

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

KITGUM NGO FORUM - KINGFO



COMPILED BY: ROBERT BABU, PROGRAMME  
COORDINATOR

## **FOREWORD**

The year 2019 marked a fresh start for KINGFO in several ways i.e. a substantive Programme Coordinator was recruited, the Forum was fortunate to have three projects running at the same time and the membership of the Forum was boosted through increased subscription by existing members and registration of new members.

In the year KINGFO was able to effectively engage in all three of her core program focus areas namely coordination, governance, and human rights/peace building. This engagement was facilitated with support from funding partners like GIZ-CUSP, the Inspectorate of Government and Open Society Foundation under the Northern Uganda Human Rights Partnership respectively.

During the year KINGFO was in position to revive members' and partners' confidence in her ability to self-govern and to undertake implementation of its declared objectives. The Forum increased its visibility by doing more field outreaches/activities, engagements on air/radio and online, and participation in coordination meetings at the district, regional and national levels.

Nevertheless there were some challenges including inability to adequately pay core staff remuneration for the Programme Coordinator and Accountant and failure to conduct regular Board meetings and oversight due to funding gaps among others. These challenges negatively impacted the administration, management and programming of the Forum during the year in a myriad of ways that is bound to affect operations in 2020. Despite the challenges it would be fair to put it that the Forum had a much better year in 2019 relative to the last couple of years.

Finally, my appreciation goes to the Executive Committee for their sacrifice and concern, the secretariat staff headed by the Programme Coordinator for their industriousness/creativity, member organizations and partners for their belief/confidence. The Forum looks forward to an even better year in 2020.

Yours sincerely,

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Mr. Olworo Jackson Bright

EC Chairperson - KINGFO

## **PREAMBLE/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Annual Reporting is a good practice for any worthwhile organization and/or company. This annual report is an account of what transpired at the organization in line with its stated goals/objectives, commitments, strategic plan and annual work plan/budget. The report also provides a narration of related programme, operational, management and administrative activities undertaken in the course of the year.

The annual report is intended for internal records, member organizations' scrutiny, the consumption of partners/stakeholders and public accountability. The lay out of the report as much as possible attempted to cater for all the crucial aspects of the organization's programming, operation and management. The report is divided into the following key parts;

- ❖ *Mission statement, strategic plan and AWB*; this section looked at the basis of planning and implementation in programs, management and administration departments of the Forum in 2019.
- ❖ *Programme areas*; this section of the report tackles the three core programme areas of KINGFO delving into what projects, activities and tasks were undertaken in 2019 within each of these areas.
- ❖ *Relevant emerging activities*; in the course of the year the organization participated in numerous other unplanned activities, meetings and capacity building exercises which complimented its program in the year. These unplanned but significant activities are catered for under this section.
- ❖ *Management activities*; special consideration was given to the support functions undertaken by Executive arm of the Forum. This includes the full Board and other ad hoc Board meetings which were conducted through the year to support the secretariat in programming and administration.
- ❖ *Administrative activities*; this embodies the day to day activities such as staff meetings undertaken by the secretariat/core staff to keep the office and organization in prime position to engage in its program work
- ❖ *Lessons learnt and recommendations*; finally the organization registered a number of interesting lessons and best practices in the course of 2019 that it would like to take forward to improve its programming

Further details on the various areas addressed above can be found in the annexes or the organization's archives

## **ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

AALPF	Agoro Aguu Landscape Platform
AWB	Annual Work Plan and Budget
CCEDU	Citizen Coalition for Electoral Democracy
CMGs	Community Monitoring Group
CRETA	Community Responsibility to Enhance Transparency and Accountability
CS BAG	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group
CUSP	Civil in Uganda Support Programme
CVA	Citizen Voice and Action
DCC	District Court Circuit
DINU	Development Initiative for Northern Uganda
ELNHA	Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors
GWED-G	Gulu Women Empowerment for Development and Globalization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JLOS	Justice Law and Order Sector
MDA	Ministries Departments and Agencies
NUHRP	Northern Uganda Human Rights Partnership
NUMDC	Northern Uganda Memory and Documentation Center
STAAC	Strengthening Accountability and Anti-Corruption
UNDEF	United Nation Democracy Fund
UNNGOF	Uganda National NGO Forum

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Annual reporting is an important exercise in an organization's calendar. Among other things an annual report is an accountability tool which presents a record of which activities, projects, programs, lawful resolutions and milestones implemented or achieved in the year ending vis-à-vis set targets. The annual report is shared with key stakeholders including member organizations, beneficiaries, donors, development partners and government MDAs for their scrutiny and feedback.

At the beginning of 2019 the management and secretariat of the Forum engaged in a planning exercise which resulted in the production of the year's Annual Work Plan and Budget - AWB. The AWB encompassed funded and unfunded priorities which were further categorized as programme, administrative and management activities/votes. The AWB was formally adopted by the Executive Committee in their first quarter full Board meeting as key and legal guidelines for activity implementation of the Forum in the calendar year 2019.

As a good practice an organization's AWB is largely derived from already laid out strategic/development plan and budget which normally span between three to ten years. In the case of KINGFO the existing strategic plan run its course in 2019 hence still covered for the AWB of the year 2019. The AWB was also heavily reliant on funded activities/projects. In the case of KINGFO three projects were funded in 2019 as presented at length in the subsequent pages. It is mainly from these funded projects that the organization was in position to conduct or meet some of its crucial management and administrative costs/activities.

The Annual Report 2019 of KINGFO covers implementation of planned activities as per the AWB but also implementation of Board resolutions plus other emerging activities complimentary to the general programming of KINGFO in the year. Key challenges, lessons, and recommendations are also dealt with towards the end of the report to further organizational learning and development.

### **1.1 ABOUT KITGUM NGO FORUM**

Kitgum NGO Forum – KINGFO is a voluntary membership umbrella/network/apex organization of CSOs/NGOs/CBOs with operations in Kitgum and Lamwo districts. The organization was founded in 2002 by a group of passionate civil society actors with a vision to consolidate and project the NGO/CSO sector as an important sector with a voice and stake in service delivery and development in the two districts. KINGFO is registered at the national level with NGO Bureau as a network organization, with the Uganda National Registration Services Bureau as a company limited by guarantee and has entered into MoU with the Local Governments of Kitgum and Lamwo districts.

KINGFO management and organizational structure consists of three crucial parts namely the AGM, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, each with an important role to play. The AGM is the supreme decision making body of the organization, the EC is the policy making organ of the organization and the Secretariat is the implementing arm of the organization. The above structures are guided by well-developed policy instruments as they execute their duties such as the strategic plan, AWB, the constitution, the finance and administration policy, the human resource policy, intern/volunteer policy/BoD manual and an internal control system among others.

KINGFO's mandate is well spelt out in key documents like the constitution and strategic plan. The same stated mandate was declared with the relevant authority at the central and local government levels. KINGFO mission statement and core programme areas read as follows;

## 1.2 KINGFO MISSION STATEMENT

### **VISION:**

An empowered society that is enjoying their rights to effective and efficient service delivery for improved quality of life in Kitgum and Lamwo districts.

### **MISSION:**

To develop the community in Kitgum and Lamwo district in partnership with the District Local Governments and Development Partners through advocacy, lobbying and policy influencing to bring about equitable development in the district.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- I. To mobilize and coordinate all CSOs/NGOs in Kitgum district
- II. To effectively represent, advocate and link CSOs and community interests
- III. To participate in all development processes in the district in partnership with government and other development actors
- IV. To influence public policy through advocacy and lobbying for the benefit of all stakeholders

### **VALUES:**

- I. Transparency and accountability
- II. Voluntarism
- III. Social inclusion

#### IV. Partnership and collaboration

##### 1.2.1 2019 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Every other calendar year the organization sets its self-annual goals and objectives in line with the strategic plan, funding opportunities and prevailing circumstances aligned to the stated mandate of the organization. In 2019 the goals and/or objectives of the organization were as follows;

- a. To increase social accountability and good governance in special government programs and regular public service delivery in Kitgum and Lamwo district.
- b. To improve CSO/NGO coordination for more effective service delivery and advocacy in Kitgum and Lamwo districts
- c. To promote and protect the rights of vulnerable communities in Kitgum and Lamwo districts
- d. To revive the operational, institutional and managerial capacity of KINGFO for proper implementation of stated goals and programs
- e. To boost reputation/visibility of Kitgum NGO Forum in the socio-political dispensation of Kitgum and Lamwo districts

## 2.0 THE ANNUAL PROGRAM, ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS

The program, administrative and management activities laid out in this report include both planned and unplanned activities for the calendar year 2019. The unplanned activities are those activities that emerge in the course of the year from partners, local government and other stakeholders circumstantially though in line with the Forum's programme focus areas.

### 2.1 PROGRAM REPORT

#### 2.1.1 CSO/NGO COORDINATION

This is one of KINGFO's core program focus areas which has been rather inactive due to resource limitations. Nevertheless KINGFO was in position to acquire a project meant to support CSO coordination in 2019 going forward from GIZ/EU Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme– CUSP. Under this project KINGFO planned several activities for implementation including;

##### 2.1.1.1 CSO coordination project

###### *NGO/CSO profiling*

With funding from GIZ-CUSP, KINGFO set out to conduct a fresh profiling exercise of at least 50 CSOs in Kitgum and Lamwo districts. This exercise was meant to update the register of CSOs operating in the two

districts as well as assess their institutional capacity for possible intervention by the same CUSP program. The profiling exercise coincided with government efforts at local and national level to validate all NGOs operating in the country thereby attracting their support and express endorsement. Through this exercise KINGFO now holds a thoroughly updated CSO register that promises to aid engagement of CSOs and government MDAs in service delivery.

#### *Development and review of CSO coordination TOR*

As a first step under the GIZ sponsored coordination project, KINGFO implemented the above activity in order to establish an appropriate guideline for CSO/NGOs engagement in a regular coordination meeting format. The TOR is meant to give structure to CSOs' coordination meetings as opposed to the one convened by the DLG. The TOR is now in its final draft stage ready to be launched and adopted for use by CSOs/NGOs in Kitgum and Lamwo districts.



*Figure 1 TOR development and review workshop at NUMDC for NGOs/CSOs operating in Kitgum and Lamwo districts*

#### *Monthly coordination meetings*

Two ordinary coordination meetings of CSOs were conducted concurrently with the TOR development/review efforts. In these meetings attention was paid to CSO compliance with legal and statutory obligations, CSO profiling and further comments on the TOR. A task force of CSO leaders was set up in one of the meetings to fast track the development of the TOR. Nevertheless the coordination meetings were yet to take shape in 2020 as envisaged in the project concept in terms of content and deliberation. Subsequent monthly coordination meetings are planned but the TOR has other proposals that need to be the harmonized with the project document.



Figure 2 Participants/NGO representatives in the first CSO/NGO only coordination meeting held at ACET offices in Kitgum Town.

### *Radio program (talk show and spots messages)*

For the first time in a long while KINGFO was able to sustain a presence in the public domain through radio talk shows and spots messages sponsored by the GIZ project. The two major radio stations i.e. Tembo and Mighty FM run well produced jingles sending out appropriate messages from KINGFO on topical issues including corruption, land rights and NGO operating space. KINGFO shrewdly took charge (through sponsorship) of two prime radio talk shows namely Kacokke Madit and Mighty Gang in which a number of topical issues on human rights, service delivery and good governance were deliberated upon by key players and opinion leaders in the sub region. Ultimately the radio program restored the long lost visibility of KINGFO in the public eye.

### **2.1.1.2 Monthly Social Sector Coordination meetings**

KINGFO has been a co-convenor and secretary of the KDLG social sector monthly coordination meeting which takes place on the last Wednesday of the month. KINGFO specifically played the part of mobilizer of development partners for the meeting and as well as secretary. Lakot Lily and later Atim Proscovia Jessica played instrumental roles as the minutes secretaries of the meetings in the course of the year. More than two thirds of the meetings were conducted and the Forum has kept the minutes.

### **2.1.1.3 The District Chain Link Committee – DCC meeting**

The Forum participated in six DCC meetings organized in the course of the year. Two officers from the Forum actively participated in the meetings which is attended by a number of institutions which are part of the Justice Law and Order Sector – JLOS to ensure that justice prevails in the community. The DCC comprises of Chief Magistrates, Resident State Attorney, court clerks, police, prison, the RDC, Probation office, LC V office, health workers and CSOs. At the DCC meetings complaints raised against judicial and other justice institutions by the community are addressed and recommendations for improvement made. Within the reporting period, the DCC held a court open day which was graced by the Chief Justice His Worship Bart Kuturebee. KINGFO participated actively in this event where it set up a stall which exhibited some of its human rights and justice works.

## **2.1.2 GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **2.1.2.1 The IG CRETA Project**

This is another core programming area of KINGFO, it entails promotion of the key elements of good governance which includes social accountability, democracy, transparency, and rule of law among others. KINGFO was among the CSOs selected by the Inspectorate of Government to implement the Strengthening of Accountability and Anti-Corruption – STAAC component of the NUSAF III programme. The year 2019 was the second year of implementation of the project by KINGFO whereby one important activity was implemented;

#### *Training of Community Monitoring Groups – CMGs*

A total of about 249 members from 40 Community Monitoring Groups spread across NUSAF III water sheds in Kitgum and Lamwo were trained in the last two quarters of 2019. The training focused on procurement in sub projects, monitoring, detecting and reporting suspected fraud in sub projects. The groups have been deployed to monitor sub projects as well as public service delivery points in their vicinity. Follow up visits and application of the community scorecard was the next set of activities planned to be conducted with the CMGs.

*Again under the social accountability/governance component, the organization participated through a consortium to implement the project below.*

### **2.1.2.2 Health Service Monitoring Project – Result Based Financing – the MSH project**

KINGFO in consortium with GWED-G and Pader NGO Forum undertook a health service monitoring and advocacy project with funding MSH/WHO. The project is planned to be implemented in four

phases/milestones running from September 2019 to July 2020. Two milestones have so far been executed which included a baseline survey and dissemination of findings to relevant stakeholders. The next milestone in this research and advocacy themed project involves community dialogues with health service users in selected HC IIIs implementing the Result Based Financing approach in East Acholi. KINGFO staff will be involved in mobilizing as well as conducting the dialogues.

### **2.1.2.3 Monitoring of voter registration**

KINGFO was selected among a handful of CSOs across the country by CCEDU and UNNGOF to monitor the voter register update exercise for the upcoming 2021 elections. The exercise involved visiting update centers at parish level and monitoring aspects like turn out, security, functionality of equipment, participation of stakeholders, community/public awareness and support to vulnerable groups. A number of sub counties including Kitgum Municipality were sampled namely; Lagoro, Kitgum Matidi, Mucwini, Layamo, Amida and the three divisions of Kitgum Municipal Council. The exercise was conducted without incidence and even *extended* on two occasions to cater for members of the public who couldn't make it the first time.

### **2.1.2.4 Radio programme on governance**

KINGFO used this avenue as well to convey its messages of good governance. This was particularly done through participation in prime radio talk shows and airing of spots messages which tackled social accountability issues. Notably the Programme Coordinator participated in two talk shows which dealt with electoral democracy and corruption in Uganda on Tembo and Mighty FM respectively. Importantly the Project Assistant customary land rights project Mr. Opio Reno is a panelist on the prime Sunday radio talk show, Mighty Gang where a wide range of issues on social accountability are addressed. Lastly KINGFO run a set of three radio spots messages with support from GIZ-CUSP including one on anti-corruption which cautioned elected leaders and civil servants from engaging in the vice for over two months.

## **2.1.3 HUMAN RIGHTS**

### **2.1.3.1 The land rights project**

Under this equally crucial third component of KINGFO programming, the organization was in position to secure a land rights project through the Northern Uganda Human Rights Partnership. The project is appropriately titled *"The citizen engagement for the protection of community land in northern Uganda*

*project*". The project will run for two years from 2019-2020. In the first year of the project 2018/2019 the following activities were implemented;

*Documentary on land conflict in greater Palabek;*

This followed sustained engagement by KINGFO under the NUHRP to protect and promote the customary land rights of the people of Ayuu Alali, Paracelle, Padwat and Apyetta. These communities have for the past decade been hounded by questionable interest/actions of some state actors and private investors in their land. The land in question has been targeted for sugar plantation, forest reserve and an irrigation project among others. As part of its community land advocacy effort KINGFO documented the voices and videos of the affected people and local leaders in order to articulate the need for urgent redress to the impasse. A videographer was engaged who put together the compilation on DVD and online. The documentary was shared on social media plus other conventional media platforms where it generated much public awareness on the issues at hand as well as acted as a deterrent to the land grabbers.

*Community consultative meeting:*

As a buildup exercise to the petition though unplanned, the Forum conducted a consultative meeting for community stakeholders from Palabek Ogili and Kal to further discuss the plan to petition the LDLG Council and Parliament of Uganda on the protracted land question. The meeting attracted the Rwot of Padwat, local leaders (LCs and Councilors), Palabek Community Development Association members, Human Rights Volunteers/activists and community opinion leaders. The meeting resolved that the two August houses be petitioned with regards to the Nyimur Multipurpose Water Resource Project, the Horyal sugar cane plantation and the demarcation of Abera forest reserve.

*Petition of Lamwo District Local Government Council and Parliament of Uganda;*

Accordingly KINGFO has preferred in its land rights intervention the lawful and less confrontational approaches. As such the Forum under the NUHRP sponsored project supported the local community development association namely Palabek Community Development Association to write and submit petitions to the District Council and Parliament seeking to put an injunction on the land grabbing activities in the sub region as well as reverse land grabs that had taken place in the area. The petitions were written, submitted and debated by the respective August houses. Both August houses formed relevant investigative committees to visit the affected areas/communities to establish the facts on ground for their guidance and further action.

*Peaceful demonstration against attempted land grab;*

NUHRP supports organic and spontaneous peaceful demonstrations against human rights violation especially against attempts to grab communal/customary land. Financial support for this activity goes through the respective NUHRP partner in the affected area. The support is triggered when the need for this activity arises. In Palabek the community had exhausted all the other peaceful means (dialogue and litigation) of resolving existing land disputes with investors and government or its agents. So when some government agents including soldiers forcefully commenced demarcation of the ‘Apyetta Forest Reserve’ in Ogili Sub County the community rose up by marching and setting up barricades to disrupt an exercise they considered illegal. KINGFO being active in this land conflict hotspot through its HR volunteers supported the demonstrators by writing up placards, providing refreshments, transport, documentation etc.



*Figure 3 Apyetta anti-forest reserve demarcation protestors seated and being addressed by Hon. Minister Hilary Onek and LC V Chairperson Hon. John Ogwok in Palabek Ogili, Lamwo district*

*Mapping of major Land Disputes in Lamwo and Kitgum Districts.*

The Forum under the Land Rights Project came up with an initiative to map out and profile all land dispute cases in the two districts. This was done to enable the Forum to prioritize unresolved land disputes by identifying the most pressing ones to ensure that they are dealt with amicably in collaboration with traditional chiefs through the Alternative Dispute Resolutions approach. The district magistrate court and police are important allies and sources of information on land conflicts as they are the official agencies

charged with registering and arbitrating such cases. About six major land disputes involving large chunks of land and sometimes between clans have been mapped out awaiting KINGFO's intervention.

### **2.1.3.2 Human Rights Monitoring Documentation and Reporting - MDR**

#### *The case of an abused young girl in Lemo East ward*

The Forum through its Human Rights focal person under the Monitoring Documentation and Reporting – MDR of HR abuses and violations identified and documented a case of abuse of a young girl called Aber Linda, aged 12 years. The girl was under the care of her grandmother one Eserina Akumu in Lemo East ward, Alok Ki Winyo cell, Pager Division, Kitgum Municipality. The father, one Anywar Samson from Lapono in Agago District was already living with a second wife. The case was reported by Mr. Abala VK LC 1 Chairperson of the village/cell on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019 to KINGFO's office for redress. KINGFO took on the case, undertook the relevant documentation and shared with stakeholders including the district's Probation and Social Welfare Officer. Several visits were paid by KINGFO and the probation office to the girl's family for counseling and advice. To date the girl has restarted school and is on the track to recovery.

## **3.0 OTHER UNFUNDED ACTIVITIES THAT KINGFO WAS INVOLVED IN:**

### **3.1 PARTICIPATION IN DIALOGUES, WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS**

#### **3.1.1 District level stake holders meeting on Agoro Agu landscape platform**

The District Level Stake Holders Meeting on Agoro-Agu Landscape Platform Expansion was held on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 at Little Palace Kitgum Municipality. This landscape was earmarked in 2014 and was named Agoro- Agu Central Forest Reserve located in Agoro Sub County, Lamwo District. The expansion is expected to cover Lamwo, Kitgum, Agago and Pader districts. The Department of Wild Life and Ministry of Water and Environment shall be key stake holders in the process. There are 12 local Forest Reserves in the 04 Districts above. The reserves are found in Namokora, Orom, Kitgum Matidi, Labongo, Palabek kal, Padibe, Acholi bur and other sub counties. The AALPF is under Upper Nile Water Management Zone. The supporting body for the expansion is the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

#### **3.1.2 Workshop on corporate governance and tax compliance for CSOs;**

KINGFO was privileged to attend this workshop Kiira, Kampala which was organized by UNNGOF and CS BAG to address the challenge of compliance and poor governance among CSOs in the country. Apparently CSOs are promoters of good governance and rule of law which they can do quite well by being exemplary.

The training exercise covered the various elements of CSO compliance as provided for by law. Participants set themselves action targets to bridge existing compliance gaps in their respective organization within a specified timeframe after the workshop.

### **3.1.3 Regional workshop on education**

The Forum participated in a regional dialogue workshop on secondary education. The workshop was attended by a staff member and Board member in Gulu and the major focus was on improving academic performance in traditional secondary schools in Acholi Sub-Region. Relevant committees were formed to conduct an enquiry and initiate an advocacy drive on the matter.

### **3.1.4 Other important meetings and dialogues attended by KINGFO**

KINGFO participated in a number of these exercises including; two land dialogues on the proposed land amendment bill 2019 by Action Aid and Trocaire in Gulu; a dialogue on the implementation of the EU sponsored DINU program by CARE in Gulu; a review of the IG sponsored CRETA/STAAC program in Gulu and Kampala; NUHRP partnership review meeting; OSF consultative meeting in Kampala; a review of the OXFAM sponsored project – Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors – ELNHA; a dialogue on the proposed charcoal ordinance for Acholi sub region etc.

## **3.2 PROPOSAL WRITING**

KINGFO primarily mobilizes resource for its programme work through proposal writing from both solicited and unsolicited sources. Proposal writing is quite a competitive venture and its success rate is rather low. As such KINGFO ought to engage in a systematic and concerted effort to write fundable proposals which it attempted to do in the calendar year 2019 as follows;

- A proposal to GIZ on CSO coordination format was successfully written and agreed to by both KINGFO and the GIZ CUSP team. A 'change project' has been signed by KINGFO Program Coordination and the GIZ CUSP Gulu hub manager. The project is likely to last for at least three calendar years.
- Another proposal on Baraza has been submitted to GIZ and is being discussed for possible implementation in partnership with the office of the RDC.
- A proposal was written and submitted to the United Nation Democracy Fund – UNDEF on a project to secure CSO operating space. This was decidedly unsuccessful as no positive feedback was received on the submission made.

- Another proposal on Reproductive Health advocacy was written to Amplify Change – UK but could not be submitted due to lack of key documents like audit report.
- A proposal on making reusable sanitary pads as matter of *girl child rights* for school age going children/girls was written and submitted to the US Embassy in Uganda under the ambassador self-help grant. The effort to write this proposal was led by Alanyo Scovia a BRAC intern with the requisite skills in making reusable pads.

#### 4.0 PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS/COMMEMORATIONS

KINGFO is expected by development partners and the District Local Government to lead CSOs in commemorating International/national rights days. In the year 2019 KINGFO led CSOs/NGOs in numerous international day celebrations and made speeches on their behalf in three such occasions including the International Youth Day celebration, International Human Rights Day, International Women’s Day celebration and International Labor day. Nevertheless KINGFO was not in position to contribute resources towards these celebrations when called upon due to lack funds currently.

##### 4.1 Sixteen Days of Activism/International Human Rights Day

This is a defining commemoration for NGOs/CSOs which starts around 25<sup>th</sup> November and ends on 10<sup>th</sup> December with the Human Rights day celebration annually. In between there is commemoration of World Aids Day and implementation of a series of other activities including awareness creation through radio programs in what is referred to as *16 days of activism*. The Northern Uganda Memory and Documentation Center – NUMDC of RLP took lead in launching the commemoration, other partners played key roles in the World Aids Day commemoration, while others sponsored standalone activities within their project areas including radio talk shows.

KINGFO for its part played an active role in mobilizing CSOs and organizing preparatory meetings. The Forum played a major role in the Human Rights Day celebration which was belated for the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at Lumule parish in Kitgum Matidi Sub County. KINGFO provided the Public Address System on the occasion.

##### 4.2 International Labor Day celebration

The Forum also participated in the commemoration of the Labour Day which was conducted in Omiya Anyima sub county at Lajok Ogayo Primary school with the Theme; **“Improved Infrastructure Investment for employment opportunity”**. The Forum was also entrusted by the District Leadership to make a speech on behalf of all workers in the District.

#### 4.3 Day of the African Child

The Forum participated in the celebration of the Day of the African Child in Mucwini Sub County in Lagot Cugu Primary school. With the theme; **“Humanitarian Action in Africa: Children’s rights first”**.

#### 4.4 International Labor day celebrations

The Forum also participated in the commemoration of the Labour Day which was conducted in Omiya Anyima sub county at Lajok Ogayo Primary school with the Theme; **“Improved Infrastructure Investment for employment opportunity”**. The Forum was also entrusted by the District Leadership to make a speech on behalf of all workers in the District.

### 5.0 MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

#### 5.1 MANAGEMENT

1. Annual General Meeting; KINGFO membership had not convened an AGM since 2017 hence the Board/EC was eager to have the exercise conducted in 2019. The KDLG through office of the LC V also raised a red flag regarding this delay. Among others the planned 2019 AGM would look at electing new EC office bearers, scrutinizing of the 2016, 2017, and 2018 audited accounts of the organization and review of the general performance of the organization in accordance with its mission statement. Unfortunately the AGM could not be conducted because of resource limitations.

2. Quarterly Executive Committee meetings

Four Executive Committee meetings were planned for the year but only two were conducted owing lack of resources for the meetings. It was crucial that the third and fourth quarter meetings were conducted given the high volume of activities that needed the Executive Committee’s oversight. The key action points during the two quarterly EC meetings conducted included passing of the 2019 annual work plan and budget, asset recovery and disposal, staff recruitment and appraisal, and review of MoUs with funding partners. More details of these meetings can be seen in the minutes of the respective meetings in the Board file.

3. Board Sub Committee Meetings

None of the planned twelve subcommittee meetings was conducted due to lack of funding. This had wide ranging negative implications for programming and management of the organization as

decision making was concentrated only in the hands of the secretariat. The EC should closely provide oversight of the secretariat.

4. Annual Financial Audit

The financial audit for the previous year 2018 was not conducted due to funding limitations. Normally financial audit for a given year is conducted in the following year at least by the third month (March). In the calendar year 2020 two financial audits will be conducted for both 2018 and 2019 calendar years. Should the organization fail to conduct an external audit by a certified audit firm, an internal audit has to be conducted for the financial accounts of the organization by a qualified local auditor.

5. Program Review and evaluation; this is a fundamental element of program management that every organization needs to regularly undertake as part and parcel of program implementation. The organization accordingly planned to have a midterm review and end of year evaluation besides audit for the calendar year 2019. The review exercise is conducted internally whereas evaluation is normally done by an independent third party most times a hired consultant. Apparently these two exercises were not conducted due to limited resources and oversight by the management.

6. Strategic planning; KINGFO's master programme guiding instrument namely the strategic plan had run its course by the year 2019. It was therefore envisaged that another three year SP would be developed for the 2020 -2022 period in the course of calendar year 2019. This document was not developed let alone reviewed in 2019. The formulation and adoption of a successor SP is a matter of priority and should be done in 2020 without fail.

7. Writing and submission of quarterly reports (finance and program); all four quarterly reports were written and presented to the Executive Committee for their scrutiny and action.

## **5.2 Membership**

As earlier stated KINGFO with support from GIZ/EU embarked on a membership drive by profiling of CSOs/NGOs in order to update CSOs/NGOs register for Lamwo and Kitgum districts as well as assess capacity gaps for purposes of improvement.

In 2019 KINGFO experienced a bust of activities in the media and the community which drew the attention of both old and new CSOs/NGOs. Furthermore offices of the National NGO Bureau, the Municipal CDO, the Kitgum DCDO and that of the RDC embarked on journey to profile and ascertain the status of all CSOs/NGOs operating the district. These offices turned to KINGFO to get the often elusive information on

CSOs/NGOs which organization ably provided. The above events and exercises set the stage for a boost in the membership position of KINGFO in 2019 relative to the past few years. Five registered members subscribed and ten new ones registered which is remarkable for a single year. The following new CBOs/NGOs/FBOs were registered as members of KINGFO in 2019;

1. Kitgum Evangelical Foundation – KEF
2. Palabek United Farmers’ Association
3. CHEPI Uganda
4. Christian Community Resource Center
5. Comforter of the Afflicted Home – CAFH
6. Faith Mission Child Development Center
7. Nile Anatole Mission Uganda
8. The Green Ribbon Foundation
9. Youth for the Future Foundation
10. Mucwini Integrated Youth Network – MIYA

### 5.3 Financial audit

KINGFO had not done financial audit for 2016 and 2017. In February 2019 an audit Firm Bawunha & Badebye CPA was contracted to undertake financial audit for 2016 and 2017. This audit firm was previously contracted by KINGFO to do financial audits. The audit reports were particularly required for commercial suitability assessment by GIZ before the signing of MoU. The last installment is yet to be paid to the auditors. As a practice financial audit for a given year is conducted in the subsequent year i.e. 2020.

## 6.0 ADMINISTRATION

### 6.1 Fortnightly staff meeting

For the year 2019, twenty four (24) meetings were planned and over three quarters of the meetings were conducted. The staff meetings were chaired by the Programme Coordinator and attended by all members of staff except the support staff who only attended on special occasions. The meetings deliberated on weekly action points, arising issues at operational and management levels, staff welfare, and coordination with partners among others. The few planned staff meetings that were not conducted was due to increased field engagements by staff during some weeks. Further details of the staff meetings can be found in relevant minutes kept in the secretariat file.

## 6.2 Personnel:

KINGFO in 2019 had a commendable number and quality of personnel that was categorized into three groups namely programme staff, management/administrative staff and support staff. All the possible job positions at the Forum were filled up by either a paid staff or a volunteer. In total KINGFO signed service/employment contracts ranging from three-month to one year contract with all 13 staff members who worked for the Forum in 2019.

The staff employed included the Programme Coordinator – Mr. Babu Robert, the Accountant – Nyeko Brian, Project Officer, customary land rights project - Nokrach Solomon Oscar/Lakot Lily/Opio Reno, Community Trainers – Otoo Jimmy, Kilama Ben, Atim Proscovia Jessica, Lakot Lily/Jimmy Katumba, Volunteer Project Assistant, GIZ sponsored NGO coordination project – Lakot Lily/Okello Ronald Reagand, volunteer Accounts Assistant – Lajara Sunday Brenda, intern – Alanyo Scovia, part time driver Canlit Livingstone, Askari – Olanya Audo, and office assistant – Daphne Otai/Apenya Brenda.

Staff engagement and motivation was a big challenge in 2019 due to low and irregular pay. Though the staff and volunteer contracts signed were clear, members expected to always get a payment at the end of the month which was not forthcoming for most months. This caused disengagement and sometimes conflicts. Staff turnover remained high across the year hence undermining the effort to revive the Forum. Nevertheless in 2019 the staff feeding program was introduced where break tea and lunch were provided on week days especially in the second half of the year.

## 6.3 Staff capacity building

- **In-house training:** this approach is quite healthy for a growing/learning organization like KINGFO. In-house training ensures sharing of knowledge and development of facilitation skills. One such training was on the Citizens' Voice and Action – CVA approach by Mr. Odokonyero Brian of LUTWOC<sup>1</sup> a member of KINGFO and seasoned CVA facilitator with World Vision Uganda. The approach is anticipated for implementation of the Baraza project currently being discussed with GIZ.
- The other training was by intern (Alanyo Scovia), a BRAC scholar, on making re-usable sanitary pads. More in-house refresher training for the CRETA Community Trainers and on Human Rights Monitoring, Reporting and Documentation are scheduled.

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<sup>1</sup> Lubanga Twero Widows and Orphans' Care

- Upon his recruitment Nyeko Brian was invited for a Quick Book training organized by the Northern Uganda Human Rights Partnership – NUHRP secretariat at GWED-G in Gulu. This capacity is important in the accounts department as a matter of donor preference and also a more efficient and effective way of book keeping for an organization
- Five KINGFO staff participated in a UNHR sponsored three day training on the Human Rights mechanisms in early February at Pelican Motel in Kitgum Town. The training was facilitated by the regional UNHR program Officer based in Gulu, the regional UHRC manager for Acholi sub region and the country representative UNHR Uganda.
- Lastly KINGFO was invited to Arua by Inspectorate of Government – STAAC program for training on civil society monitoring of government program with respects to the Disaster Response in Displacement Impact Program, DR DIP which is being implemented in districts with refugee settlements. The training follows the one done earlier for community trainers for monitoring the NUSAF III project. Two of KINGFO’s volunteers, Ms. Atim Proscovia Jessica and Mr. Kilama Ben were co-opted to attend the training together with the Program Coordinator – as their supervisor. The project will be implemented in Lamwo districts.

#### **6.4 Physical assets:**

Through the procurement and asset disposal subcommittee, the organization disposed of one of its old (nonfunctional) generator HONDA and a DT motorcycle. These two assets fetched 600 K UGX and 1.4 M UGX respectively. They were disposed of through competitive public bidding/auction according to established policy. The funds generated were deposited on the organization’s accounts and utilized as per policy.

KINGFO recovered two laps from former employees Akot Lydia Achan and Achan Betty Charity who had them in their custody and at a technician’s respectively. The lap top from Lydia KNF/LCP/06 was returned in good condition but the one from Charity was completely damaged with the mother-board totally crushed.

The organization was in position to acquire two internet routers, one for Africell and another for MTN. The one for AFRICELL was bought from reserves and the MTN router was procured and supplied by GIZ-CUSP under the direct procurement arrangement. Find attached the asset register of KINGFO for more details on the status of physical assets of KINGFO in 2019.

#### **6.5 Finances:**

KINGFO received most of its funding for the year from the OSF project, the IG-CRETA project and the GIZ sponsored project. KINGFO also registered a significantly higher collection of locally raised revenue (membership and subscription fees) during the year than the previous years. The organization also dispose of some it un-deployable assets as mentioned earlier.

KINGFO was in position to meet all planned project expenses as well as most of its administrative expenses. The administrative and management expenditure were largely unfunded in the annual budget 2019. As such some critical expenditure like rent was not fully paid (December was not paid) for the twelve months of the year. See details of the organization's financial accounts in the financial report of 2019/annex.

#### **6.6 Affiliations, legal status and other statutory obligations:**

The ministry of internal affairs and the NGO Bureau undertook a validation exercise of all NGOs in the country within the reporting period. The validation exercise was done online of which KINGFO could not log in due to technicalities. Eventually KINGFO made physical submission (hard copies) of her credentials and was furnished by the authority with a set of new three-year registration permit and certificate currently hung in the Programme Coordinator's office. KINGFO was not in position to pay its subscription to key umbrella bodies like the Uganda National NGO Forum - UNNGOF, DENIVA or CCEDU in 2020 due to funding limitations. However KINGFO took part in the Regional Advocacy Network and Regional Budget Group activities sponsored by UNNGFO and CS-BAG respectively.

KINGFO is yet to file its annual return to the National NGO Bureau for the year 2019. This is a fundamental aspect of compliance that every NGO especially KINGFO should ensure at the end of every calendar year.

## **7.0 SUCCESS STORIES/ACHIEVEMENTS, LESSONS LEARNT/CHALLENGES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 SUCCESS STORIES/ACHIEVEMENTS**

- a. KINGFO in collaboration with NUHRP supported Palabek Community Development Association – PACODA to petition LDLG and the Parliament of Uganda on the relentless attempts by state connected elites and some district leaders to grab community land. The petitions were tabled in the August houses for deliberation and two teams of law makers from both houses have been formed and tasked with doing investigation on the matter in the affected community. This development has brought the matter into the public limelight and the perpetrators are now eager to put things right by catering community rights and interests (a draft MoU is in the offing).

- b. In the IG-CRETA project, corrupt practices of some NUSAF facilitators and district officials were exposed and public resources in several sub projects were saved/recovered. An example of this recovery was in a road project (labor intensive public works category) in Palabek Ogili Sub County. The Community Score Card approach helped to identify gaps in service delivery at parish/sub county level and setting of joint action points which were eventually acted upon hence improvement in those specific service delivery in the affected areas.
- c. Restoration of confidence and trust in KINGFO's ability as a CSO leader in the district is also a development noteworthy. Previously, from 2015 - 2017, KINGFO had lost a lot of credibility among CSOs and was continuously coming under scrutiny of the district authorities. At the beginning of the year the office of the LC V Chairperson penned a letter questioning KINGFO's governance and whether or not the organization's Board and management was in disarray. Which was partly true. A reply was written by the Chairperson Board explaining the gaps. In addition to the reply the Secretariat embarked on a process of relationship building with the key offices of the LC V Chairperson, the RDC, the CAO and the DCDO through sharing of reports, having joint activities, mobilization of NGOs and holding coordination meetings.  
Towards the end of 2019, the district had regained confidence in the Forum as demonstrated by their repeated calls to NGOs to subscribe with KINGFO as a matter of obligation. KINGFO is however aware that its membership is voluntary and does not therefore force any CBO/NGO to register with it, but this gesture of goodwill by the district goes to show the amount of trust they had put back in the Forum by end of 2019.
- d. The other success registered by the Forum in 2019 was the resumption of regular coordination meeting of CSOs. This is a primary role of KINGFO that was increasingly being lost to the district local government. Instead KINGFO was co-opted by the district to mobilize NGOs for their monthly coordination meeting sponsored by UNICEF in the social sector. Nevertheless with funding from GIZ, KINGFO started convening monthly CSO only coordination meeting that will continue in 2020 along an agreed upon coordination format/TOR. Three meetings were held in the last quarter of 2019 which looked at the coordination TOR and CSO compliance with government statutory provisions among others.
- e. KINGFO was able to repair/restore its parked/broken car to a functional state within the period. The car had been parked due to mechanical breakdown for three to four years and was due for disposal. The car was deployed for field activities under the MSH project and during the Community Score Card implementation in the CRETA project.

- f. The introduction of the staff feeding program towards the end of 2019 was a great morale booster for staff members. Most KINGFO staff in 2019 were either on low pay or were total volunteers. It was not uncommon for staff members to work on empty stomachs from 8:00am to 5:00pm. This situation impacted negatively on staff performance, attendance and morale hence the launch of the feeding program. With the feeding program running, it was noted that staff could finish their assignments on time and come up with initiatives to advance the program of the Forum.

## 7.2 CHALLENGES/LESSONS IN 2019

- a. *Inability to conduct all EC meetings*; four quarterly EC meetings were planned for 2019 but only two (first and second) quarter meetings were conducted. All eight planned subcommittee meetings were not conducted which made it impossible for departmental activities especially in programs and finances to be scrutinized by the oversight body. This gap deprived the secretariat of an opportunity to put safeguards that could have forestalled unnecessary leakages in the finance department.
- b. *Inadequate staff salary*; the core staff of the organization including the Programme Coordinator and Accountant were paid meagre salaries in 2019. Due to limited funding, the organization had to fill some staffing vacancies with volunteers who also needed some sort of motivation like stipends. However volunteer stipends were not forthcoming for most months which undermined their motivation and work engagement.
- c. *Failure to conduct audit and AGM*; as a matter of policy every year the organization has got to audit its financial accounts as well as the Annual General Meeting. In the AGM the organization's gets to provide relevant annual accountability for its activities, change Executive Committee members (in election year every two years), and renews the mandate of management to continue providing stewardship to the organization. **The leadership of KDLG in early 2019 cautioned the organization to undertake these democratic processes which they rightfully thought was long overdue.**
- d. *Failure to conduct annual programme review and evaluation*; as earlier mentioned, the failure to conduct these two activities deprived KINGFO's programming during the year with much needed critical analysis and guidance. The planned M&E activities are meant to keep the organization on course as per Key Performance Indicators.
- e. The un-willingness among some donors to support administrative costs such as rent of the organization. This trend in donor funding leaves small local organizations like KINGFO stretched

beyond limit. Administrative costs are fundamental cost centers for any organization to operate normally. This situation put the organization in an awkward position of having to scrape around for resources to meet these crucial expenditures.

- f. Late disbursement of funds by donors makes funded activity implementation skewed towards the end of the year. The resultant uneven distribution of workload in the course of the year undermined implementation of the approved annual work plan and budget of the organization.

### **7.3 BEST PRACTICES EMPLOYED IN 2019**

- a. KINGFO's partnership with Mighty and Tembo FM to sponsor their prime weekend talk shows was a game changer in the year. KINGFO negotiated with the radio stations to sponsor Mighty Gang and Kacokke Madit respectively.
- b. The collaboration with other partners including the private sector (KOMATSE Bus Company) to facilitate the petition team in their travel to meet the speaker of Parliament in December 2019 ensured adequate resource mobilization for the exercise.
- c. The idea of working with volunteers to fill staffing gaps in the organization has been a remarkable feat. KINGFO was able to work with qualified and experienced volunteers at minimal pay (stipend). Apparently some donors like GIZ don't have payment provision for personnel assigned to the project.

### **7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2020 AND BEYOND**

- a. Engage funding partners to make them give due consideration to important costs like personnel and administrative costs.
- b. Ensure timely submission of narrative progress reports and accountabilities such that donors are given adequate opportunity to give feedback and disburse the subsequent instalment of funds.
- c. KINGFO should strive to establish an institutional home for the Forum to avoid the exorbitant cost of rent that the organization has to pay currently.
- d. The organization should invest in social enterprises with guidance from GIZ to complement its current funding sources.
- e. The Board and Secretariat of the organization should make sure institutional, management and governance processes of the organization as provided for in the policy instruments are adhered to. These processes include EC and subcommittee meetings, financial audit, program review/evaluation – M&E and Annual General Meeting among others.

- f. Double the effort in resource mobilization through strategic and tactful proposal writing through consortia and networking.