



Young Heroes Executive Director Khulekani Magongo making his remarks.



Young Heroes Executive Director Khulekani Magongo, Ministry of Justice Principal Secretary Lindiwe Mbingo and Eswatini Legal Aid Director Lungile Magagula with stakeholders in a group picture.



The stakeholders in a discussion.

Young Heroes hails Legal Aid partnership

BY PHINDILE NGWENYA
Mbabane

YOUNG Heroes Executive Director Khulekani Magongo says the partnership with Legal Aid Eswatini will strengthen the prevention and response efforts to community and school-based violence cases.

Young Heroes entered into a cooperation agreement with the ministry of justice and constitutional affairs, on behalf of Legal Aid Eswatini.

Magongo said the partnership would enhance access to clinical, social and legal post-violence care services, as well as empower communities to address harmful norms that contribute to HIV risk and strengthening the capacity of government entities to lead in GBV.

The partnership between young heroes and legal aid, according to Magongo, will also significantly enhance the ability to provide comprehensive assistance to orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC), adolescent girls and young women, who are survivors of violence

by giving access to legal advice, document preparation, court representation and community sensitisation on pertinent legal matters.

"This will give hope to those who have endured unimaginable hardships, than just being a formal agreement between organisations.

"It underscores our collective commitment to ensuring that every young person, regardless of their circumstances, has access to justice, support, and opportunities for a brighter future," Magongo said.

PRINCIPAL Secretary in the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Lindiwe Mbingo believes that access to justice is a fundamental component of people's development.

Mbingo said this during the signing of the memorandum of understanding between Eswatini Legal Aid and Young Heroes on Friday.

She said this aligned with His Majesty's vision of improving the lives of Eswatini by ensuring that all individuals have access to services that enhance their standard of living.

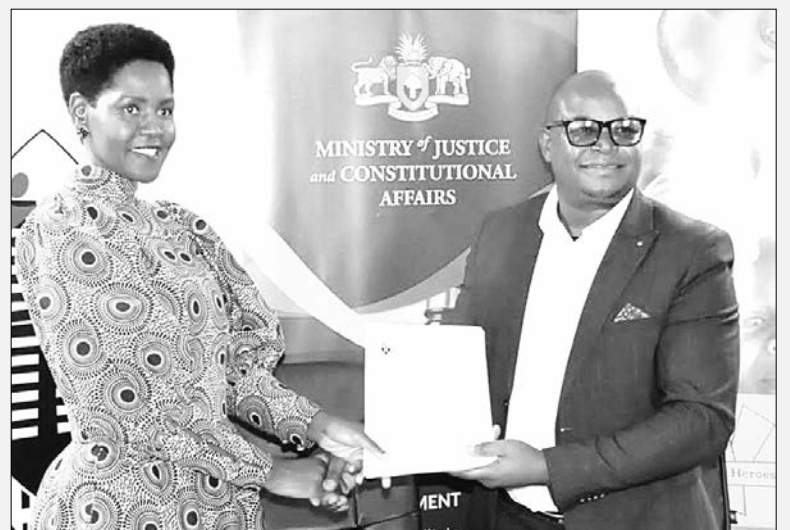
"The partnership between the two institutions will greatly contribute to the Legal Aid office's identification and addressing of the needs of vulnerable youth in the country," said Mbingo. This, she said, would be possible by adoption of a human rights-based approach. The office, according to Mbingo, would ensure that the specific needs of the most vulnerable individuals were addressed.

Elaborating, she said it would also provide the opportunity for better understanding of the unique vulnerabilities of the youth in realising the benefits of the justice system.

"As a ministry, we are thrilled by the remarkable progress made by the Legal Aid office since its launch in August 2023. The agreement between the two institutions aligns with the ministry's ongoing efforts to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals are not left behind in the justice processes", she said.

The PS also noted the primary focus of Young Heroes as a key stakeholder in empowering young people to combat gender-based violence (GBV)

Access to justice fundamental for people's development – PS



PS Lindiwe Mbingo and Magongo during the MoU signing ceremony.. (Pics: Phindile Ngwenya)

and ensuring access to justice for vulnerable youth.

She said the ministry was currently developing its strategic plan for the next five years, with a particular focus on aligning its objectives with government's national development programmes.

"One of the key areas of emphasis within this strategic plan is ensuring access to justice for all citizens," she said. Explaining, she said by recognising the importance of justice as a fundamental human right, the ministry wanted to address existing gaps and challenges in the justice system through comprehensive and targeted

interventions. She said this strategic plan would prioritise the establishment and enhancement of mechanisms that facilitate access to justice for all segments of society, particularly marginalised and vulnerable groups.

"Special attention will be given to addressing barriers faced by disadvantaged groups, such as women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, and those living in remote areas," she said. The ministry, according to Mbingo, was optimistic that the collaboration with Young Heroes would yield positive results and propel it towards achieving access to justice for the most vulnerable members of society.

58% Emaswati want to benefit from legal aid

A legal aid baseline survey conducted in 2022 by the ministry of justice and constitutional affairs indicated that about 58 per cent of Emaswati want to benefit from legal aid.

The findings were that Emaswati, mostly marginalised groups including women, people with disabilities and youth, find the cost of legal representation unaffordable, which impacted their ability to defend their rights.

In this survey, about 58 per cent of Emaswati had stated their desire to benefit from some form of legal assistance while 40 per cent had singled out legal representation as the type of assistance they would have benefited from.

Following these findings, the ministry of justice and constitutional affairs, supported by the United Nations Development Programme, established the Eswatini Legal Aid.

Legal Aid Director Lungile Magagula stated that they had rolled out their services by focusing on four thematic areas, namely; legal information and awareness, advice and referrals, mediation, as well as legal assistance, which includes representation.

Magagula added that for the public to access legal aid, they had to apply, and each case would be assessed based on the need and available resources.

"Legal aid services cover different legal

issues, including criminal, civil, family, administrative and other common issues," she said.

According to Magagula, since its launch in August 2023, the Legal Aid office had made remarkable progress in operationalising its overarching objective of providing legal assistance to those who are indigent and marginalised.

Magagula said she believed that partnerships with other organisations would provide the foundation and structure for all possibly anticipated interactions related to legal aid services, information, training or human capital development, and resource sharing as well as outlining areas of cooperation on legal matters.



Tender invitation for the procurement of the following item for the Taiwan Technical Mission:

- 1) A batch of pig feeds include Weaner 150 bags, Grower 700 bags, Finisher 90 bags, Sow & Boar 600 bags and Lactating 90 bags. The size of bag is 50kg.

The completed tender item should be delivered in a sealed envelope to the TTM Matsapha Farm reception or email before **1:00pm, 07 May 2024**.

The envelope should be addressed to: Pig Industry Enhancement Project 2 in Eswatini, Taiwan Technical Mission.

NOTES:

The tenderer should be the animal millers in Eswatini. For more information, please contact: **Henry 2518 8814/ 7971 2691/ 7652 3038**