



*Commissioner's Visit to the President of The Gambia H.E Adama Barrow*



*Nationwide Popularisation of the Concluding Observations on The Gambia's 6th CEDAW Periodic Report: URR, Basse*



*NAMs Discussion and Consideration of Criminal Offences and Criminal Procedure Bills 2022*

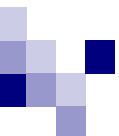
## Capacity Building for National Assembly Standing Committee on Human Rights



Through the PBF funded UNDP-DHCHR post-TRRC Project, the NHRC organised for the members of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Human Rights and Constitutional Matters a three-day residential retreat during which they reviewed and critiqued every provision of the Criminal Offences and Criminal Procedure Bills 2022. The Members were also updated on the work and constraints of the Commission and re-adopted the Human Rights Compatibility Framework which was validated by the previous Legislature.

A key outcome of the Retreat would be a report which the Members of this Standing Committee would submit to the Assembly for its consideration. The report would highlight the positions of the Members on each of the provisions of the two Bills.

The Standing Committee plays a pivotal role in the promotion and protection of human rights as it has the duty to 'scrutinise, consider and deal with matters relating to the Constitution and human rights' before the Assembly. As the primary national human rights institution, the NHRC regularly collaborates with the Standing Committee to enhance human rights protection in The Gambia.





# Promoting Equitable Access to Justice in The Gambia



Access to justice as a human right is integral to a well-functioning democracy. The Strategic Plan 2021-2025 of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) identifies 'assistance in ensuring equitable access to justice in The Gambia' as a strategy under its Strategic Objective 2.



On June 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, the NHRC, in partnership with YAKARR Justice Foundation, brought together national and international stakeholders working in the human rights field, including the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Gambia Bar Association, Gambia Police Force, Gambia Prisons Service, National Agency for Legal Aid, and CSOs, to have in place a sustainable roadmap for speedy and equitable access to justice in The Gambia.

Opened by the Honourable Solicitor General on behalf of the Attorney General and Honourable Minister of Justice, the two-day conference sought to consolidate the resolutions of a similar engagement held in 2021 and to provide innovative approaches to enhancing speedy access to justice. The NHRC recognizes that respect for and protection of human rights can only be guaranteed by the availability of effective remedies, including the right to fair trial and adequate reparation and/or compensation.

The Conference highlighted key steps and approaches for all stakeholders to consider as part of efforts to accelerate access to justice, such as speeding the decentralization of courts to rural communities, empowering local government structures to support the justice system more effectively, enhancing legal aid provision, having mobile courts in the prisons and detention facilities, and building the capacity of the Police Prosecution Unit.

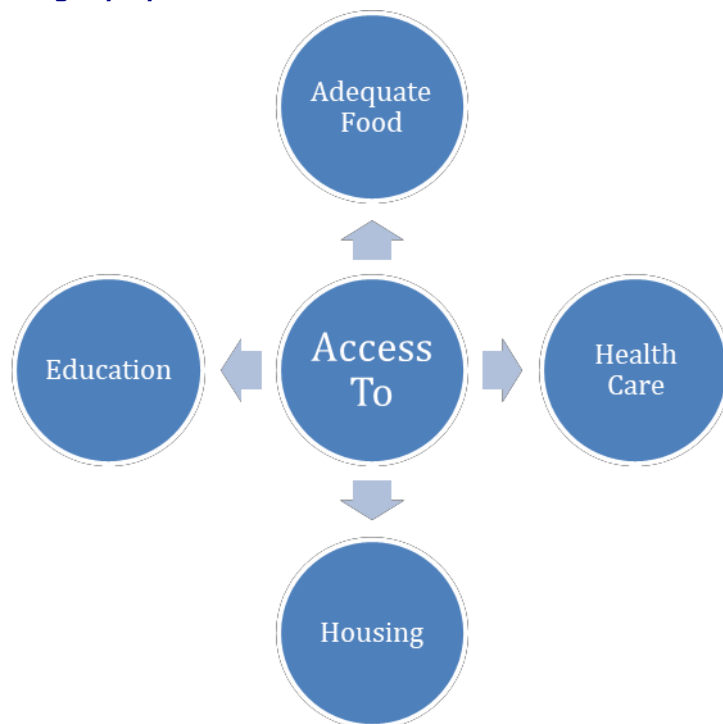
The NHRC intends to organise such conference annually as part of its mandate to ensure that everyone in need has access to justice.



## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

*What are Economic, Social and Cultural Rights?*

*These are rights that give people access to certain basic entitlements to lead a dignified life like...*



**These rights also relate to...**

Participation in cultural life

workplace-  
Workers Rights

Social security-  
and social  
protection

Essentially the right to an adequate standard of living encompasses all the previously mentioned topics.

## Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

*Everyone has the right to a decent standard of living, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and social protection.*

### UDHR@75

#### Why are Economic, Social and Cultural (ESC) Rights important in The Gambia?

##### They are.....

- ◆ The basis of human development. Their protection is important for society to advance.
- ◆ Indivisible from Civil and Political Rights. Therefore, the protection of Socio-Economic Rights is important to the realisation of Civil and Political Rights.
- ◆ Codified in Article 25 of the UDHR and inherent to all human rights systems, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to which The Gambia is a signatory.
- ◆ Essential for the enjoyment of the right to access to land, especially for women who are often denied this rights.
- ◆ Protective means against loss of livelihood and the destruction of human connection and interaction (social networks).

#### Are ESC Rights Guaranteed in the 1997 Constitution?

**Section 22** of the 1997 Constitution of the Gambia guarantees the right to property and prohibits taking possession of any property compulsorily.

**Section 30** guarantees the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities for all persons.

**Section 33** prohibits discrimination on several stated grounds.

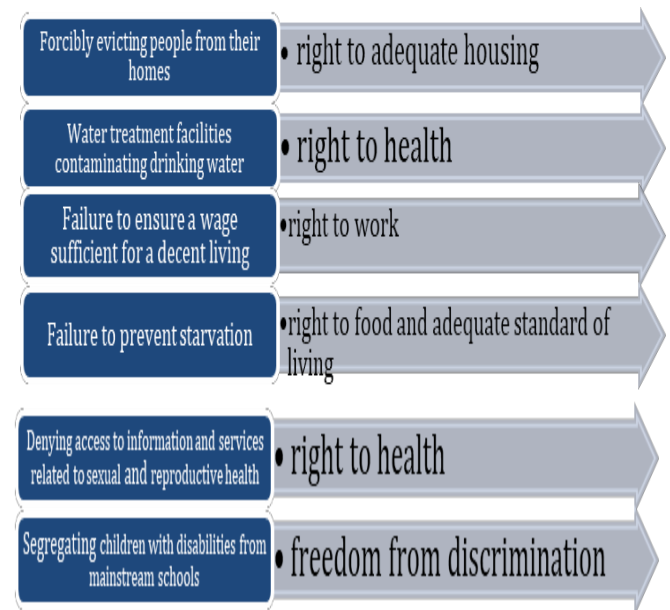
**Under Section 211**, the Directive Principles of State Policy gives a list of guidelines to the State on the formulation, enactment and implementation of policies and laws, specifically on economic, social, educational and cultural objectives

#### Let's Explore Some of the Regional and International Treaties that recognize ESC Rights

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are protected under various international treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights- **UDHR**, Convention on the Elimination of forms of Discrimination Against Women-**CEDAW** and regional treaties such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights-**ACHPR**, and the Maputo Protocol.

#### What constitute violations of these rights?

An individual's economic, cultural, and social rights can be violated through various means.



The protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is important to the enjoyment of Civil and Political Rights!

© NHRC

## Introducing Our First International Fellow

**A**hmi Moore is the first NHRC international Summer Fellow from America. She is a Human Rights Studies & English Major at the University of Dayton. Ahmi worked with the NHRC for two months during which she demonstrated exceptional skills and knowledge in human rights issues.

During her stay, she worked with the Communication and Media Directorate and contributed to the drafting and production of publications, IEC materials and press statements. She has also worked in the Legal and Investigation Directorate and participated in the regional sensitization of the Technical Advisory Committees in Basse, Janjanbureh, Soma and Farafenni.

Her internship with the NHRC marked the first time she visited the Gambia. Commenting on her stay, Ahmi shared that she found everyone to be welcoming, stating “I was able to share what I have, and I have learnt a lot from all of you.”





# Regional Sensitisation of Technical Advisory Committee

The NHRC organised awareness raising workshops for the Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) in Basse, Janjanbureh, Soma and Farafenni on human rights and the Mandate, Functions and Powers of the Commission. The activity also strengthened collaboration between the NHRC Regional Offices and Heads of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in the Regions. The TAC members have been urged to adopt a human rights-based approach in their programming and mainstream human rights in their works and service delivery.



The TACs comprise heads of Government institutions and private sector organizations in the Regions. They provide technical advice needed in the design and implementation of development programmes and projects at the regional level. The TACs are chaired by Governors of the various regions.

Sensitizing the TACs on human rights and the works of the NHRC would strengthen partnership and collaboration in the promotion and protection of human rights in the regions and enhance coordination efforts towards that end.



The Commission has opened two permanent regional offices in Farafenni (NBR) and Basse (URR) that oversee LRR and CRR respectively. By their existence, the NHRC is extending its human rights services to everyone in all parts of the country.



# NHRC and UTGDA Held Capacity Building Training for Students



The National Human Rights Commission, in partnership with the University of The Gambia Debate Association (UTGDA), held a two-day training on human rights, public speaking, and debate for students in the Greater Banjul Area. The training, held at the UTG Law Faculty, was attended by fifty Senior Secondary School students and fifty students from Tertiary Institutions.



In its quest to promote the culture of respect for human rights in all sectors in the Gambia, the NHRC is targeting children's groups and students to enhance their understanding on the role and mandate of the Commission, their human rights and responsibilities and basic human rights principles, standards and practices .



# Popularisation of the Concluding Observations on the Gambia's 6<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Periodic Report

In October 2022, The Gambia participated in a constructive dialogue with the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women on its 6th Periodic Report on CEDAW. With support from the PBF through the UNDP-DHCHR post-TRRC Project, the Commission and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, in collaboration with partners, conducted a nationwide popularisation on the Concluding Observations issued to the Gambia by the Committee following the constructive dialogue.



In the Concluding Observations, the CEDAW Committee raised concerns on the prevalence of SGBV, lack of employment opportunities for women, limited access to justice and other forms of discrimination women face in the Gambia. The implementation of the recommendations by the State would significantly contribute to women's enjoyment of their full rights without exclusion and discrimination.



The Commission had fruitful discussions with women and duty bearers in all the Regions and received recommendations from Women Councilors, Civil Society Organisations, Persons With Disabilities, Alkalolu and other relevant stakeholders .

The NHRC is committed to promoting and protecting the rights of all individuals in the Gambia, especially women and girls who continue to face historical, societal and institutional discrimination and injustices.

**Remember!** To File a Complaint, the NHRC Secretariat is just a call away **5200272**  
Speak Up Against Human Rights Violation

Farafenni  
NBR/LRR  
Janjangbureh  
CRR/URR

• 3373550

• 3373551/ 2620816/3754872/  
3735777



**Connect with us**

**Facebook: National Human Rights Commission, The Gambia**

**Twitter: @NHRCGambia**

**Instagram: @nhrcgambiaofficial**

**YouTube: @nhrcgambia**

