



IPHR member, Yves, at the Legal Aid Clinic

Work Overview

During the months of June through August 2012, I worked with Initiatives for Peace and Human Rights (IPHR) in Rwanda to accomplish the following goals:

1. Increase the international awareness of IPHR's activities and future goals through video production, newsletters, blog posts, social media, and networking
2. Redesign and update the IPHR web site
3. Review and refine IPHR's 2011-2015 Strategic Plan
4. Work with IPHR on the development of a Mobile Legal Aid Clinic
5. Work with IPHR on the development of a Family Mediation Center
6. Create a structure for the accommodation of future IPHR interns

Work Accomplished – In Detail

With the support of The Advocacy Project (AP), IPHR and I worked together to accomplish the following:

1. Increase the international awareness of IPHR's activities and future goals

The purpose of increasing IPHR's international awareness is to subsequently also increase IPHR's support system and functional capacity. With this end goal in mind, I spent a large percentage of my time working with IPHR to increase their online presence and to broaden their professional network.

Regarding IPHR's online presence, my efforts were divided among [documenting IPHR's work online](#), creating and routinely updating IPHR's Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr accounts, and producing a video of IPHR's work. In total, 20 blogs were posted that detail both the extremely valued work of IPHR and the culture in which IPHR serves. 82 photos were also edited and

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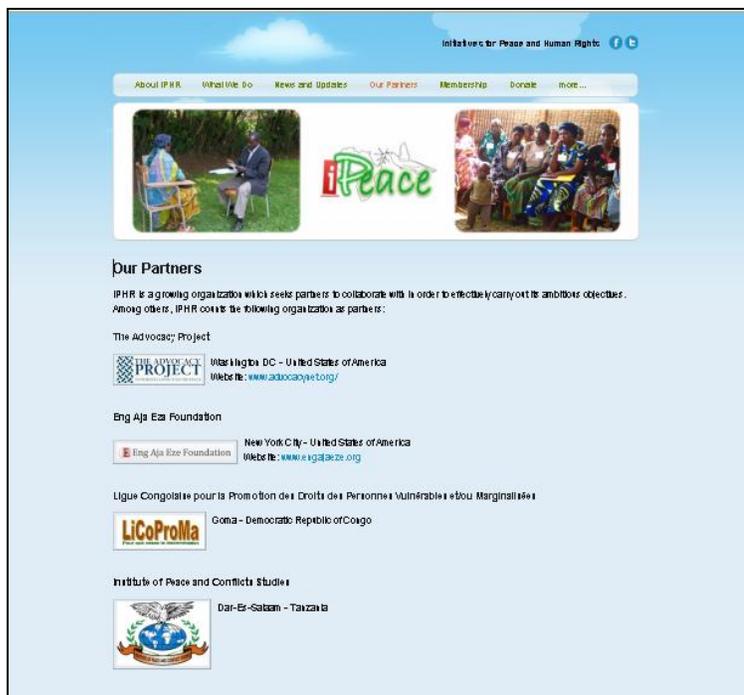
posted on various internet sites – including AP’s Flickr page, IPHR’s web site, Facebook, and the AP website. Regarding video production, one video was produced, documenting [the story of a woman](#) receiving legal advice from IPHR. To date, this video has received 128 views, and will hopefully receive more in time. Additional videos are in the works.

In addition to broadening IPHR’s online presence, I also helped to broaden IPHR’s professional network. To accomplish this goal, I linked IPHR to a newly-evolving central database of Rwanda-based NGOs as well as reached out to fellow colleagues whose company goals aligned with those of IPHR. Dialogue between many of these colleague connections and IPHR is ongoing, with the hope that valuable knowledge and insight will continue to be exchanged.

2. Redesign and update the IPHR web site

A large portion of July was spent on redesigning [IPHR’s web site](#). The IPHR web site is now organized into easy-to-navigate web pages that boast more photos and concisely written content. A Blog, Bio pages, and social media tools (Flickr, Twitter, Facebook) have also been added to IPHR’s web site to facilitate greater communication of their goals and mission.

IPHR’s web site redesign has been successful in terms of increasing internet traffic. The web site redesign, in collaboration with strong email/social media-based publicity, has increased IPHR site traffic from an average of 10 visitors per day (pre-redesign) to an average of 40 visitors per day (post- redesign). Furthermore, to ensure sustainability of the web site, I worked with one IPHR member to train him on how to manage and edit the web site.



The IPHR web site

3. Review and refine IPHR's 2011-2015 Strategic Plan

During my internship with IPHR, I was also asked to conduct a full review of IPHR's 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. My completed review included suggestions on content edits and formatting edits. I also highlighted the importance of including a gaps analysis and including more immediate objectives. The suggestions proposed in this review were made with the goal of ensuring that IPHR's distributable Strategic Plan clearly communicates to all audiences the organization's mission, vision, goals and strategy.

4. Work with IPHR on the development of a Mobile Legal Aid Clinic

In order to demonstrate to donors the need for a Mobile Legal Aid Clinic, I interviewed several Legal Aid Clinic lawyers and beneficiaries. The film, [Meet Mukamuhire](#), is one finished product designed to demonstrate the need for a Mobile Legal Aid Clinic. Other interviews were conducted but, to date, these documents remain internal.

Unfortunately, due to the political conditions between Rwanda and DRC, the funding that IPHR had previously received for the development of this Mobile Legal Aid Clinic was withdrawn. In the future, I hope to continue assisting IPHR as they look for other means to realize this much needed facility.

5. Work with IPHR on the development of a Family Mediation Center

During my time with IPHR, I also helped to develop a Mediation Center that will solve disputes in a cheaper (which is very needed by the poor in Rwanda), faster (removing the need to wait for court availability), and legally-defensible (as all decisions made in mediation are protected by law) manner. Towards the realization of this center, I worked with IPHR to flesh out the purpose, importance and implementation details of this project so that this vital information can be clearly communicated to potential funders.

In addition to helping plan the Mediation Center, I also created a training manual on successful mediation practices which IPHR members may use as a reference.

6. Create a structure for the accommodation of future IPHR interns

In the future, IPHR hopes to welcome two new interns each year. As the first IPHR International Intern, I was tasked with creating a how-to manual for future interns. Thus, during my time with IPHR, I created an [Internship Guide](#) that will help future interns prepare for and enjoy their time with IPHR. Throughout this next year, I will also work with IPHR to recruit future interns.

Personal Experience and Reflections

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Rwanda. Even during the difficult times, walking outside in Kigali's streets always cleared my mind and kept me focused.

IPHR was excellent about including me in their work and making sure I remained connected. In addition to the human rights trainings I attended in June (see First Report), I also attended two other human rights trainings – one for abused women and one for widows – as well as numerous consultations where IPHR offered free legal advice to community members.



Waiting to receive free legal advice from IPHR

Furthermore, IPHR asked me to travel to Goma, DRC, to cover the work of IPHR's partner organization, LiCoProMa. I do not fully have words for [my time in Goma](#) as I have not yet sorted through all of my thoughts since my return to the US, but I can definitively say that it was a life changing experience.



IDP camp just outside of Goma, DRC, where LiCoProMa serves young women

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I am forever thankful to IPHR, The Advocacy Project, and the Jessica Jennifer Cohen Foundation for making my time in Rwanda a reality. During this past internship, I was able to use my knowledge in helping a very worthy cause, to gain a vast amount of insight into Rwanda, and to establish some lasting friendships. Looking back, I could not be happier about my time in Rwanda.

I plan to continue working with IPHR and to keep the personal relationships I have made strong well into the future.