



July 29, 2008

The Honourable Beverley J. Oda, P.C., M.P.
Minister of International Cooperation
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

In our recent meeting you indicated a desire to hear about success stories relating to CIDA and the CBA's rule of law programming. I thought you would be interested in news I received this week from one of our partners, the East Africa Law Society (EALS). It demonstrates the sustainable results produced through the CIDA-supported CBA programming approach of local ownership.

EALS has launched a survey of its members – in Kenya, Tanzania (including Tanganyika and Zanzibar), Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi – to identify and address gender equality issues in the legal profession. This initiative and the resulting changes to the legal profession in East Africa is a direct result of the CBA's partnership program, facilitated with CIDA's financial support.

In the CBA's current program in eastern Africa we held two regional workshops and one in-country workshop for each of the four countries on governance issues. These workshops dealt with issues of governance of the legal profession (regulation, competency, ethics and discipline) and organizational governance. Gender equality in the profession was addressed in each workshop. In the first regional workshop, issues of gender equality were integrated into the other sessions and not addressed as a separate issue. In the second, a specific session dealt with equality in the profession. For the in-country workshops, equality in the profession was one issue the partners could choose to focus on in a session and several partners did choose it as an issue. After each workshop, participants were expected to share their knowledge with their respective organizations and consider how to apply it.

As a result of these workshops, our ongoing discussions with our partners and their own initiatives, the partner organizations have increased their understanding of gender equality issues in the profession. Some have accepted that their organization has a role in addressing these issues. EALS is undertaking the survey with the support of its council composed of our other partners (Law Society of Kenya, Uganda Law Society, Tanganyika Law Society and Zanzibar Law Society). This demonstrates their ownership of the issue and their commitment to implementation without specific support from the CBA and CIDA, other than advice on the

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substantive matters in the survey. The idea of a survey as a starting point to address gender equality issues flows from sharing the CBA's own experience in Canada in dealing with gender equality and the CBA's *Touchstones for Change: Equality, Diversity and Accountability: Report on Gender Equality in the Legal Profession*, released in 1993.

“Gender in the legal profession” did not rank highly as a priority issue in eastern Africa when we initiated discussions to develop our most recent partnership program five years ago. Although our partners acknowledged that gender equality could be something to address, there was, and continues to be, substantial resistance to gender equality issues within our partner organizations and the legal system as a whole. By working with the partners with a responsive approach and discussing gender equality with them in the specific design of each activity at each stage of the program, they have increasingly agreed to introduce it in the program. The partners have taken ownership of the issue and the drive for change is coming from within the partner organizations, not from the CBA. This will ensure the sustainability of the results.

This iterative process is being proposed in a wider sense in our current program proposal which has been submitted to CIDA – ODG for funding support. We are confident it will meet with similar successes. We are awaiting approval of that program.

Meanwhile, the EALS newsletter is attached for your ease of reference. We hope you find this example useful and insightful.

Yours truly,

(Original signed by Bernard Amyot)

Bernard Amyot



Dear EALS Member,

Gender Equity in the Legal Profession

Thesis: With an increasingly diverse demographic, the East African Law Society (EALS) is working on developing a comprehensive database on “gender equity in the law profession” as part of our commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. By so doing, we are in essence addressing inequity and thus the cornerstone of law and human rights. Gender inequity is a direct violation of the law which this profession is dedicated to uphold. As such, we would greatly appreciate your assistance in completing this gender survey via email, as the success of this project depends on you. Thank you for your participation.

Aim: EALS hopes that by investigating and identifying the level of equitable gender practices and policies, as well as the level of awareness of gender inequality (or lack thereof) which exists within the East African legal profession, we shall then be able to compile a database from which we may deduce people's perceptions and experiences of gender inequality. Once such information has been gathered, recommendations may be made to redress these issues in future policy-making and/ or activities organized by EALS. As such, we hope the changes spawned by this project can be the profession's greatest strength as it acknowledges and draws on the concerns, aspirations, and talents of the new demographic. Moreover, we hope that this shall ignite renewed public confidence in the legal system and its ability to uphold the virtues of justice, good governance, democracy, and the protection and promotion of human rights.

Method: EALS has created a gender survey which is being sent via email to the 3000 members who presently constitute its database. We would greatly appreciate if once the survey is completed, that it be promptly returned to <mailto:LJohn@ealawsociety.org>. The results shall be kept in the strictest of confidence.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Laurah John

[Click here to download the survey in Word Format](#)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN JULY 2008

July 17, 2008: International Justice Conference, Kampala (convened by the International Refugee Rights Initiative)

July 18, 2008 : Non-State Actors' Forum on “Taking Integration in the Eastern, Southern and Indian Ocean African Region Forward, Kempinski Hotel, Dar es Salaam (convened by the East African Community - EAC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa -COMESA, and Indian Ocean Commission)

July 19, 2008 : LSK Annual Justice Cup Soccer Tournament, Parklands Sports Club, Nairobi

July 22-23, 2008 : Emergency Consultative meeting on Burundi , Hotel Novotel, Bujumbura , Burundi (convened by EALS)

July 25, 2008 : Follow-Up Regional Workshop on the Zero Draft Protocol to operationalize the extended jurisdiction of the East African Court of Justice, AICC, Arusha (convened by the East African Community)

August 11-22, 2008 : Short term course on refugee and humanitarian affairs organized by the Centre for the Study of forced Migration (CSFM), University of Dar es Salaam

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