



Greetings from Kampala, Uganda.

CHARM was well represented in Naivasha, Kenya, by our Coordinator, Maria Kaddu, in a three-day training on the Universal Peer Review (UPR) process. The meeting brought together Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) from East and Southern Africa and provided an excellent networking opportunity. It also allowed for reflection on the successes of CIVICUS in supporting grassroots organizations leading the UPR process.

CHARM submitted a proposal to the Digital Development Initiative (DDI) and SIDA, key funders for the consortium. We are in the advanced stages of the application process and are hopeful for a positive outcome.

Seven months in, it's been quite a journey with many ups and downs. We've been putting in the effort, and the results are already starting to show. In June, the coordination team presented their work at the Defend Defenders mid-year staff retreat. It was a great opportunity for reflection, as the staff recognized and appreciated the progress they've seen in CHARM. They particularly noted the team's intentional efforts to ensure that all DD members understand the consortium's mission, its partners, and the scope of its work.

The Coordination Team.



Part of the coordination team at the DefendDefenders Staff retreat that took place in June, 2024. The meeting was a nice reflection point for CHARM, and also an appreciation as to how far we have come as a consortium.



HRDS in Eastern and Southern Africa trained on UPR process

From 5-6th June, 2024 Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) from Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, South Africa, and Rwanda gathered in Naivasha, Kenya, for a training session on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process. Organized by CIVICUS, the Centre for Minority Rights Development (CEMIRIDE), and DefendDefenders under the CHARM consortium, the training aimed to enhance the HRDs' advocacy skills and deepen their understanding of the UPR process.

The training provided comprehensive knowledge about the UPR process, including preparation, submission, and follow-up on recommendations. Experts shared best practices and strategies for effective advocacy, ensuring participants gained actionable insights and skills to implement UPR recommendations in their respective countries. Uganda's model of organizing CSOs into thematic clusters for UPR report submission was showcased as a best practice, highlighting its effectiveness in providing comprehensive coverage of issues and improving report quality. Participants were encouraged to adopt similar models to enhance their UPR submissions and follow-up actions.

To maintain the momentum, each organization was urged to develop structured follow-up plans, including regular check-ins and mentorship programs. Continuous monitoring and reporting on the implementation of UPR recommendations were emphasized as crucial. Additionally, sharing best practices and utilizing the advocacy toolkit provided by CIVICUS will further strengthen collective efforts.



Participants at the UPR training in Naivasha, Kenya. The training provided an opportunity for HRDs to network and build stronger relationships. Participants shared their lived experiences, challenges, and successes, creating a supportive community ready to engage in future UPR activities. The event fostered a sense of camaraderie and mutual support, essential for the continuous advocacy needed in the UPR cycle.



RFLD sends delegation to GIMAC

At CHARM, our mission is centered on women empowerment and the integration of gender equality. Our partners are dedicated to ensuring that women have a seat at the table where important conversations take place. In July, the Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement (RFLD) will send a 13-person delegation to participate in the upcoming 6th Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) African Union Strategic Engagement in Accra, Ghana, from 12 – 15 July, 2024. This prestigious event focuses on achieving gender equality and educational sustainability in Africa.

Led by RFLD Senior Officer in charge of partnerships, John Gbenagnon, the delegation comprises a dynamic mix of government officials and CSO representatives. Thanks to CHARM funding, five young women activists under 30 will be part of the delegation, bringing fresh perspectives and energy to the conversation. The presence of key government officials will ensure a strong link between policy and action, while CSO representatives will strengthen the civil society voice for change.

“We believe empowering young women is crucial. This funding amplifies their voices and ensures they have a seat at the table,” said Mr. Gbenagnon.

All delegates will benefit from full coverage of travel, accommodation, and daily expenses. This opportunity will allow them to represent their constituencies, contribute to discussions, and network with influential leaders and stakeholders.



Part of the delegation that will be attending the GIMAC training in Accra, Ghana.

“This funding is about investing in the next generation. We equip them with the knowledge, skills, and connections to drive change,”

*John Gbenagnon.
RFLD Senior Program Manager*



WCJ hosts workshop on community radio governance, sustainability, and viability

Media development is crucial for improving civic space across sub-Saharan Africa, and our partners are actively working towards this goal. On 24 -26th June, 2024, the Wits Centre for Journalism held a three-day workshop focusing on community radio governance, sustainability, and viability.

The workshop examined the current state of the industry, particularly post-COVID-19, and explored strategies to strengthen the sector. Key areas of discussion included creating effective systems for community radio hubs as platforms for collaborative resource generation at the provincial level and leveraging collective resources for government-sponsored programs.

Florence Kikine, SABC Media Strategy Manager: Sales Division, spoke to delegates about informed approaches to monetizing different platforms to generate revenue for the community radio sector, including exploring podcast content for revenue generation.

Morio Sanyane, PowerFM Head of News, facilitated a session on how high-quality radio programming and content can enhance a station's marketing and sales outcomes, thereby improving sustainability. "There is always a disjuncture between marketing and quality programming in the radio industry, and even worse within the community radio sector. Such a disconnect makes it difficult for radio stations to attract funding and clients," Sanyane explained.

The session also featured Julia Sham-Guild, Head of Legal and Regulatory Affairs at the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). NAB aims to foster a sustainable and robust broadcasting system in South Africa and regularly engages with policymakers and regulators to promote a level playing field and an industry grounded in the principles of democracy, diversity, and freedom of expression.



Part of the delegates at the Wits center for Journalism who met to discuss issues around community radio governance and sustainability.

"Community radio challenges have evolved over time, with the sector grappling with financial and technological sustainability, as well as regulatory and governance issues,"

*Lerato Makate,
Citizen Justice Network coordinator*



ABOUT CHARM

CONSORTIUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND MEDIA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (CHARM) aims to promote and protect human rights, civic space and media freedoms in Sub-Saharan Africa.

CHARM is a partnership of CIVICUS, Civil Rights Defenders, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Institute, The Wits Centre for Journalism, Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement, and Magamba Network.

The partnership acknowledges the role that a free and active media and civil society have in the protection of robust democracies and the promotion of national development.

CHARM is funded by:



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