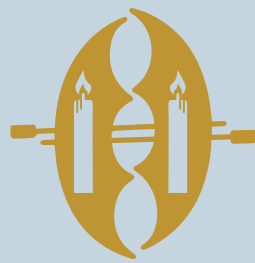


ISSUE 2, 2022

# THE JUSTICE WATCHERS

MARCH, APRIL, MAY, 2022



DEFENDERS  
COALITION



## NEWSLETTER

SAFETY, SECURITY AND WELLBEING OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

# DEFENDERS COALITION

## WHAT WE DO



### **Supportive Policy, Legal and Institutional Frameworks**

The Defenders Coalition works to position itself as a thought leader and collaborative partner towards (re)formulation and/or enforcement of appropriate policies, laws, institutions and cultural norms that touch on the safety, security and wellbeing of HRDs



### **HRD Protection and Safety**

The main aim of this pillar will be to facilitate timely and appropriate responses to all forms of threats or insecurities to HRDs.



### **Socio-economic wellbeing of HRDs**

To facilitate HRDs to build their socio-economic resilience and attain an 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.



### **Institutional excellence**

Defenders Coalition will see to consolidate its position as a dynamic, effective and sustainable organization.

# Editorial

*By Kamau Ngugi, Executive Director  
Defenders Coalition*

Its injury time for Kenya as the August 9 general elections approaches. Its that time when like others who believe in democracy the citizens have the opportunity to renew mandates of their leaders to govern the state on their behalf, or replace them with those that they believe provide alternative solutions to their problems or meet their aspirations and to make informed choices when political parties and individuals develop and market their manifestos.

Various government agencies are tasked with putting their houses in order for the peaceful conduct of the election and to ensure the process lead to free, fair and credible elections. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) for example must act as a fair umpire and ensure the field is fair for all players by ensuring that enabling laws are in place and followed to the letter, and the electoral infrastructure is beyond reproach. The security agencies ensure the leaders freely and safely market their candidature and the citizens make choices out of free will and not through coercion, intimidation, violence, threats or insults. On the other hand, advocates of human rights including civil society organizations (CSOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), HRD Networks, Human Rights Movements and human rights defenders (HRDs) are keen to promote electoral integrity, respect for human rights and accountable leadership prior to, during and post election 2022.

Defenders Coalition which is concerned with good governance, rule of law and the respect of human



rights for all by working with human rights defenders at the frontline to ensure that they are safe when conducting their frontline role of promoting peace, harmony, justice and the respect for human rights. We have made deliberate efforts to strengthen the capacities of Civil Society Groups and individuals to effectively play their critical role of monitoring, documenting and reporting human rights violations during the election period for timely remedies and justice for the victims.

Defenders Coalition has trained and deployed 105 monitors to conduct this work across 29 counties in Kenya.

We are also collaborating with our partners that have monitors in the other counties to share critical information that is helpful in advancing the safety of HRDs and election monitors from all the 47 counties in Kenya

# Editorial

By Kamau Ngugi, Executive Director  
Defenders Coalition

. Among the benefits that HRDs have gained from the Coalition is skills to confront and manage risks during the 2022 elections period. Over One hundred and Fifty HRDs (155) undergone training in digital security management following documentation of risks encountered when HRDs conducted advocacy at digital platforms. Out of 155, trained, 60% are Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) and sexual minority rights advocates.

In addition to leadership in enhancing HRDs safety, Defenders Coalition has been encouraging the HRDs family to prioritize the physical and mental wellbeing. As a demonstration, we launched and continue to rally HRDs to participate in outdoor excursions. The most successful in 2022 being able to successfully conquered Mt. Kenya in March. During this physically challenging but rewarding endeavor 17 out of 17 climbers made it to Point Lenana demonstrating resilience and commitment to a good cause of raising awareness on human rights violations and to funds for the establishment of the Haki Village; a resource hub for HRDs and the larger human rights community.

It is unfortunate that despite such positive human rights strides we also encountered huge setbacks. Human rights defenders Elizabeth Ekaru and Sheila Lumumba were brutally murdered in 2022 with little progress in holding those responsible to account. In the case of Elizabeth, an arrest was made and the matter is in court. However no arrest were made for the killers of Sheila despite massive public outrage.

Other Cases of HRDs killed in previous years remained unresolved including Paul Ndirangu Kioi killed in 2020, environmentalist Joanna Stutchbury, in 2021, Journalist Betty Barasa in 2021, and Joash Mosoti in 2021. There has also been worrying escalation of attacks of the rights of sexual minority individuals and groups with impunity including routine harassment by law enforcement agents, arbitrary arrests and detention, extortion, sexual violence, physical assault, and evictions.

The state also intensified tactics violating or limiting civic action by regularly arresting HRDs who dared to assemble peacefully and petition various duty bearers over a range of issues. Because of these harassment Defenders Coalition support to the criminalization through bail, bond and legal representation increased. It's unfortunate that judicial harassment remained the leading tactic of limiting HRDs agency.

***Despite all these, we recognize the fact that the level of awareness on the need to promote and protect human rights in our communities has increased. This means that silence is not an option when violations occur. Defenders Coalition, therefore, affirms its fiery commitment to collaboratively act, with quality and in a timely manner, at the preventive and responsive levels to ensure safety, security and wellbeing of those involved in the work of speaking truth to power in all the 47 Counties in Kenya.***

# Our Work During The Period

Reached and strengthened **6** county WHRD networks

We Provided legal assistance to **18** HRDs at risk due to their work

Trained **105** Monitors on elections monitoring

Enhanced capacities of **35** LGBTQ+ HRDs on digital security management

**8** WHRD Networks received support for network strengthening and psychosocial wellbeing

**105** monitors deployed to monitor human rights violations in **29** counties

# Our Work During The Period

**3** HRD Groups received psychosocial debriefs

Submitted a statement to the ACPHR on the situation of Human Rights Defenders in Kenya and accountable in the implementation of the recommendations

**13** mainstream media coverage

**11.6**

Million shillings mark hit in support of Climb For Justice Campaign



## Contributing towards positive lasting change in supportive Policy, Legal and Institutional Frameworks

Every year the Defenders Coalition gets an opportunity to submit statements about Human Rights in Kenya to the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR)

On 27 April 2022, Defenders Coalition submitted a statement to the commission during the 71 Virtual ordinary session regarding the situation of Human Rights Defenders in Kenya with the aim of holding the government accountable in their commitment towards the implementation of various recommendations by the ACHPR from the previous reporting period but also push the government to protect and promote the work and the rights of HRDs.



**DEMAND AN END TO INCREASING FEMICIDE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**Nationwide protest against the increased cases of femicide on women and women human rights defenders in Kenya.**

**Tuesday, 11th January 2022  
9:00am - 12:00pm**

Contact 0716200100 or 0712632390 to link up with other human rights defenders networks near you to join the protest.



## Recommendations

1. Call upon the Kenyan Government to recognize and promote the work of Human rights defenders as they play a critical role in safeguarding democracy and ensuring that societies remain open, pluralistic, and in line with the rule of law.
2. Call upon the Kenyan Government to share an update of all documented cases of femicide and the perpetrators brought to book.
3. Urge the Kenyan Government to respect and safeguard the citizen's right to privacy and ensure that state and non-state bodies adhere to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

**“ Cases of femicide are on the rise in Kenya including that of Woman Human Rights Defender Elizabeth Ekaru who was killed on 3 January 2022 in Isiolo. Justice for the victims is still elusive. ”**

## Conversation circles with WHRDs and duty bearers in 6 Counties



*Women Human Rights Defenders and Duty bearers from Kwale County after a successful county conversation circle meeting on 26 May 2022.*

In our efforts to strengthen grassroots networks of HRDs and Civil society organizations, including those of women and feminist groups, Defenders Coalition, through the partnership of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi, continued to bring together WHRDs from Kajiado, Busia, Migori, Kwale, Mandera and Turkana Counties.

### Key Outcomes

1. Formed 6 County HRD Networks
2. Identified priority actions for collaboration towards realization of the United Nations Declaration on HRDs and gender equality
3. Created linkages amongst duty bearers and WHRDs



MARCH, APRIL, MAY , 2022

## Statement on IDAHOBIT and the Safety, Security of SOGIE Persons in Kenya

The Defenders Coalition joins individuals across the globe to commemorate the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBIT) 2022. We join hands to call to action and emphasise our affirmation that all people have an equal right to live a life of dignity, free from violence, persecution, discrimination and stigma.



Defenders Coalition is concerned that the limiting and discriminatory legal framework on the rights of sexual minorities in Kenya is acquiescely increasing the vulnerability of SOGIE persons to bias and social stigma, discrimination, economic impact, the risk of violence and domestic parental violence, and continues to contribute to the lack of access to gender-affirming health services. We are also concerned with the lack of a dedicated state agency to work on issues related to their safety and security.

While acknowledging increasing efforts in many countries to protect the rights of members of Sexual, Orientation, Gender, Identity and Expression (SOGIE), we remain seriously concerned with the widespread violation of the human rights of community members in Kenya in recent years, from elements including close family, community and members of the public.

We are concerned that within the past one year, Defenders Coalition has documented 23 cases of either/or violent murder, assault, forceful eviction of LGBTQ+ individuals across Kenya with little to no action by the relevant duty bearers in promoting the safety and security of sexual minority individuals as well as seeking justice for the victims. Among the documented cases, we noted that the victims of murder were brutally stabbed to death or sexually abused through corrective gang rape or strangled and/or violently assaulted before being killed.

In consideration of these grave concerns, pursuant to the rights and freedoms provided for in the Constitution of Kenya 2010, Defenders Coalition calls on all Kenyans to commit towards the promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTQ+ persons in Kenya. We call on Kenyans to strive to realise dignity, respect, and the rights of all citizens.

”

***Defenders Coalition celebrates the courageous advocacy efforts carried out by human rights defenders, activists, journalists, media workers and civil society organisations to raise awareness about the issues affecting SOGIE persons and human rights violations they may face. ”***

We invite you to support our goals of realising safety, security and wellbeing of human rights defenders. We condemn these acts of violence and inaction by the state actors to hold perpetrators to account.

Annex: LGBTQ+ individuals killed in Kenya between January 2021 – May 2022

known victims and documented cases of violations

1. Sheila Lumumba was discovered dead on 22 April 2022 at their home in Karatina Town. Post-mortem reports indicated that they were hit by a blunt object on the head, raped and stabbed to death.
2. A 50 year old intersex was found murdered on 4 May 2022 by the roadsie in Cherang'any constituency, Trans Nzoia County. Reports indicate that the victim was raped.
3. Joash Mosoti was found murdered by strangulation in his house in Bamburi, Mombasa County on 11 May 2021.
4. Erica Chandra was found dead in westlands Nairobi on 29 August 2021.

The Missing Voices Coalition released its findings on enforced disappearances and police brutality in Kenya on 27 April 2022.

In the report, the Coalition of organizations documented 219 cases of police killings and enforced disappearances in Kenya for the year 2021.

According to the report titled *Delayed Justice* the most vulnerable to police killings in Kenya are men from informal settlements between the ages 18 and 35.

The report also noted that Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Kenya face innumerable threats from security agencies when they pursue cases of police killings and enforced disappearances.

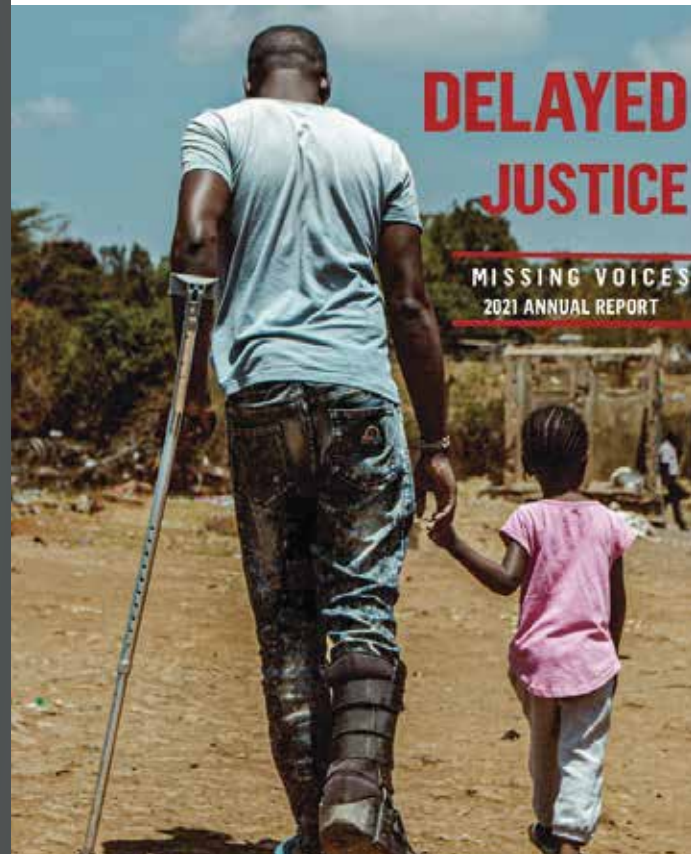
Data from the report also shows that Kenya's capital, Nairobi, has the highest incidences of police killings, while Mombasa, was the city most affected by enforced disappearances.

Of the 219 documented cases of police killings and enforced disappearances were as a result of 161 separate incidents.

36 were cases of enforced disappearances and four were found dead more than 24 hours after disappearing in police custody.

The report called for the enactment of a law on enforced disappearances or amend existing legislation to criminalise enforced disappearances. The report also called on the judiciary to expedite and finalise the cases of enforced disappearances, police killings before the courts.

Read the full report on Missing Voices Coalition Website [www.missingvoices.or.ke](http://www.missingvoices.or.ke)



**“ The report also noted that Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Kenya face innumerable threats from security agencies when they pursue cases of police killings and enforced disappearances. ”**

The call for Nominations for the Annual Human Rights Defenders Awards has been released. Nominate HRDs for an opportunity for public recognition on their work via [www.defenderscoalition.org](http://www.defenderscoalition.org)

Continued to take part in Police Reforms Working Group to specifically promote adoption of human rights based approach in policymaking by law enforcement agencies

Together with the Working Group on Huduma Namba, we sought to influence the Huduma Bill by submitting various memoranda to law makers.

Website: [www.defenderscoalition.org](http://www.defenderscoalition.org)

Follow us on our social media handles:



Defenders Coalition



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@DefendersKE

# 2

## Enhancing the protection of Human Rights Defenders

While a lot of effort has gone towards advocating for an enabling working environment for human rights defenders in Kenya, Human Rights Defenders continue to remain exposed to safety and security risks that emanate as a result of their work.

Defenders Coalition has documented violations and abuses on the freedom of assembly, freedom of the media, right to life, right to security, right to housing and spousal/gender based violence.

There have also been incidents pointing at the emergency of actions geared towards limiting the freedom of expression by HRDs. We noted the following: Highly coordinated smear campaigns on Social media platforms Twitter and Facebook.

# 18

Number of HRDs who received legal support

# 42

HRDS received other forms of protection Support

***For Rapid Response on protection call or Signal us on 0716 200 100***



## Capacity Enhancement: Digital Security



### Digital security trainers camp

In April Defenders Coalition held a training camp for digital security trainers in Kenya to conduct a fresher training on emerging trends in digital security.

Through engagement, the participants developed an action plan for offering digital security support to HRDs during the 2022 elections period.

### Elections Monitors trained

In May, Defenders Coalition trained 105 elections monitors on the basic digital security management.

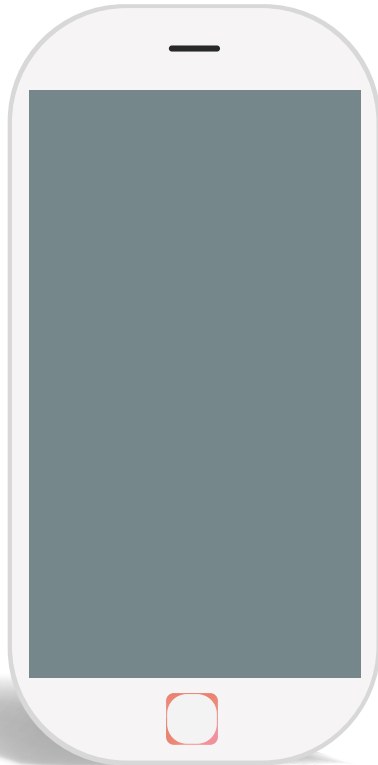
### HRDs trained in Mombasa

In April, Defenders Coalition trained a group of 30 HRDs on digital security management in Mombasa.

### Organizational security enhancement

A total of five grassroots organizations in Taita Taveta, Kisumu, Nyeri and Makueni received equipment for strengthening their physical and digital security management.

## Mobile Applications for human rights work



### Revamped An Application for monitoring and reporting HRD violations

The Defenders Coalition has successfully revamped its mobile application - Mtezi for purposes of reporting human rights violations. The application also has features including panic button for rapid response.

### E-learning Application

Defenders Coalition continues to make available our e-library, a platform for remote learning. Learners can access modules including principles to human rights, monitoring, documentation and reporting, security management.

Learners also have access to a pool of resources including literature and knowledge generated from research over the years.

*Download both mobile applications on Google Playstore and Apple Store or visit [www.defenderscoalition.org](http://www.defenderscoalition.org)*

***// Defenders Coalition has a world-class digital security management desk. Reach us on [ict@defenderscoalition.org](mailto:ict@defenderscoalition.org) for any support on digital security and safety. //***

MARCH, APRIL, MAY, 2022



## **Deliberate monitoring of** violations during 2022 elections period

In May, Defenders Coalition trained 105 monitors from 29 counties on monitoring, documentation and reporting.

The monitors have since been deployed to monitor and document elections-related human rights violations for purposes of intervening by outing mechanisms to deter violations, warn and seek justice for victims.

**Whereas 105 Monitors were trained and deployed to monitor violations during elections in 29 counties, Defenders coalition welcomes reports and any information that would lead to addressing safety concerns of HRDs and promotion of human rights. Reach us on 0716 200 100 for any emergencies related to your work**





## Contributing towards the socio-economic wellbeing of HRDs to defend rights with dignity

### 8 networks supported

Defenders coalition has supported 8 women human rights defenders networks over this period.

The support facilitated institutional support towards the sustainability of the work of grassroots WHRDs and offered needed support towards promoting their wellbeing, adoption and actualization of the recommendations of the report on promoting wellbeing, mental health and self-care for WHRDs in Kenya.

The beneficiaries of this support included women in social justice centers and WHRDs networks from Nairobi, Lamu, Elgeyo Marakwet, Wajir and Vihiga.

### Mental Health

In March 2022 in collaboration with the Bipolar Heroes Foundation- Kenya, we commemorated

World bipolar day through an engagement that brought together stakeholders who offer psychiatric services including the ministry of health and mental health advocates. This gave

Mental health rights advocates the opportunity to share their lived experiences as well as have one on one engagement on the discourse of provision and access to psychiatric services as well as advocacy strategies on policy reforms for mainstreaming mental health issues.

### Psychosocial Group Debriefs

Defenders Coalition supported three (3) group psychosocial debrief sessions. The sessions saw HRDs from those affected by the forced evictions within Mukuru kwa Njenga slums, SOGIE HRDs responsible for security response from 16 organizations and Women in social Justice centers take time to reflect on their wellbeing, examine the effects of their work on their mental and physical health and offered opportunity for them to build resilience through peer to peer sharing.

### Staff Wellbeing

We have continued to prioritize staff wellbeing through the observance of wellness Friday with the last Friday of the month being a staff wellbeing day.

# WALL OF HUMANITY

This page is deliberately left blank for you to scribble something and share with us some of the successes you experienced towards the promotion and protection of human rights during the period. We are happy to read and tell the whole world about it. Share the stories with us via [communication@defenderscoalition.org](mailto:communication@defenderscoalition.org).

DONATE TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF DEFENDERS COALITION ON MPESA  
PAYBILL 810896, ACCOUNT; YOUR NAME



# 4

## Consolidating Defenders Coalition as an effective, dynamic, professional and reliable human rights institution

Supporters of Climb for Justice campaign remained enthusiastic about the hiking expeditions for a cause and wellness benefits that came with it. During the period, the Defenders coalition conducted three hiking activities to Mt. Kenya (day hike), Rurimeria Hills and Mt Kenya expedition for five days.

Moreover, climbers were encouraged to take part in weekly workouts in preparation for the ultimate hikes.

A total of 76 climbers took part in the hikes. The ultimate hike of the period was at Mt. Kenya where 17 out of 17 climbers successfully took the flag of justice to Lenana Point on Mt. Kenya. The campaign closed the period at a total of Kshs. 11.6 million.

# 11.6

Million shillings mark hit in support of Climb For Justice Campaign



## Secretariat

Continued to have a team of professional and passionate staff and volunteers at the secretariat.



# THANK YOU

## *THANK YOU*

- Sigrid Rausing Trust
- Ford Foundation
- Royal Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi
- American Jewish World Service
- Fund for Global Human Rights
- Open Society Foundations
- Defend Defenders.
- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights
- ASTREA Foundation
- Urgent Action Fund
- JAss Assocaites