

## ‘ Development Tools for Strategic Pro Bono’ (APBVC & A2J Exchange) 26 September 2020

### A. Case study – to be read in advance of the workshop

This note outlines a case study which we will refer to and work on during the workshop. Please read this case study in advance.

#### Case study

- Country:

Located in West Asia, the Republic of Viramar acceded independence in 1991. Adopted in 1994, the Constitution establishes a representative democratic parliamentary republic. Elections in Viramar are internationally recognised as fair and transparent. However, in the last few years, the government has come under criticism for measures restricting freedom of the media and for use of excessive force against protesters. Rich in natural resources, Viramar is a high-income country, consistently ranked ‘high’ by the World Bank in its Doing Business reports. Yet, economic inequalities are high and poverty in rural areas remains widespread.

- Organisation:

The National Equality Group (NEG) in Viramar is a civil society organisation, comprised of lawyers and activists, that works to advance human rights in the country, and especially works to promote the rights of, and end discrimination against, marginalised groups, such as women, youth, the LGBTI community, and persons with disabilities.

- Project:

The NEG is concerned that the government’s recent actions signify a decrease in freedom of speech and civil society space and could have a particularly negative impact on communities seeking to promote equality. To help defend these rights, the NEG plans to work with other civil society organisations in Viramar, as well as media representatives and human rights lawyers.

The meetings and trainings aim to:

- a) Strengthen ties between lawyers and activists in the country so that they can unite their voices and better coordinate actions
- b) Increase the media’s understanding of their rights
- c) Build the capacities of lawyers to challenge the government and defend these rights in court