional governance and strategy developer. This should assist the organisation to map out its potentials, internal and external forces to develop a sustainable programme.