

RLP AWARDS CERTIFICATES TO REFUGEES, POLICE AND IMMIGRATION OFFICERS

On Friday 26 August, 2011, the Refugee Law Project (RLP) awarded certificates to 167 refugees who had successfully completed the English for Adults (EFA) programme. The EFA programme is specifically designed for refugees from non-English speaking countries to be able to speak their rights.



Comm Felix Ndyomugenyi receiving certificates on behalf of other commissioners

At the same function, 32 immigration officers and 98 police officers were also awarded certificates in Refugee Law and Human Rights. The ceremony took place at the RLP offices in Old Kampala.

The immigration officers were selected and trained from border entry points in Western and Eastern Uganda while the police officers were from strategic selected police stations in Kampala.

The Refugee Coordinator at the United States Embassy in Kampala Mr. Gregory Shaw, congratulated participants on their achievement. He said the US Government is committed to supporting refugees in Uganda. He appreciated the work of the Refugee Law Project, Office of the Prime Minister, the Immigration department and Police throughout the country for ensuring that forced migrants are provided with protection. He noted that he was proud to partner with RLP and to specifically fund the EFA programme.



Guest of Honour Gregor Shaw delivering his speech

The Director, Refugee Law Project, Dr. Chris Dolan, thanked the US Embassy for the funding that provided a bigger space for the EFA programme. He thanked the police for involving RLP in the community policing programme. He noted that the joint community policing has strengthened relationships between the police and RLP and also improved the handling of forced migrants' cases.

He also thanked the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) for their commitment to train EFA Facilitators.

Dr. Chris Dolan encouraged the learners to continue with the programme through songs, testimonies and drama as demonstrated in their performance during the event. He also thanked the Finnish Refugee Council for financing the EFA curriculum development and manual.

The Head of Education and Training Department at RLP, Ms Winfred Agabo was happy to note that, 6 grandaunts had enrolled for professional courses at Makerere University, Kampala International University and St. Lawrence University in Uganda. One student managed to secure a full scholarship for an online master's degree offered by a university in Spain. 25 of the grandaunts got jobs at construction sites, supermarkets and restaurants. Some operate small businesses like restaurants.

She noted that the RLP training manual has been incorporated into the police training curriculum for the cadets and constables at the National Police Training School.

Ms Agabo noted that RLP has empowered police officers with best practices to handle offences created under the Refugee Act 2006, to advise forced migrants appropriately on the procedures of seeking asylum, as well as offences with protection dimensions.

The occasion was graced by several performances by the EFA grandaunts such as drama, poems, dances, songs and testimonies. These activities were performed in the English language to show the level of their proficiency.



EFA students dance group



A grandaunt recites a poem



A student plays a guitar during a presentation



A grandaunt reads an appreciation note