

FORCED EVICTIONS, EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS AND ENFORCED  
DISAPPEARANCES, LAND GRABBING, INSECURITY, REPRESENTATION  
MULTILATERAL PROJECTS, DISCRIMINATION, DISASTER MANAGEMENT  
REFUGEES AFFAIRS, AND VIOLATIONS TO THE ALL GROUP RIGHTS  
LISTED ABOVE INCLUDING VIOLENT DISRUPTION OF PROTESTS,  
DEREGISTRATION OF ORGANIZATIONS AND DENIAL OF ACCESS TO  
INFORMATION



RESIST PROTEST RALLY COURAGE  
LEAD FIGHT STAND UP PUBLIC INTER  
SPEAK UP LOBBYING LITIGATIONS  
PROTEST BOYCOTT SHADOW  
MEMORANDA REPORTS  
TO PARLIAMENT INFLUENCE  
PUBLIC POLICY FORMULATION  
PARTICIPATION OCCUPY



CIVIL LIBERTY JUSTICE FREEDOMS OF ASSEMBLY  
SECURITY OF PERSON ASSOCIATION AND EXPRESSION  
EQUALITY INCLUSION EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

WE SUPPORT ALL HRDS WHO DEAL WITH ALL HUMAN  
RIGHTS ISSUES AS ENSHRINED IN THE CONSTITUTION,  
INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS AND TREATIES KENYA IS PARTY  
TO AND THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.



DEFENDERS  
COALITION

PEOPLE  
LOSE  
POWER!!!  
I'M  
NOT  
GOING!  
WHY ARE YOU  
ARRESTING ME??  
GIVE ME A  
REASON!!!?  
I'M NOT  
COOPERATING!!!

"WHEN WE LOSE OUR FEAR,  
THEY LOSE THEIR POWER!"  
-WANJIRU WANJIRA

Bunz<sup>20</sup>



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# The COALITION

The Defenders Coalition is a national, membership organization established in 2007 and registered under Kenyan law as a Trust. The Defenders Coalition works primarily for the protection of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Kenya. Among others, the Defenders Coalition strengthens capacities of HRDs to work more effectively, besides advocating for favorable legal, policy and institutional environments in order to reduce their vulnerability to the risk of persecution and or harm.

Under the prevailing operational context and the organization’s track record, the Defenders coalition uses the following four strategic pillars to offer the much needed areas of services to HRDs:



Supportive Policy, Legal & Institutional Frameworks



Socio-Economic Wellbeing of HRDs



HRD Protection and Safety



Institutional Excellence



Message from  
**THE CHAIR OF  
THE BOARD**



**T**he Defenders Coalition continues to recognize that support for HRDs is central to the realization of universal respect for human rights and implementation of international human rights protocols that contribute to a safer and more just world.

It is through this realization that our commitment is to the protection of the selfless activists at the frontline who many a times are the target of human rights violations because of their work.

Beyond protection and enhancing the capacities of HRDs for their safety and security, 2020 will be remembered as a year where innovation was key to survival. Tolerance, creativity and having each other's backs was paramount for survival of HRDs.

We therefore wish to thank our partners, who were flexible enough to open the lever allowing our programmes to offer humanitarian support to HRDs during the pandemic.

We are happy that our actions touched more than 10,000 HRDs directly. We shall continue to seek significant change in the capacity of HRDs to work in a reprisal-free environment while promoting human rights and social justice. Our engagements with policy mechanisms and implementation of progressive legislation was and still remains a priority.

The sacrifices of our brave HRDs over 2020 underpins our unwavering optimism in a just society founded on human rights. Recognition and appreciation of all human rights was our driver in delivering the services that HRDs gravely need for their general wellbeing.

Join us and act with us in promoting access to the safety, security and wellbeing of HRDs in Kenya.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Simat". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mary Simat  
Board Chair  
Defenders Coalition

“Beyond protection, and enhancing the capacities of HRDs for their safety and security, 2020 will be remembered as a year where innovation was key to survival.”





Message from  
**THE EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR**

**O**ur story for 2020 is not one of drastic changes to the world we live in, but of our response to ongoing challenges we face. Time and again we saw with adept demonstration how resilient, creative, and adaptable human rights defenders can be in the face of repression and mutation of risks.

The challenges are well known: criminalization of HRDs work through perpetual intimidation, harassment, imprisonment, detention, enforced disappearances, threats, digital shaming, punitive justice administration processes, systematic implementation of restrictions to fundamental freedoms and a deepening shift in the narrative on human rights defenders from protector of the people to enemy of the state.

The Covid-19 pandemic amplified some of these challenges while contributing to even more challenges within the operating environment for HRDs. We don't accept this challenging environment for human rights as the new normal, but, we acknowledge the need to develop ways to achieve our goals within it.

The key is in how we adapt, how we resist, and how we use the power of solidarity within our networks and establish strong movements that not only respond to the situation of HRDs, but also set the human rights agenda.

The vibrant communities and partnerships we have fostered for the last one decade through the different fora and auspices of engagement demonstrated the strength of their potential. Together, we were visible and we increased our cooperation in advocacy, capacity building and in protection, thus setting the stage to meet the challenges we face.

We can proudly highlight the following key milestones made enduring the year 2020:

1. We watched over the backs of 400 HRDs who were at risk due to their work. We equipped them with skills to continue doing their work effectively and without fear
2. We equipped HRD networks with skills to be effective first responders within their communities during Covid-19 pandemic
3. The presence of Defenders Coalition as the spokesperson for HRDs served to denounce and resist harmful actions on the environment of HRDs, and keep the perpetrators on toes (both state and non-state)
4. Defenders Coalition had a 100% success rate on mitigating torture and detention among HRDs who were criminalized because of their work
5. Defenders Coalition successfully mobilized critical partners to jointly engage in advocacy over pressing human rights issues in Kenya
6. Defenders Coalition successfully build protection pathways for HRDs at the most remote corners of the country with national, regional and international systems and actors coming on board to protect HRDs
7. Defenders Coalition innovatively responded to humanitarian and resilience need to HRDs and CSO organizations during Covid-19 pandemic

Looking to the long term, we took ownership in our response to worrying trends – reaching out to new and existing partners to build coalitions, and laying the foundations for engagement in our joint case studies, reports, and events.

At our launch events and submissions to regional and international watchbodies, we united with different multi-level stakeholders through joint statements and recommendations to the relevant duty bearers. We also used our combined networks to make sure HRD voices are heard across the world. These included submission to the UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) two shadow reports to the African Commission on Human people’s rights and a statement during Kenya’s UPR report adoption at the 45th Human Rights Council Session in Geneva.

We also looked to a joint response to the shrinking civic space in Kenya as more and more freedoms are under threat in the guise of implementing Covid-19 measures. We challenged regulations, practices and actions aimed at drawing pushbacks on the civic space, specifically the freedom of expression, association and assembly.

In the same spirit, we launched a case digest report dubbed “They Keep Coming After Rights Defenders” to highlight trends on human rights defenders and the law in Kenya. The report is a basis for advocating for a just and fair legal and judicial processes for HRDs seeking their services.

Besides joining forces to address international trends, aligning with technological advances and needs of HRDs, we came together in areas such as human rights education and capacity building. Through the newly launched Defender Coalition E-library, HRDs can now access resources necessary to enhance their capacities at the click of a button. Further, we held 24 physical capacity building activities which culminated to the Annual weeklong HRD Academy in November 2020, where 100 upcoming HRDs were brought together to network, debrief and equip them with necessary skills.

Having re-thought the sustainability of the work of defending rights in Kenya, we have made huge strides in advancing and instilling the same among HRDs through the #ClimbForJustice Campaign. Over 800 fitness enthusiasts and supporters of our work have hiked different destinations to speak against human rights violations as well as raise funds for setting up a HRD hub. We are thankful



that we have raised KES 6.9 Million. We urge you to join us in one of the biggest hiking attempts we have made in the name of Justice by registering to hike the tallest mountain in Africa, Mt. Kilimanajro in February 2021.

Being the first year of implementing our new strategic plan 2020 -2025, we have undertaken an external and internal evaluation to inform our implementation in the subsequent years. This includes self-reflection, input from our main stakeholders and partners, and advice on what works, what does not from beneficiaries of our work, and in what direction we should take our work. We look forward to remaining a dynamic, professional, empathetic, modern organisation that can respond to calls for assistance and to the environment we face.

Despite the challenges, we managed to come out on top. We learnt that it is essential that the human rights movement gets closer to the grassroots, communicating values and principles and how human rights have meaning for people in their daily lives, and reaching out with education/ sensitization on human rights. We must also get closer to the different struggles without discrimination whatsoever, to ensure collective championing of the civic space that is under threat now more than ever.

The new year 2021 presents us with an opportunity to build back better. We shall endeavour to establish new partnerships and broadening the potential of diversifying our support to all the different cadres of HRDs. This for sure will enable us to meet the demand of our services that has tremendously risen over the years, to energise our work and make us stronger.

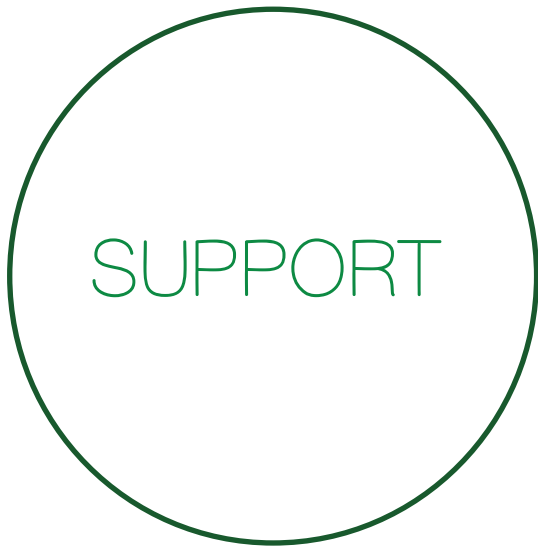


Kamau Ngugi,  
Executive Director  
Defenders Coaition



## SUPPORTIVE POLICY, LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR HRDS

*A thought and collaborative leader towards (re)formulation and or enforcement of appropriate policies, laws, institutions and cultural norms that touch on the safety, security and wellbeing of HRDs. We will thus seek to contribute to securing a conducive operating environment for HRDs, and in which respect for human rights is accorded to all.*



POLICY | LEGAL | INSTITUTIONAL

**T**hrough this pillar, the Defenders Coalition has positioned itself as a thought and collaborative leader towards (re)formulation and or enforcement of appropriate policies, laws, institutions and cultural norms that touch on the safety, security and wellbeing of HRDs. We thus seek to contribute to securing a conducive operating environment for HRDs and in which respect for human rights is accorded to all.

## 1.1 Interventions on the Freedom of Assembly, Expression and Association

In 2020, we saw an increased crackdown on freedoms of assembly, media, expression and association with violation of the freedom of assembly being the most prevalent among HRDs.

The Defenders coalition held bilateral discussions with duty bearers including the leadership of the National Police Service, the Chair of the Council of Governors, Court Users Committees in Nyeri and Mombasa Counties with a view of curbing or addressing the growing concerns of the increase in violations of fundamental rights and freedoms.

The meetings achieved the following:

- Sensitized duty bearers on the work of HRDs
- Creating relationships and establishing linkages between HRDs and duty bearers to address human rights violations in their counties.
- Sensitized and lobbied the goodwill of the duty bearers on the HRD Protection Policy and Action Plan, and HRDs trained on alternative justice systems.
- We advocated against the de-registration of Eagles Community Based Organization in Naivasha. The CBO's deregistration has not been reversed yet.

For the first time, we rolled out actions that aim to support HRDs through strategic partnerships with religious leaders and HRDs.

## 1.2 Annual Human Rights Defenders Awards

For the past five years, the Defenders Coalition and the Working Group on Human Rights Defenders; which brings together diplomatic missions and civil society organisations that are concerned with the protection of HRDs and Human Rights, has organized an annual feat to recognize the exemplary work of HRDs who demonstrate great zeal in promoting human rights in Kenya.

The Awards serve to;

- a) Honour the extraordinary work of HRDs in the promotion and protection of human rights
- b) Profile the work of HRDs and challenges they face as agents of social change and transformation
- c) Recognise and appreciate the human rights work of young and upcoming HRDs in Kenya
- d) Enhance the safety and protection of all HRDs in Kenya.

For the first time, 2020 saw the awards ceremony happening simultaneously in 9 different locations within 6 counties (Nairobi, Nakuru, Mombasa, Isiolo, Turkana and Lamu) . This was the first attempt in devolving the awards ceremony to HRD networks.

The award achieved the following:

Reached over 60,000 citizens globally via live broadcasting on Nakuru Tv, social media platforms and through subsequent media coverage;

The participation of the event had a record 403 participants participating physically in the convenings and more people following the awards ceremony online.

Helped shape the narratives around the work of protecting human rights.

Recognized HRDs and organizations who have been at the forefront of human rights work

Enhanced the creation of an enabling environment and enabling stepping stone for grassroots HRDs, who in many instances are not celebrated.

**9 LOCATIONS**

**6 COUNTIES**

**403 PARTICIPANTS**



“The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.”  
– Albert Einstein

### 1.3 Pamoja Tuangamize Corona campaign

At the height of Covid-19 pandemic, the Defenders Coalition partnered with the Social Justice Centres Working Group on a campaign dubbed “Pamoja Tuangamiza Corona” to bolster community-based interventions against Covid-19. The campaign aimed at sensitizing community members on the pandemic, offer household reprieve and support to human rights defenders, hold to account the duty bearers at the centre of covid-19 response as well and advocate for the inclusion of communities and human rights defenders in decisions aimed at curbing the runaway coronavirus cases then.

#### Impact of Pamoja Tuangamize corona campaign

IMPACT

1. Forced community concerns into the national attention through #SabaSabaMarchForOurLives in July 7, 2020
2. Supported 6847 community members with face masks and information on staying safe and best public health practices
3. Contributed to mass public awareness by providing information on COVID-19
4. Supported 472 HRDs and their families with Peace Packages (food items)
5. Amplified fight against COVID-19 and police brutality and social justice through installation of 18 graffiti walls
6. Monitored, documented and acted on cases of human rights abuses and violations including GBV and police brutality.
7. Justice centres were able to distribute 20,000 face masks.
8. Individual centres were able to form community outreach and project implementation teams that implemented community outreach activities to counter the effects of covid-19.
9. Due to availability of resources, Nyando social justice centre was able to act as an evacuation centre for HRDs and community members during the floods that hit their area.



Participants during a sensitization forum between community opinion makers and teenagers on teenage pregnancy and SGBV at Ruaraka Grounds on 17 July 2020

## 1.4 Shujaa mtaani Campaign

Defenders Coalition launched the digital campaign #shujaaMtaani to recognize the critical role that human rights defenders at the grassroots level were doing for their communities during covid-19. The campaign focused on promoting their work as well as shaping narratives around the work of defending human rights in Kenya.

### Impact of #ShujaaMtaani Campaign

1. Brought to the frontline little-recognized human rights defenders who use different tools/ media to advance different causes, specific to promoting awareness and safety of covid-19 amongst their communities
2. Promoted an exchange of best practices amongst grassroots human rights defenders
3. Enhanced the promotion of an enabling working environment for human rights defenders by targeting the attitudes and perceptions of members of the public.
4. The recognition of their work
5. Contributed to the embedding of the culture of protecting and promoting human rights in Kenya among members of the public as witnessed in the several public outcries whenever there are human rights violations or cases of impunity.

IMPACT



*A Press briefing on the runaway police killings and enforced disappearances at Kiamaiko Social Justice Centre at the height of Covid-19 and lockdowns*

## 1.5 Graffiti and Art for social change: Activism, progressive communities within marginalized communities

To effectively communicate for social change, the Defenders Coalition employed a number of innovative ways for creating awareness about human rights and instigating social change on persistence human rights violations that were prevalent during the covid-19 lockdowns including police extortion/brutality, sexual and gender-based violence.

The graffiti also proved an alternative source of livelihoods for artists who were facing tough economic times due to partial lockdowns, dusk to dawn curfew and eventual closure of entertainment spots—a key income generating source for the majority of creatives and activists.

**26** **GRAFFITIS**  
**ERECTED IN**  
**DIFFERENT**  
**COMMUNITIES**  
**COUNTRYWIDE**

We supported 26 human rights networks erect graffiti within their communities to communicate hope, tackle misinformation and encourage adherence to public health and hygiene guidelines.

IMPACT

### Impact

1. A timely source of livelihoods to artists
2. Emphasized and sensitized on human rights violations in communities
3. Brought created new networks of activist HRDs
4. Served as an alternative and sustainable communication tool for social change



One of the graffiti erected in Kamukunji informal settlements in Nairobi to address sexual and gender based violence

## 1.6 The right to privacy and data protection

The enactment of the Data Protection Act (2019) into law was a key landmark in the safeguarding of the right to privacy under article 31 of the CoK 2010. The law which heavily borrows from the European General Data Protection Regulations paves way for a system of accountability to persons or entities (private or public) processing and storing data as well as data subjects. However, the implementation of the Act lies in the full operationalization of the Office of Data Protection Commissioner. After much lobbying, the Data Commissioner was appointed and took office in October 2020 paving way for engagements with the office and operationalization of the Act.

Defenders Coalition set out to update the perception survey report conducted in 2018 to encompass the changes in law and also gauge the effectiveness of her work with HRDs on privacy and communication surveillance. The following were some of the findings;

- HRDs are concerned about the safety and privacy of their personal and work-related information.
- Majority of the HRDs, though aware of the Data Protection Act, are not well acquainted with its provisions and implications including the role of the Data Commissioner.
- HRDs are concerned that the data collected as part of measures to address COVID-19 pandemic is not in safe hands of the government or corporates.
- HRDs are suspicious of the biometric data collected by the National Integrated Information Management System (NIIMS) or huduma number

The report was also translated into swahili with the translated version seeking to reach, empower and shape discussions, engagements and understanding of privacy and surveillance among grassroots human rights defenders.

WHRDs and Journalists also underwent a 2-day sensitization forum on the existing legal framework on right to privacy. The forum brought together 35 participants who also underwent digital security training to mitigate digital security threats in the course of their work. Through the forum Defenders Coalition was able to;

- Create a network of Journalists supporting Women Human Rights Defenders work at the grassroots to enhance visibility.
- Participants formed regional networks that shall be engaging policy makers to ensure the localization of the DPA through informed policy setting.



## 1.7 Sector Working Group Meetings

Defenders Coalition continued to be part of sector working groups that deal with different issues on human rights and civic space. We actively participated in actions that shaped the response to concerns within the civic space and the safety and security of HRDS. These working Groups include:

- Protection Working Group
- Missing Voices Coalition
- Police Reforms Working Group
- International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights
- United Nations Convention against Torture
- African Commission on People & Human Rights
- Universal Periodic Review
- Election Observers Group
- Sustainable Development Goals Forum- Kenya
- Working Group on Human Rights Defenders
- Kenya Media Sector Working Group
- Hunter Gatherer Forum
- Indigenous Women Council
- SOGIE Think Tank
- East Africa Advocacy Forum

Amongst other achievements, the Defenders Coalition managed to achieve the following through these human rights networks;

1. Enhanced the promotion of positive perceptions of members of the public about human rights defenders
2. Offered solidarity to global human rights movements, HRDs at risk, minority and discriminated groups in the society
3. Strengthened cooperation among HRDs and organizations at national, regional and global levels
4. Continued to engage duty bearers on persistent and emerging human rights issues at national, regional and global levels

IMPACT

## 1.8 Global Solidarity

The Defenders Coalition has continued to set its participation in global human rights solidarity. During the year, the Coalition participated in 11 regional and international statements and joint appeals with stakeholders drawn from Africa and other continents to condemn human rights violations against HRDs, CSOs, journalists. The statements also focused on calling for security sector reforms.

The Defenders Coalition made a statement during the adoption of Kenya's UPR during the 45th session of the Human Rights Council in October 2020. Among others, the statement was to welcome the acceptance of recommendations on protection and investigation of HRDs cases by the government of Kenya.

The Defenders Coalition participated in the ACHPR during the 66th and 67th ordinary sessions. We gave updates on the status of HRDs in Kenya on defending in a pandemic.

During the year, the Coalition continued to support and work in partnership with other HRD organisations in the Eastern Africa Region. The partnership included joint protection, advocacy and capacity building initiatives and activities.



## **CHECKPOINT: Impunity and undue restrictions on the rise: #SabaSabaMarch4OurLives**

On 7 July 2020, 63 HRDs who were part of a procession #SabaSabaMarch4OurLives were arrested by Kenya Police Officers and placed in different police cells across the city.

The peaceful assembly was calling on the implementation of the constitution of Kenya, 10 years after its promulgation in a campaign dubbed #TekelezaKatiba.

However, Police Officers disrupted the peaceful processions by unleashing unbelievable violence and embarked on an arresting spree. The arrested were detained in four police stations as follows: Kilimani Police Station(18), Kayole Police Station(12), Central Police Station(25) and Muthaiga Police Station(8).

We are proud that through the support of human rights networks and uproar from Kenyans, the distraught HRDs were released the same day with the charges pressed against them being dropped eventually.

*“However it is worrying that Article 37 of the 2010 Constitution continues to be blatantly violated by state security actors. Even with profound provisions, HRDs are always at risk of arrest and other detention-related persecutions for peacefully assembling to express their discontentment or present petitions to duty bearers. 2021 and 2022 are within the Kenyan electioneering period. HRDs, as any other Kenyans are expected to enjoy their democratic rights and freedoms but it is highly unlikely that the state will be willing to let this happen. We are wary that there may be an escalation of these rights violations, especially those related to the fundamental freedoms surrounding the vibrancy of the civic space: Freedom of Assembly, Association, Expression and Media. Deliberate actions including strengthening of the different actors and institutions must be put in place to prevent this distasteful eventuality.”*



### **PIGA NDURU CORNER FOR URGENT INTERVENTION**

### **THE MURDER OF ACTIVIST PAUL NDIRANGU KIOI OF NJORO, NAKURU COUNTY**



Paul Ndirangu Kioi, an activist from Njoro – Nakuru County was found murdered on December 8 and his body dumped in Ndarugo River in Nakuru. Paul had was last seen alive on the evening 7th December 2020.

Apart from being a human rights defender, Paul worked as a cyclist to put food on the table for his family. He was passionate about human rights. He would not by-pass a violation that came to his attention.

Community members who spoke to Defenders Coalition’s regional representatives said that one time, Paul was an avid believer in good governance and social accountability. He once followed up on a double bursary allocation to beneficiaries. Through his actions, local Members of county Assembly and the area Member of Parliament were brought to account.

In his advocacy and awareness creation work, he embraced social media as a tool to bring to light human rights violations. Among his most recent cases that Paul was documenting and creating awareness on, were those of sexual and gender based-violence and exploitation of young girls in his community.

During his last days, Paul is said to have been pursuing two major cases relating to business and human rights in his home area. A private developer had set a timber processing factory within the local community’s residential area. With an unwelcome and unpopular neighbour in sight, waste from the factory became a living hell for the community living in the area. Their health was and is still at stake due to the nature and quantity of pollution.

For safety reasons, the community members sought to relocate, not voluntarily, but forced by the prevailing circumstances. In doing so, they agreed to enter into a pact with the said owner of the timber factory. However, the timber factory owner wanted to buy their pieces of land at his own terms, at the price that he wished for.

Paul could not take this and he was vocal on the abuse of social status by the factory's owner. He was seen many times standing against the violation of what can be termed as a planned and systematic forceful eviction of community members from their land.

It is at this point that his tribulations started. He started receiving threats against his life. He reported the threats twice at Njoro Police Station under the OB numbers. Fellow activists, (Names Withheld) told the Defenders coalition that on 28th November, 2020 Paul was arrested by Njoro police officers and spent a night in a police cell without being booked. In solidarity with Paul, the HRDs sought the reason for Paul's detention and why he was not being booked and presented in court to take a plea.

After inquiring from the OCS Njoro, they were informed that he had been arrested on allegations of threatening one of the timber factory owner's friend. The HRDs would then proceed to secure Paul's release on a cash bail of Kshs. 5,000. It was at this point that he was given a date with the judicial process; Paul was to be arraigned in court on 4th December, 2020.

Surprisingly, this never happened on pretext that the person with the allegations wished to withdraw the case. It is on this basis that Paul refused the case to be withdrawn and demanded to proceed to court saying he had enough evidence against the social misdeeds of those behind his arrest. On 3rd December 2020, he posted on his social media (Facebook) over impending court proceedings the following day. Prior to this, Ndirangu had on 22nd November 2020 posted his frustrations of people following him and wanting to take his life. He however did not provide information of who they were.

On the fateful day of his disappearance, Paul left his house at around 2pm to join his two friends (a lady and a man) at Njoro Posta where they relaxed at Njoro Park till around 6-7pm. He left them to pick some cash from an undisclosed location promising to return and buy his friends dinner. What the two friends did not know was that that would be the last time they would see Paul alive. He never returned and his friends had to leave at around 8.00pm after waiting in vain.

The following day at around 7am in the morning, Ndirangu's lifeless body was found by passersby dumped in the Ndarugo River. On 11th December, postmortem was carried out at Egerton University Mortuary by a pathologist in the presence of family and his fellow HRDs.

The report showed that Paul was strangled to death and a blunt object used to hit him from behind on the head. The report suggests that he was hit after he was already dead.

Though investigations are ongoing, there is little progress. Paul's killers are still at large, walking freely as not a single suspect has been arrested.

**We call for speedy investigations by authorities to ascertain the following:**

1. Who masterminded the killing of and or Who killed Ndirangu?
2. What was the Motive of his killing?
3. Does the killing linked to his work and more so his advocacy to have the private land developer do their business while ensuring the rights of the people living in the area are protected?
4. What is the next course of action to ensure Ndirangu and his kin gets Justice? And what should be done to protect Ndirangu's HRD colleagues who still are seeking justice for the victims of abuses and human rights violations.

We call on the international community to join us in calling for a speedy conclusion of the murder of activist Paul Ndirangu Kioi

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS PROTECTION

*We facilitate timely and appropriate responses to all forms of threats or insecurities to HRDs. This will be achieved by strengthening the capacities of HRDs and other service providers, more so, duty bearers, lawyers, medical personnel and counsellors among others. The Defenders Coalition will intervene in a timely way whenever HRDs are at risk and deliberately establish strategic partnerships with complementary referral systems in order to ensure a systems approach to HRD support.*

# PROTECTION

## SAFETY & SECURITY

**T**his pillar aims to facilitate timely and appropriate responses to all forms of threats and/or insecurities that human rights defenders face. This is intended through strengthening capacities of HRDs and service providers like lawyers, health workers and including duty bearers. In this regard, the Defenders Coalition intervened in a timely manner whenever HRDs were at risk and deliberately set out to establish strategic partnerships with complementary referral systems in order to ensure a systems approach in supporting HRDs.



### WAPI NDURU YA HAKI CORNER

### SOLAI ACTIVISTS INCRIMINATED FOR PROMOTING THE REALIZATION OF JUSTICE FOR SOLAI DAM TRAGEDY VICTIMS ACQUITTED

6 activists were acquitted on charges they illegally assembled during the aftermath of the Solai Dam tragedy, where a deluge of water swept through farmlands and engulfed parts of Solai, killing 48 people and destroyed homes in May 2018.

The acquittal was delivered on 15th of October by the Nakuru Magistrate Court, after the office of the Director of public Prosecution withdrew the case due to lack of evidence.

The accused had appeared for five court mentions within a period of one year and ten months.

The acquitted activists are Peter Mbae, Michael Kabiya, Daniel Muniu, Samuel Muchiri, Daniel Maina and Nelson Gitonga.

Violently arrested, tortured

The activists were violently arrested by police officers based in Solai area on 31 January 2019 alongside 2 survivors of the tragedy and a local Member of County Assembly.

On the fateful day, the arrested had organized a meeting with survivors of the tragedy and pro bono lawyers with the aim of agreeing on how to collectively press charges against the perpetrators of the 2018 manslaughter, which caused massive displacement and loss of livelihoods of hundreds of poor farmers and laborers within Solai area.

However, police officers disrupted the peaceful meeting and indiscriminately descended tear gas and button violence on the attendees, which at the time had 248 registered survivors. School-going children were not spared either as teargas was lobbed in school compounds and classrooms.

*"Police just hurled teargas everywhere. We scampered for safety in a school compound but police followed us there. School children had to suffer from the effects of inhaling teargas fumes which were thrown in their classrooms because police thought we were hiding within the classrooms,"* Samuel Nganga stated.

The arrested HRDs were then presented in court on 1 February 2019, where the prosecution asked for the arrested to be detained for 10 more days on the grounds that they needed more time for 'further investigations'.

The court allowed five days of investigations, which could see torture unleashed on the arrested activists within the confines of what should be a safe space while waiting for investigations and judicial processes to be completed.

*"When we were in police custody, wardens kept pouring water on the floor so that we could not sleep. Their intention was to torture us to the point that we could plead guilty to the trumped up charges that they were pressing against us"* Samuel continues.

*"We were beaten, and constantly threatened with murder and that they could dump our bodies in places where we cannot be found. I personally suffered an injury on the upper part of my back. I can no longer work the way I used to "* says Nelson Gitonga.

Within the five days granted by the court for investigations, the arrested were moved in rounds between Njoro, Nakuru Central and Menengai West police stations for unknown reasons.

#### Court places exorbitant bail

Upon the lapsing of the five days that the court allowed for investigation, another hurdle awaited the already exhausted and violated human rights defenders. The court had placed a high cash bail for the six. Each was expected to raise two hundred thousand shillings to secure their freedom.

*"What crime had we committed that the court thought it wise that we can only secure our freedom with so much money? It felt and still feels so harsh"* Nelson wonders up to date.

It was at this point that the Defenders Coalition stepped in, applied for the bail to be considered for downward revision.

*"We intervened and called for the court to be a bit flexible and give a reasonable cash bail. We are happy the magistrate then reviewed it downward to one hundred and fifty thousand shillings per person. It was still high for an arbitrary arrest but the Defenders Coalition had to ensure that the human rights defenders were freed and had access to a safe home,"* Executive Director Kamau Ngugi said.

Nelson Gitonga notes that had it not been for the financial and legal aid extended by the Defenders Coalition, he could have suffered longer in police custody.

*"I could not raise such a huge amount of money within a short period. I thank the Defenders Coalition for acting so fast to ensure our release."*

#### Charges withdrawn

The Office of the Director of public Prosecution withdrew the charges pressed against the arrested due to lack of evidence. The six were set free under section 210 of the Criminal Procedure Code, meaning the prosecutor has no jurisdiction to press fresh legal processes against the accused after dismissal of the case.

*"We are happy that the case has come to an end because we are innocent. However, we were tortured while in police custody. I wish we can be compensated for the harassment and torture inflicted on us,"* adds Nelson.

Samuel adds that he is happy that there is an organization that works to champion the rights of those who champion other people's rights.

*'Despite the challenges, I am happy that there is someone who pursues justice for the people on the frontline defending other people's rights. What many people don't know is that without such support, a phone call from powerful individuals can get you detained for 100 years!'*

Early this year, the dam owner and several government officials who were among the nine who were arrested and charged over the collapse of the dam, known as Patel or Solai were set free by Naivasha Chief Magistrate Kennedy Bilali who cited little progress with the case and that the accused deserved a fair trial and not lengthy court appearances.

The owners of the Solai dam also have business stakes in Solai Coffee Estate Limited and Kensalt Limited, a leading company in Kenya for producing table salt.

## 2.1 Human Rights Violations Monitoring

At the beginning of the year, the Covid pandemic indirectly contributed to several human rights violations that were happening across the country as a result of the measures put in place to curb the spread of the virus. These included dawn to dusk curfew and mandatory wearing of masks that saw police officers forcefully implement these measures.

The forceful and even brutal implementation of these measures resulted in bodily harm, arbitrary arrests and even death. Due to the increase in the number of violations being reported, the Coalition mobilised twenty seven (27) HRDs to monitor these violations. They were selected from counties that reported the most violations. These included Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa and Nakuru.

In just under three months, information from the monitors recorded stood as follows;



The following measures were adjusted with time including the lift of the lockdown and people were free to move about. However, curfew still persisted with the timings being adjusted.

During the close of year, the following figures had been adjusted and now stood at;

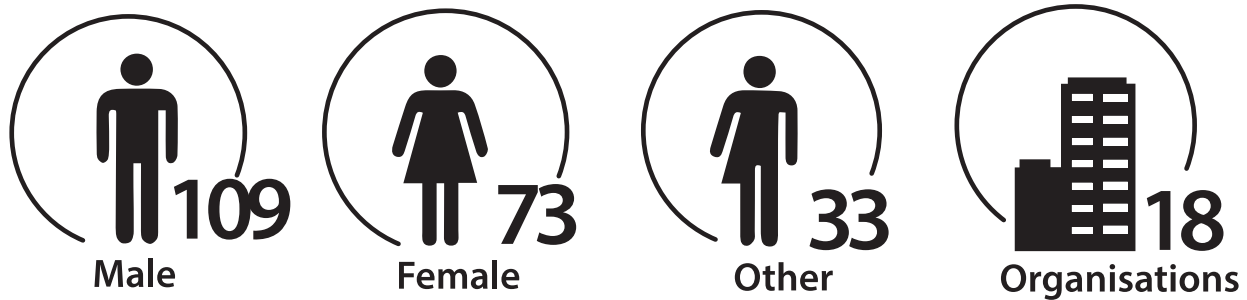


While the arrests happened across different themes; including water and sanitation, extrajudicial killings, corruption and integrity and land advocacy, they all had a common theme of violating covid regulations.

## 2.2 Direct Response (Protection Response to HRDs)

In line with the pillar's mandate of timely response, the Coalition was able to intervene in situations where HRDs needed support. For the Coalition to determine whether a case will be supported, Case assessments need to be done. 2020 saw the coalition receiving 233 cases with the Coalition supporting 197 through various interventions and 36 referred to partner organisations.

referral mechanisms segregated as follows;



Protection response support was broken down as follows;

### Legal;

140 HRDs, including 3 members of the media, were supported with legal intervention. These included bail and bond, representation and accompaniment to police stations.

### Medical & Psychosocial;

Several HRDs fell sick and were unable to go about their daily income generating activities therefore creating a livelihoods problem. A total of 18 HRDs including 3 organisations for group therapy were supported during this period.

### Relocation & Family Support;

Several HRDs faced imminent threats and risks and they had to be moved to a safer location. Some of these threats resulted in physical attacks of the said HRD including physical break ins at their homes and/or offices. Majority of HRDs who faced such attacks were SOGIE HRDs therefore highlighting even further the risk that SOGIE HRDs face while working in communities.

### Security audits;

In 2020 the Defenders Coalition supported grassroots organizations in enhancing their safety and security through extensive security audits. We targeted grassroots and thematic organizations as well as those who submitted requests for support.

13 organisations were supported to enhance their capacity and skills in assessing and mitigating security threats.

They include Hoymas, CREAM, HAPA Kenya, Kisumu Peer Educators, Kisumu Lesbian Bisexuals and queer, Initiative for Equality and Non Discrimination among others.





*"We continued to operate our 24/7 emergency response phone line that is available to receive emergencies through phone calls, WhatsApp and SMS. We continued to offer rapid responses including safe spaces for HRDs at risk. We responded to 112 queries from members of the public. Responses included legal advice, counselling services, and other technical support."*

## Promoting the rights of Sexual Minority Groups

Same-sex sexual relations between persons in Kenya continue to be criminalized under the penal code with a penalty of a maximum of 21 years in prison. The constitution of Kenya provides for freedom from discrimination but does not explicitly do so on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. There is no specific legislation that promotes equality in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, discrimination in employment, health, housing and/or other social economic areas.

There is no provision in law for same-sex unions, and same-sex couples are not legally allowed to adopt any children in Kenya. There is no legal gender recognition for trans-gender persons. The law protects intersex persons' rights to humane and dignified treatment in custody, and the government has identified the legislative reforms necessary to comply with the 2014 High Court judgement which found that intersex persons in Kenya have the right to be recognised under the law.

Defenders Coalition is happy to report that there has been government recognition of transgender and intersex persons as vulnerable groups and a commitment to safeguard their rights and interests. For the first time, intersex as a gender marker was included on the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census to determine the number of intersex people in Kenya.

## **CHECKPOINT** -Escalating Reprisals, Intimidation and Harassment of Human Rights Defenders

In 2020, the Defenders Coalition associated itself with the global campaign to bring to an end systemic discrimination and police violence against black people, who have endured sustained socio-economic and political exclusion the world over.

It was therefore important and in solidarity that in the wake of a global 'I can't breathe' movement to bring to an end police brutality, Defenders Coalition participated as National Police Service officers continued to inflict brutality and death upon innocent kenyans. The police also singled out human rights defenders for intimidation and persecution.

One such case is that of Mutemi Kiama, a human rights defender and blogger based in Nairobi. He was among the tens of human rights defenders and journalists that survived serious injuries, unlawful arrests conducted violently, detention and malicious prosecutions over trumped up criminal charges. Mutemi Kiama was unlawfully arrested on the night of Tuesday, 9 June 2020 after police officers from the Special Crime Unit (SCU) and Karen Police Station forcibly broke into his apartment. His phones, cameras and laptops were confiscated. He was detained at a police station before he was presented to court late evening the following day.

It is dreadful that officers from the Special Crimes Unit, a rebranded police unit that was historically accused of engaging in enforced disappearances, torture and extra judicial killings attempted to circumvent the lawful procedures by re-introducing Mr Mutemi Kiama to court to seek orders to detain him for 10 more days prior to investigations. This is despite contrary advice from the Office of the Public Prosecutor. It took the swift action of the defense legal team comprising of Hon Martha Karua, Harun Ndubi, Lempaa Soyianka and Mbugua Mureithi and an officer from the ODPP who arrived at Kibera Court in the nick of time, where the officers had sneaked the suspect without the knowledge of the lawyers and sought orders to detain him. The defense and prosecution refused to acquiescence on application by the police to have Mutemi detained for 10 days as they conducted investigation over an alleged crime of Digital Piracy. The court dismissed the application and affirmed the right of the rights defender/blogger to be set free as the police conduct their investigations. His tools of trade remain confiscated.

The Defenders Coalition condemned this unlawful arrest of Mutemi Kiama. Defenders Coalition believes in the rule of law and the right of the police to conduct their work freely, but lawfully. However, the conduct of the police to forcibly enter a private residence of the rights defender late in the evening without a court-sanctioned order, the use of violence against the defender during the arrest, and attempts to hold the rights defender incommunicado following arrest and forum shopping in an attempt to seek favourable court orders to detain the blogger before preferring any charges, demonstrate keenness to circumvent the rule of law with the aim to persecute or humiliate the defender.

These deplorable actions by the SCU police fall in a concerning pattern of escalating intimidation of human rights defenders in the country in 2020.

To highlight, Collins Ochieng and Samuel Gathanga of Ruaraka Social Justice Centre, were detained at the Central Police Station on 9 June 2020. They were arrested by police officers shortly after delivering a petition to Parliament regarding police brutality within informal settlements in Nairobi. The two were booked in with charges of failure to keep social distance and failing to wear face masks contrary to the directives given for managing spread of COVID-19. The two have insisted that they were not in contravention of the rules and that the charges were trumped up. The two were released from custody after posting cash bail.



*Legal team supported by Defenders Coalition at Kibera Law Courts after representing Mutemi Kiama in May 2020. Mutemi was a victim of misuse of state security laws to persecute him due to his criticism of powerful individuals*

## 2.3 Networking grassroots CSOs to Collectively Protection the civic space

On 16 -18 September 2020, together with grassroots organizations and independent HRDs, Defenders Coalition brought together 56 CBOs and HRDs to dissect concerns within the civic space and renew their commitment towards collectively protecting/reversing the shrinking civic space.

The co-creation meeting arrived at the following 10 point action plan:

1. Change our human rights narratives and refine our brand.
2. Consolidate a periodic national forum on civic space.
3. Convene a forum to celebrate and amplify our voices and power.
4. Engage with our politics through electoral and economic systems: develop and roll-out robust political education.
5. Create a human rights hub (human rights house) to foster HRD economy.
6. HRDs to engage a new gear in resource mobilization.
7. Identify laws and policies that curtail our rights and shrink the civic space.
8. Reclaim/ restore our lost glory as civil society; renaissance our identity.
9. Memorialize the history of our sector: reclaim our memory.
10. Undertake mentorship, exchange and learning.
11. Undertake Non-Violent Direct Action.

## 2.4 Imparting skills in the next generation of HRDs

### Physical security management and Security Plan Development Training

Operating in a complex and diverse environment, HRDs safety and security is determined by a whole range of factors. Cognisant of this, the Defenders Coalition enhanced the capacities of 119 HRDs on the different risks, threats and vulnerabilities associated with their work and the relevant strategies for countering different risks.

### *Annual Human Rights Defenders Academy - Creating a national network of upcoming HRDs*

Defenders coalition organised a week-long convening for HRDs from across the country and representing the key thematic areas of their work centred under a common theme. This week-long convening allowed the participants to interact and network, share information while building capacity in different aspects of their work.

A total of 91 HRDs from the 47 counties in the country were put through an intense week of extensive training on security management, monitoring and documentation.

Cognisant of the ripple effect of Covid-19 in their work, the HRDs received group therapy sessions and individual psychosocial support for debriefing purposes.

## Digital Security Management Training

Despite Covid-19 training challenges, we managed to hold four digital security training sessions with four different thematic groups of HRDs.

A total 179 HRDs took part including 30 Women journalists in September, 30 focal persons from the Social Justice Centres Working Group in October, 28 Sexual and Gender Minorities in October and 91 Upcoming Human Rights Defenders during the Annual Human Rights Defenders Academy in November.

# 179

**HRDS' CAPACITIES AND KNOWLEDGE ON DIGITAL SECURITY WERE ENHANCED TO ENABLE THEM NAVIGATE RESTRICTIONS, MANIPULATION AND SURVEILLANCE**



## Leveraging on experience to create linkages between veteran and Upcoming HRDs

Defenders Coalition held a roundtable conversation with Veteran HRDs on 12th December 2020. This meeting sought to collate the voices of Veteran HRDs as well as pave way for more engagements that seek to address the wellbeing of Veteran especially owing to the effects of the pandemic.

From this meeting a few resolutions were agreed upon;

- Need to conduct a skills mapping exercise to identify expertise and skills within Veterans HRDs for utilization especially on intergenerational mentoring.
- The establishment of the mashujaa fund should be fast tracked to benefit Veterans whose capacity to generate income is decreased and needs including medical has skyrocketed as a result of their human rights work.

## Women Human Rights Defenders Continue to claim spaces

In support of the global campaign of #LeaveNoOneBehind sought to highlight the work and plight of Women Human Rights Defenders in Kenya.

The year saw Defenders Coalition escalate its focus on WHRDs through a project dubbed “Ni Mama” where the Defenders Coalition sought to support WHRDs through a number of activities which included;

1. Strengthening of solidarity networks in five counties: Nairobi, Lamu, Elgeyo Marakwet, Vihiga and Wajir.
2. Enhance community protection for WHRDs through strong networks that are for and by women WHRDs.
3. Skills building in the management of physical and digital security as well as monitoring and documentation, wellness and visibility of their role and/or work in human rights.
4. Linking WHRDs with duty bearers among them KNCHR, NGEC and KEWOPA. This relationship is expected to fast track policy work on the HRD policy as well as the two-third gender rule.

To appreciate the courage that WHRDs have shown in this challenging context we organized a three-day forum for WHRDs, that brought together 50 WHRDs drawn from the 5 target counties (Elgeyo Marakwet, Wajir, Nairobi, Vihiga, Lamu) and also included those from Samburu, Baringo, Marsabit, Kajiado, Mombasa, Kisumu and Nakuru.



*Women human rights defenders break into dance after a successful psychosocial wellbeing retreat and day of marking the International Women human rights defenders in November 2020*

The forum served to :

1. Strengthen the capacities of nascent and Grassroot WHRD networks within the confines of a pandemic.
2. Sensitize the WHRDs present on existing alternative sources of livelihoods for them through utilization of resources within the communities and expertise of defenders within the networks.
3. create a space for collective wellness and wellbeing for WHRDs through artistic therapy and storytelling.
4. Enhance visibility for WHRDs and their work through positive profiling of their work and showcasing their products.
5. Develop and harmonize annual interventions and plans that will inform the work of NCHRD-K for the year 2021.

## Engaging the systematically marginalized: Hunter-gatherer and Pastoralist indigenous communities in Kenya

Kenya, like other global partners concerned with increased infection and deaths, imposed measures aimed at limiting the spread through restrictions on movement and public interactions, personal hygiene among others. At the height of restrictions, there were reports of surge in domestic violence linked to COVID-19 Restrictions.

Kenya's Chief Justice David Maraga announced that sexual offences had spiked across the country since more Kenyans started working from home, the Government imposed a curfew and schools were closed indefinitely. He noted that the incidents constituted nearly 40 per cent of reported cases and that most perpetrators are close relatives. This was an increase from about 5 per cent according to the National Council on the Administration of Justice.

Defenders Coalition deployed monitors to document human rights violations during the implementation of MOH guidelines on COVID 19 restrictions who affirmed spike in gender and sexual based violence, impunity of perpetrators and extreme pressure on HRDs to offer intervention as the state had failed to arrest the situation.

Defenders Coalition invested in boosting the capacity of human rights defenders to be at the



*Beneficiaries of a sensitization forum and in partnership with grassroot HRDs up in smiles after receiving some much information, hygiene and sanitary wear. The forum aimed to address issues on teenage pregnancy, early marriages, dropping out of school, FGM and beading among teenage girls and mothers in El Parako in Magadi*

forefront confronting the challenge of forced early marriages, teenage pregnancies, beading of school going children and family violence particularly among indigenous and pastoralist communities.

Between March and December 2020, the Defenders Coalition facilitated conversation circles for HRDs, women, girls and the duty bearers to build a supportive framework for affected women and girls.

We further enhanced WHRDs capacity to make soaps, face masks and distributed information materials on personal safety and protection during COVID-19.

We also supported a women-led human rights network in Baringo County (Baringo Women and Youth empowerment Network) to enhance their capacity of producing reusable dignity kits. The kits present an alternative for young girls and mothers whose access to sanitary ware is limited.

Through the initiative, the Defenders coalition also hopes that the network will have an alternative source of disposable income thus enhance the members' economic well being .

With the second wave of Covid-19 sweeping across the country, we have been receiving humanitarian, emergency response and psychosocial requests for support from human rights organizations and HRDs. With the support and cooperation with our partners, we continue to offer timely support.

**27**

**MONITORS WERE DEPLOYED FOR A PERIOD OF 6 MONTHS TO MONITOR AND DOCUMENT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AT THE GRASSROOT LEVEL DURING THE PANDEMIC.**



“10,000 face masks were distributed in 2020, 10 human rights networks were trained on liquid soap making. They have since organically imparted the skills among community women”

*Youth supported to make liquid soap- crucial commodity in the prevention of the spread of Covid-19*



Photo Credit: <https://defenddefenders.org>

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELLBEING OF HRDs

*We facilitate HRDs to build their socio- economic resilience and attain improved quality of life. Such support will also seek to ensure that HRDs are self-sufficient, easily access the basic necessities of life and live in dignity. In particular, the Defenders Coalition will strengthen the capacities of HRDs to engage in productive activities so as to increase their self-reliance and income security.*





## SOCIO- ECONOMIC WELLBEING

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### 3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELLBEING OF HRDS

The economic and social disruptions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating effect on the progress of poverty eradication in Kenya. The strain that was caused by the raft of measures by the government to contain Covid trickled down to impact on family setups and structures.

Further the lockdowns and curfews exposed many to mental wellbeing, as it made it difficult to move freely and meet physically with family and loved ones.

Human Rights defenders were not spared of these disruptions. A majority of whom mainly rely on day to day incomes, were disrupted in different unproportional ways. In response we undertook the following activities:

### 3.2 Webinar Series on economic impact of Covid-19 and solutions to the devastation

Defenders Coalition hosted a series of webinars with grassroots HRDs to share their experiences during the partial lockdowns and curfew. The webinars highlighted the challenges and inspiring resilience of HRDs amidst the pandemic, recollecting our efforts and paving the way for economic sustainability.

Through the Webinars we focused to:

- Understand the challenges faced by grassroots HRDs, especially artists.
- Identify areas of intervention especially on creating linkages with business Development services and available economic opportunities.

**FREE WEBINAR**

## **HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS ECONOMIC WELLBEING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**



**Euphresher Rina**  
*Teacher, Counsellor  
Trainer of Trainers.*  
- Vihiga



**Kefar Gwaro**  
*Technician, Ladies of Hope.*  
- Mukuru kwa Jenga



**Elva Ondiek**  
*Armstrong Women's  
Empowerment Center,*  
Kisumu



**Salome Nduta**  
*Head of Programmes  
Defenders Coalition*



### 3.3 Using evidence, examples to spark a culture of economic independence -HRD Market

For the second year in a row, the Defenders Coalition organized the Human Rights Defenders Market.

The market which is for and by HRDs, brings together inspiring and creative HRDs who are running income generating businesses including bead work, tailoring, basketry, car wash, community eateries, branding, designing etc.

The owners/networks running the businesses got an opportunity to mentor the upcoming HRDs on the different ways that they defend human rights sustainably through an ongoing robust mentorship programme.

#### Economic Empowerment at the Academy

91 HRDs were put through an 5-day economic empowerment training at the Annual HRD Academy. This work helps extend the Defenders Coalition's strategic choice of ensuring that HRDs receive an all-round capacity enhancement. The training exposed the young HRDs to successful economic empowerment case studies for adoption of best practices.

Moreover, the HRDs were exposed to financial literacy, mentoring and advisory on available economic opportunities. We also brought on board business development service providers who would give extension services to the HRDs.

Through the training we were able to achieve the following;

- HRDs were equipped with knowledge on available funding opportunities and how to access the funds.
- HRDs made commitments to venture into county savings groups (community owned organizations for economic and tertiary support) for self-sustainability for grassroots HRDs.



*The opening of the HRD market during the Annual HRD Academy in November 2020*

## Mental Health Awareness

On 30th October 2020, together with Coalition for grassroots Human Rights Defenders, Mukuru Social Justice centre & Mukuru Angaza CBO, Defenders coalition held a one-day sensitization forum on mental health. The forum brought together HRDs from the informal settlement from Nairobi for a debrief session, as a result;

Five HRDs were able to access comprehensive psychosocial support.

Defenders Coalition established a HRD-led wellness network for HRDs within Mukuru informal settlement.

## Holistic empowerment of HRD Networks and shaping the resilience discourse

2020 was a tough year. Marred by the widespread effects of Covid-19 the Through cooperation with our development partners, the Defenders Coalition appreciates the flexibility accorded in the implementation of our program work. We were able to make imperative humanitarian interventions aimed at supporting communities' resilience during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Defenders coalition recognizes that support to HRDs is central to realization of universal human respect for human rights and implementation of international human rights protocols that contribute to a safer and more just world.

We believed and continue to believe that capacity development; building movements/ strategic partnerships; and assuring an enabling policy, legal, institutional and cultural environment have the greatest impact on safety, security and wellbeing of HRDs.

We imparted and supported HRD networks with the necessary resources to enhance their capacity on liquid soap making - a commodity that was necessary in the efforts to contain the spread of the Covid-19.

*“Since receiving the support, two human rights networks - Feminist for Peace Rights and Justice Centre and Maringo Finest- have organically been producing liquid soap and selling it within their communities for at affordable rates thus making soap readily available to low-income earners as well as becoming an income generating activity for the networks.”*

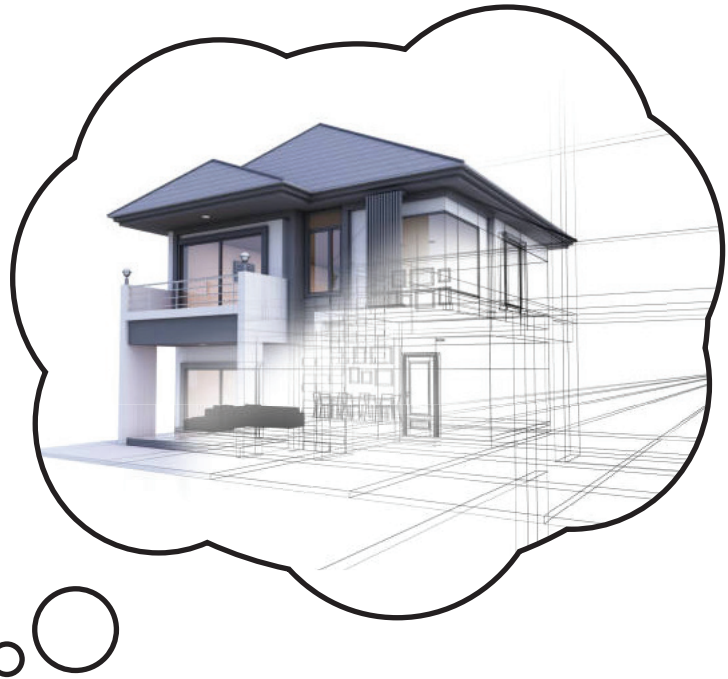
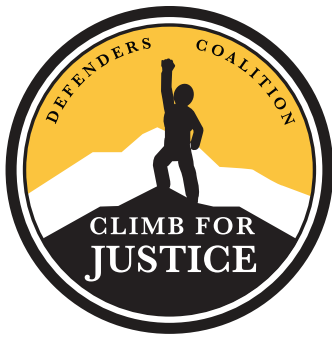
22 networks were supported. Namely: Social Justice Centers Working Group, Wajir Women’s Network, Baringo Women and Youth Network, Lebit Community Based Organization, Mukuru Angaza, Sengwer Women of Embobut, Elgeyo Marakwet Women, Kisumu VOWWEK, Lamu WOmEn HRDs Network, MidRift Human Rights Network, Nyando Social Justice Centre, Feminist For Peace Rights and Justice Centre, Miss Koch Foundation, Coalition for Grassroot Human Rights Defenders, Taita Taveta CSO’s Network, Teenseed Foundation, Kwale, Vihiga HRDs Network, Endorois Indigenous Women Empowerment Network, Lamu WHRDs Network.

The support to networks achieved the following:

1. Enhanced resilience and cohesion of HRDs in the dark wave of uncertainty that hanged on the heads of not only HRDs but also globally;
2. Created a platform for engagement between the HRDs and community members;
3. Shaped the narrative of HRDs as not only people who question human rights violations against other people, but also those who offer solutions to problems that face their communities;
4. Promoted the visibility of HRDs through creativity and innovation;
5. Strengthened networks;
6. The food packages to HRDs ensured needy community members and HRDs had food on their table;
7. Promoted the socio-economic wellbeing of HRDs as some networks started generating income by selling the liquid soap to community members at low prices.



HRD debriefing session during the Annual HRD Academy



*Raising funds to establish vibrant space for strengthening the promotion and protection of HRD rights and all Kenyans as enshrined in the constitution.*

**ONE STEP  
ONE BOB**

Supporters of the Climb for Justice campaign continue to make thousands of steps every day to show forth the work of defending human rights. Every step they take and sweat they break in the name of just supports the struggle, risks, pain and sacrifice that HRDs make in their work. Support Climb for Justice, One Step-One Bob.

#Climbforjustice



**Mpesa Paybill:** 810896

**Account:** Your name

**Cheque payable to:**

The National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders-Kenya

**Bank Details:**

NIC Bank Account: 1001188727



An Initiative of **DEFENDERS  
COALITION**



#### INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

*Internally, Defenders Coalition will seek to consolidate its position as a dynamic, effective and sustainable organization. We will mainly focus on further strengthening/ diversifying our resource base, human resource and leadership capabilities, as well as our internal systems, policies and structures.*



## INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

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### 4.1 Defenders Coalition incorporates Power Analysis in its work

Over the last 13 years work on organizing for advocacy and rights-based development has increasingly gained credibility, producing some important policy advances at local, nation and international levels and in varying magnitudes. Yet the Defenders Coalition and her partners have found that these victories are often incomplete, quickly overturned, and can even undermine organizations and social movements that are crucial to sustaining long-term change.

As an umbrella organization and with membership of several HRDs, NGOs and CBOs , majority who have professionalized themselves around advocacy and won legitimacy, many times our members have fallen into the pitfall of only engaging in the exciting nature of policy work aimed at the very visible dimensions of power.

Many of us have, however, tended to lose sight of the community organizing, movement-building and critical thinking aspects of social change work directed at the less visible manifestations of power.

Therefore, we have incorporated Power Analysis Strategy Framework in our work for extensive and informed analysis of power and designing action approaches to engage with the powers. We are smoothly rolling it out to our members.

In this way, we believe our members will better analyze their own contexts, design comprehensive sets of strategies, identify and engage a more effective mix of allies and tap their own individual and collective power for social change.

### 4.2 Musical Extravaganza for Debriefing: Mashujaa Festival

This is an annual event that is marked on every 20th Of October to recognize and celebrate the sacrifices the heroes and sheroes of our time and previously have made to realize the freedom and liberation of Kenya. The term "Mashujaa" means heroes.

In 2020, the event was held on December 12, where members of the public and activists came together through a music extravaganza. It was the second year that the event was being held. In total, the event has been able to attract over 8,000 participants who attend the event live (online as well as in-person).

The Festival also offers an opportunity to talented HRDs to publicly showcase local and regional creative genius to various audiences globally.

The event also offered HRDs and members of the public an opportunity to debrief after being forced to stay indoors due to Covid-19 public health guidelines. This year's event accommodated both virtual and physical audiences on Facebook live and Youtube Live.

### 4.3 Embracing ICT in our work: Training goes digital

With the current global pandemic and dynamics that beat physical activities, the Defenders Coalition moved to offer its services online.

It is envisioned that the E-library will close the knowledge and information gap among community based HRDs in safety and protection through online information sharing also aims to, in the long run to build a national level knowledge hub on HRDs issues that can be tapped by institutions of higher learning to enhance and build on their already-existing resources on human rights from the perspective of academia.

The e-library has courses including an introduction to the Principles of Human Rights, Monitoring, Documentation, Reporting, Digital Security and Physical Security management.

Other materials on the website include reports and manuals developed by the Defenders Coalition and her partners over time.

You can access the elibrary here <https://elibrary.defenderscoalition.org/>

The launch, officiated by the Executive Director of the Coalition and officially launched by the Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Switzerland Mr. Patrick Egloff, the launch was well attended both physically and virtually more than Eighty(80) people from different sectors, embassies, civil societies and human rights defenders attended the launch physically and virtually.

- HRDs can now access training materials remotely
- HRDs can share knowledge exchange materials on the blog section of the e-library
- Members of the academia and the public can access a wide pool of materials to expand their research in the field of academia and fact checking

### 4.4 Institutionalizing sustainability: Conquering summits for Justice, well being

On 13th August 2019, the Defenders Coalition kicked off the #ClimbForJustice Campaign to invite human rights defenders, friends of Defenders Coalition and citizens to take part in a fundraising initiative to Climb hills and mountains to inject a strategic direction sustainability in the protection of human rights defenders in Kenya.

31 supporters successfully climbed Mt. Kenya. Over 700 Kenyans supported the campaign. They raised 6.9 Million out of our target of KES 50 Million.

Despite the lockdowns and many guidelines that made it almost impossible to hold physical activities, the campaign stayed active and served as a wellness activity for many. It was the platform where HRDs could meet to check on one another.

**6.4 MILLION  
STEPS FOR JUSTICE**

Through the year, over 400 supporters of the campaign took part in the hikes. Together, the hikers made approximately 6, 442,800 steps for Justice. The hiking destination conquered include Kudu Hills Nature Conservancy, Eburru Forest, Ngong Hills, Elephant Hill and William Hill



CONQUERED SUMMITS

DESTINATION	DISTANCE (KMs)	CLIMBERS
Kudu Hills, Kajiado	12	112
Eburu Forest, Naivasha	16	23
Ngong Hills, Kajiado	18	28
William Hill, Kiambu	14	14
Elephant Hill, Nyandarua	21	81
Elephant Hill 2	21	28

This phase of the campaign presented an exciting opportunity for human rights defenders, friends, supporters of Defenders Coalition to join us in building a home for human rights defenders, which is a centre of excellence for defenders wellness and safety, organise, network, share knowledge, and build talents in order to continue defending the weak in our society.

We aim to continue raising the remaining KES 43. 9 Million through the “Climb for Justice!” campaign which is set to run into December 2021 and culminate with summiting the tallest mountain in Africa, Mt. Kilimanjaro.



Climbers hoisting their flags at Lenana Point in December 2019 in support of #ClimbForJustice campaign

#### 4.5 Online Fitness Sessions

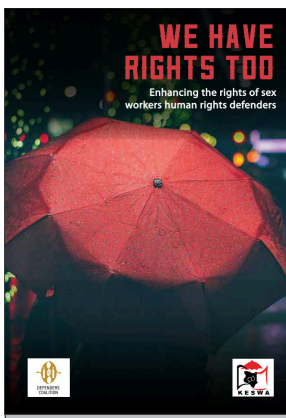
The Defenders Coalition continued to support HRDs throughout the Covid-19 pandemic by having weekly virtual fitness sessions to encourage a culture of practicing physical activities among HRDs even when in the comfort of their home. The sessions were requisite for debriefing considering the sudden change in the ways of interacting, and working.

## 4.6 Media and Communication

In 2020, we continued to share our monthly newsletters and increased our online presence. We conducted 3 campaigns online #HRDAwardKE, #ShujaaMtaani and #ClimbForJustice to highlight the work of HRDs and foster an enabling environment for rights defenders through regular engagements with members of the public.

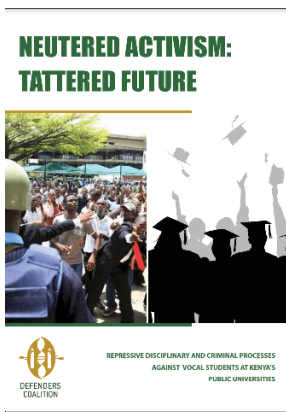


## List of publications in 2020



WE HAVE RIGHTS TOO: ENHANCING THE RIGHTS OF SEX WORK HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS (REPORT)

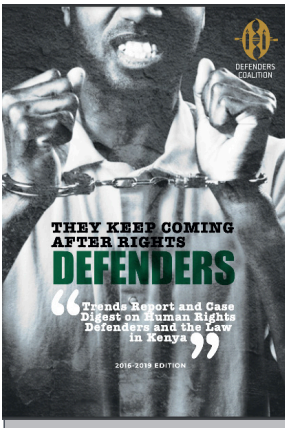
<https://defenderscoalition.org/we-have-rights-too-enhancing-the-rights-of-sex-work-human-rights-defenders-report/>



REPRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY AND CRIMINAL PROCESSES AGAINST VOCAL STUDENTS AT KENYA'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

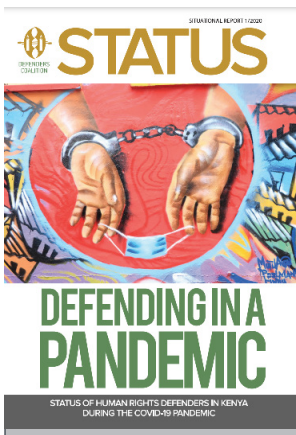
[https://defenderscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Neutered-Activism\\_-Tattered-Future-2-1.pdf](https://defenderscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Neutered-Activism_-Tattered-Future-2-1.pdf)

# List of publications in 2020



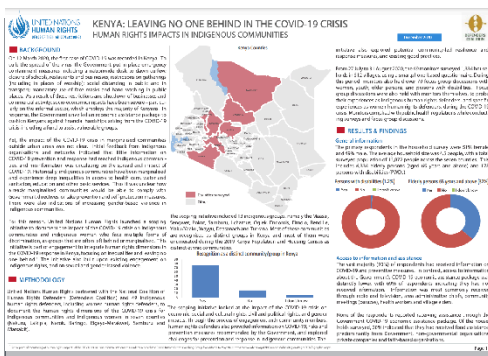
## CASE DIGEST REPORT: THEY KEEP COMING AFTER RIGHTS DEFENDERS

<https://defenderscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/NCHRD-K-CASE-DIGEST-REVISED-EDITION-NEW-2020-NOV.pdf>



## STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN KENYA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

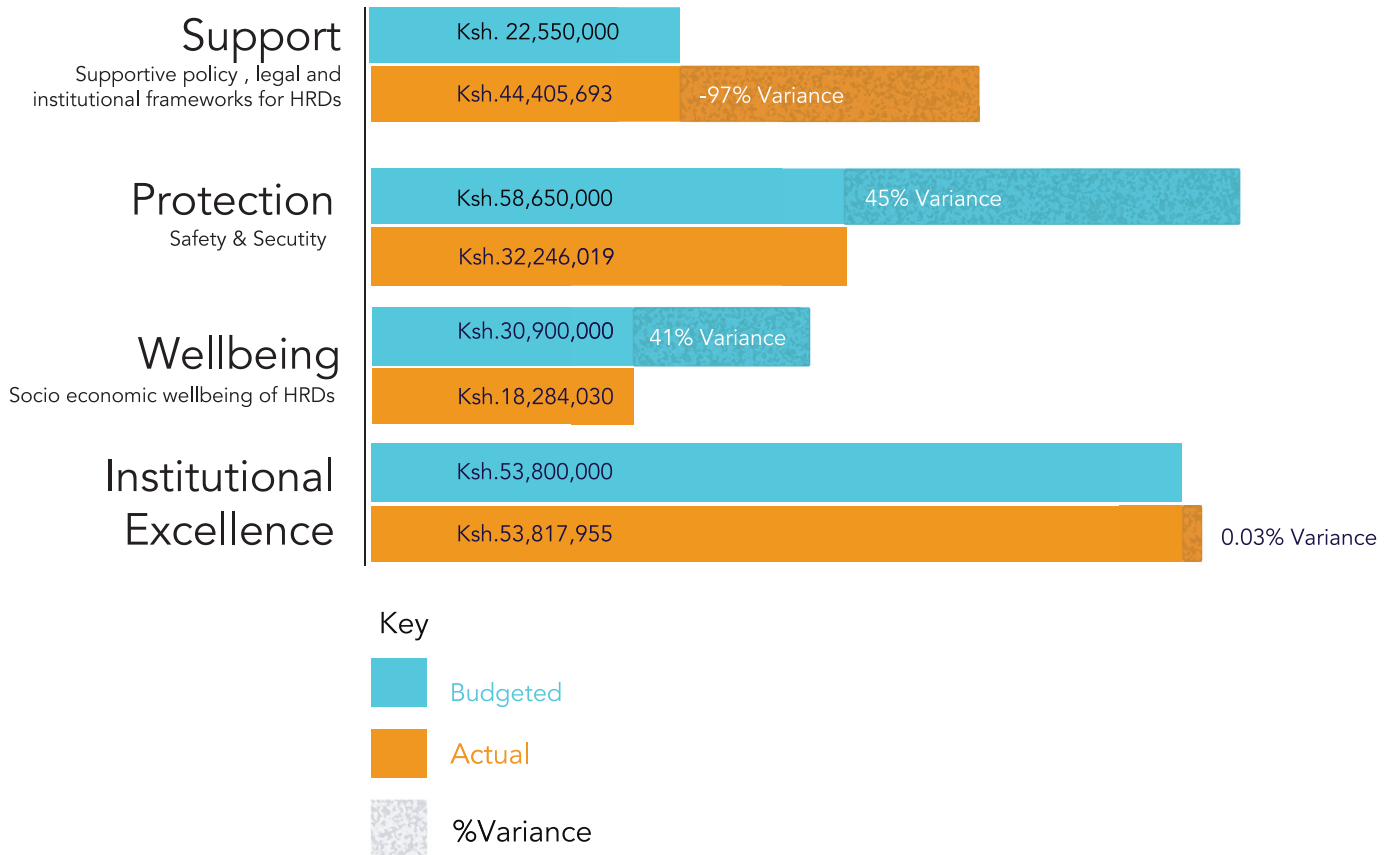
[https://defenderscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Defenders-Coalition-Situational-Report-1\\_2020-.pdf](https://defenderscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Defenders-Coalition-Situational-Report-1_2020-.pdf)



## KENYA: LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND IN THE COVID-19 CRISIS HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

[https://defenderscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/OHCHR-DC\\_December2020.pdf](https://defenderscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/OHCHR-DC_December2020.pdf)

# Pillar Funding



# The Secretariat



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Executive Director*



*Salome Nduta  
Head of Programs*



*Gloria Madegwa  
Head of Operations &  
Strategic Partnerships*



*Mercy Nzomo  
Finance Manager*



*Francis Ndegwa  
Advocacy Manager*



*Diana Letion  
Knowledge and Protection  
Manager*



*Obino Nyambane  
Communications and Resource  
Mobilisation manager*



*Joyce Njeri  
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*Molly Aketch  
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# CIVIL LIBERTY JUSTICE FREEDOMS OF ASSEMBLY SECURITY OF PERSON ASSOCIATION AND EXPRESSION EQUALITY INCLUSION EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

*"Congratulation Defenders coalition. Today we visited IPOA Nakuru offices, following your complain intervention to police brutality to 2 Naivasha land rights defenders. The issue is being addressed, but it's back ground complexity and scale of corporate and business human rights abuses, and ongoing investors petition at corporate legal battles. parties agreed for more sittings. next week Friday. Hongera for standing with us"*  
- Haki Jamii Rights Centre

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*Great job Nchrd Kenya you are doing. Be sure they can lock up people but the spirit of patriotism will not be confined in police cells.*  
-Micop Cbo

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*I thank you for supporting Hrds in Kenya , your work towards Hrds in Kenya is highly appreciated Kamau Ngugi, Salome Nduta, Gloria Madegwa and other staff, all Hrds in Kenya. I am wishing you all the best merry Christmas and happy New year*  
-Nathan Naythan

---

*On behalf of the social justice western working Group I truly appreciate the NCHD for building the resilience of of Grassroot Hrds. Long live the spirit of organizing. Viva.*  
-Odhiambo Ojira

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*Great work Kamau Ngugi and Nchrd Kenya for capacity building grassroots organization.*  
#SeedTheChangeYouEnvision  
- Charles Njenga

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*"Congratulations Defenders Coalition. Today we visited IPOA Nakuru offices, following your complain intervention to police brutality to 2 Naivasha land rights defenders. The issue is being addressed, but it's back ground complexity and scale of corporate and business human rights abuses, and ongoing investors petition at corporate legal battles. parties agreed for more sittings. next week Friday. Hongera for standing with us"*  
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DEFENDERS  
COALITION

**SAFETY, SECURITY, WELLBEING OF HRDS**

Defenders Coalition | P. O. Box 26309- 00100 Nairobi