



6TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TANZANIA HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' DAY

THEME: CLAIMING AND PROTECTING ONLINE CIVIC SPACE FOR PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN TANZANIA

28TH

APRIL 2019

Unending Quest to Defend Civic Space

- Eight Months of Defending Civic Space in 2019
- Unity Among Civil Society Organisations/HRDs Remain Intact
- Protection of Journalists Improved under the Coalition

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A WORD FROM THE THRDC NATIONAL COORDINATOR

I am happy to introduce you to our magazine, and take you through our journey of protecting Human Rights Defenders in Tanzania. I greatly appreciate invaluable support and continued cooperation we have been receiving from various stakeholders including our members, partners and government officials. We have always enjoyed working as a team and cherished whenever we reached a milestone while working jointly to cope with the challenges we have been facing in the course of our duties.

As you know, Tanzania has remarkably dropped from the 2018 World Press Freedom ranking, losing ground by 25 positions, because of the shrinking civic space in the country.

In the past one year, we have witnessed many incidents of clear violation of the rights of Human Rights Defenders notably journalists, whose work is increasingly becoming difficult due to frequent interference by law enforcers. As defenders of human rights, the coalition will always strive to protect the rights of Human Rights Defenders by ensuring that they work in a safe and secured environment. Through our members and partners, the coalition has managed to engage various human rights defenders, both at regional and international levels.

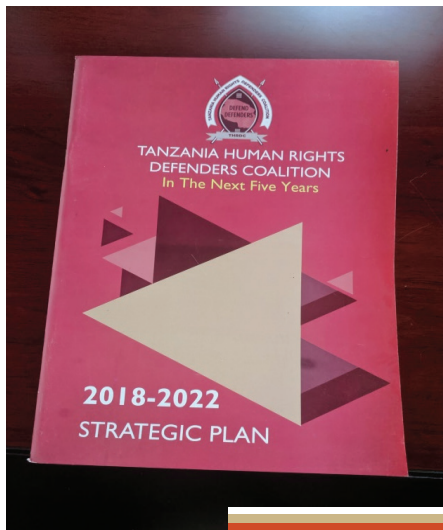
THRDC is deeply committed to protect and build capacities of the human rights defenders so that they can better serve the society through the civil society sector. We are always striving to establish and maintain good will and mutual understanding with all our stakeholders. Through our various initiatives, we have been able to empower, protect, respect, recognize and reach out to all Human Rights Defenders in the country.

We are constantly making some changes on our approach to human rights defense, with the view to improve and strengthen the performance of our organization and how it engages numerous government officials through meetings and round table discussions. This newsletter is aiming to shade some light on various activities undertaken by the coalition, with a clear focus on the worsening plight of human right defenders in Tanzania. The role of Civil Societies under the coordination of THRDC in defending civic space is highly exploited here. If you happen to be a Human Right Defender reading this newsletter, bear in mind that Defending Human Rights is not a Crime!



TANZANIA HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS COALITION EIGHT MONTHS OF DEFENDING CIVIC SPACE IN 2019 JANUARY TO AUGUST 2019

The Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) is currently working to enhance the growth of the shrinking civic space, with the view to improve working environment of the Human Rights Defenders. Since the beginning of January 2019, the coalition has been tirelessly working to meet this goal, in a strategic campaign for the growth of online and offline civic space through its various departments; Members Affairs, Advocacy, Capacity Building and Protection.



<< On 28th April 2018, THRDC Launched its Five-Year Strategic Plan (2018-2022) during the Commemoration of the 5th Anniversary of the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Day

In the 2019 World Press Freedom Index, Tanzania ranks 118 out of 180 countries from position 93 in 2018, a drop of 25 positions. According to an article titled “Bulldozing the Media” by Reporters without Borders for Freedom of Information Tanzania lost ground due to “adoption of draconian legislation, the closure of media outlets and the expulsion of press freedom defenders, the president not tolerating any form of criticism, abductions and disappearance of journalists and police





force intervening social gatherings that are deemed to be conducted by the opposition or human rights defenders.” This sums up how the civic space in Tanzania is constantly shrinking. The shrinkage has consequently affected the performance of human rights defenders who constantly fear for their lives or freedom.



impose difficult requirements to CSOs, such as re-registration of Organizations such as those registered under the Companies Act to re-register under the NGOs Act, and vague mandates to the Registrar and the responsible Minister in suspending, monitoring and overseeing the implementation of CSOs activities.

The situation has been made worse by the enactment of the Miscellaneous Amendments No.3 which removes permanent registration of Civil Society Organizations while confining them to a 10 years renewable certificate, if the registrar sees it fit. The Amendments also

Following the fact that most of the Civil Society Organizations are human rights defenders, this poses a new challenge and warrant further shrinking of the Civic space.



Delegates from Ministry for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children conducted a one day meeting to elaborate the Miscellaneous Amendment Act No.3 of 2019 mainly on Amendments in the NGOs Act (2002) to the CSOs Stakeholders after it was enacted at Karimjee Hall in July 2019.



COMMEMORATION OF THE 6TH HRDs DAY: THE GOVERNMENT SHOWS COMMITMENT TO ENACT A LAW TO PROTECT ONLINE DATA

On the 28th of April 2019, the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) commemorated the 6th Anniversary of Tanzania Human Rights Defenders' day. The Tanzania Human Rights Defenders' Day is commemorated annually as a way of honouring the establishment of the United Nations special mandate on Human Rights Defenders. This year's main theme of the event was "Claiming and Protecting Online Civic Space for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Tanzania". This theme is based on the fact that, Freedom of expression and association is a fundamental human right and that, it is essential for enjoyment of other rights. If people can't express themselves freely, other rights suffer more.



"Human Rights Defenders are not enemies". They are important partners in development", Norwegian Ambassador to Tanzania, H.E. Elisabeth Jacobsen



Access to internet is indeed our right: From Left to Right are Mr. Onesmo Olungurumwa (National Coordinator - THRDC), Maxence Melo (Executive Director – Jamii Media) and Maria Sarungi (Executive Director – Change Tanzania). Maxence Melo and Maria Sarungi were recognized as Distinguished Online Human Rights Defenders of the Year 2018.

The event was attended by stakeholders from various sectors; the Guest of Honor was the Minister of Work, Transport and Communications, who sent a representative. Others were Ambassadors to Tanzania (EU Delegation, Belgium, Norway, United States, France, Ireland, EU-HRDs Focal Point - Swedish Ambassador, British High Commissioner, High Commission of Canada), Foundation for Civil Society, representative from the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG), Defend Defenders, Tanzania Telecommunications Company Limited (TTCL), Tanzania Communications Regulations Authority (TCRA), Civil Society Organizations and other Human Rights Defenders.



<<The Guest of Honour, Partners and Human Rights Defenders Visiting CSOs Exhibition Booths on the 6th Anniversary of the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders' Day

The stakeholders were made aware of the situation of human rights defenders and the report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Tanzania was distributed. They all discussed on the challenges facing the online and offline civic space in Tanzania and how they can be resolved. During the event distinguished Online and Internet Freedom Champions were recognised and awarded.



Distinguished Awardees, seated, and THRDC Partners, Standing

Representing the Minister for Work, Transport and Communication, Mr. Mulembwa Munaku, said, “The government through the Ministry recognizes the fact that there are some challenges that affect the operation of the online media in our country. The government

will not hesitate to make amendments to the laws and policies for the betterment of the information sector in Tanzania.” He was impressed by the theme and commended THRDC for organizing the Anniversary, “This is an illustration of THRDC’s level of commitment to the promotion of human rights and protection of Human Rights Defenders in particular” he added.





Mr. Mulembwa Munaku representing the Minister for Work, Transport and Communication: “The Government is planning to enact a Law that will ensure Online Data Protection”.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION ISSUES

THRDC is an umbrella organization hosting 170 member organizations and 17 individual members, whose main activity is defending Human Rights in nine main thematic groups/ areas; Women Rights, Children Rights, Natural Resources and Economic Rights, Freedom of Expression, Political and Human Rights, Social Rights and Accountability, Pastoralists Rights, Minority Rights and Legal Aid providers. The member organizations are in both, rural and urban areas. There are so many activities performed by THRDC members in defending civic space. Stakeholders have joined hands with the members and the THRDC team in raising awareness on human rights, protection of human rights and as well as attending

trainings on increasing the online and offline civic space as well as using online platforms to advocate for human rights in Tanzania.

UNITY AMONG CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS REMAIN INTACT DESPITE OF EMERGING CHALLENGES IN CIVIC SPACE

Under the current situation where civic

“We are only as Strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided” J.K Rowling





Under the current situation where civic space has been drastically shrinking, unity among CSOs/HRDs is needed now more than ever before. Unity is needed in various areas of focus such as advocacy for legal and policy reforms, capacity building and generally in the protection and security of HRDs.

In the quest for the promotion of unity and solidarity among Human Rights Defenders in the Country, the THRDC has continued to coordinate CSOs/Human Rights Defenders in making joint interventions against emerging issues that affect civic space. For the past eight months the Coalition as an umbrella body brought together HRDs including CSOs, media, private sector and other stakeholders within the country and empowered them to work in unity and solidarity.

By uniting these voices of HRDs in the country, HRDs have continued to wield a huge influence since they speak in one voice and importantly the protection of HRDs throughout the country is strengthened. The Coalition goes an extra mile by linking local CSOs with international entities and other human rights stakeholders.

As part of improving unity among CSOs, THRDC in collaboration with the Freedom House and Pact under the support of USAID is currently implementing a project on Data Driven Advocacy (DDA), specifically on Civic Space issues. This program seeks to improve and sustain Tanzanian rights-focused civil society's ability to advocate for, and influence policy on key national level human rights issues using better data and information to drive results jointly or individually under respective organizations.

Under this program, THRDC has been mentoring and providing technical assistance to more than 20 rights-focused CSOs in data

collection and evidence-based advocacy. The program is being implemented in unity as a working group. Working Group Members are coordinated in engaging with the government and contribute to a more inclusive, data driven, human rights-focused policy-making process.



A cross section of Participants listening attentively to Adv. Leopold Moshia from the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) as he was presenting a Draft Civic Space Advocacy Charter

Key achievements:

1. The THRDC has provided platforms for increased cooperation and collaboration among members and HRDs in which advocacy activities have been highly strengthened.





- CSOs Working Group on Civic Space have continued to conduct quarterly meetings to review civic space issues and propose collective action against them.
 - Other working groups including a group of CSOs working under the name of “Ushiriki Tanzania” have continued to work together in defending democratic rights in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar.
2. Civil society’s abilities to collect, generate, monitor, and report independent and reliable information concerning human rights abuses strengthened.
 3. The capacity of Human Rights Defenders to respond to urgent and unanticipated needs have been improved. Emerging violations against freedoms of expression, assembly and association have been effectively addressed.
 - In March 2019 the East African Court of Justice declared multiple provisions of the Media Services Act violate press freedom and freedom of expression. This follows a case instituted by THRDC in collaboration with MCT and LHRC.
 - Challenging provisions under the Statistics Act (2015) amended:
Joint advocacy activities including through engaging Regional and International Human Rights Mechanisms have contributed to the amendment of the Statistics Act in July 2019. The Act has been amended to the extent that there is no need for individuals of organizations to apply for a permission for conducting research or issuing statistical data.

PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS IMPROVED UNDER THE COALITION

“Sometimes People Lose their Right to Remain Silent When Pressured to Remain Silent”
CRISS Jami

Press freedom is a constitutionally guaranteed right. In the 2019 World Press Freedom Index, Tanzania ranks 118 out of 180 countries from position 93 in 2018. A drop of 25 positions is witnessed here. The article “Bulldozing the Media” by Reporters without Borders for Freedom of Information attributes this drop to “adoption of draconian legislation, the closure of media outlets and the expulsion of press freedom defenders, the president not tolerating any form of criticism, abductions and disappearance of journalists and police force intervening social gatherings that are deemed to be conducted by the opposition or human rights defenders.” This sums up how the civic space is constantly shrinking.

This shrinkage heavily affects the performance of human rights defenders especially journalists, fearing for their lives or freedom.

Despite the growing pressure, Tanzanian journalists have not given up on the fight of the press freedom for they firmly believe the protection gained and granted by the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC)

THRDC has always stood to defend the civic space in the country through several bases since 2012. Since January to August 2019, several newspapers have been banned and their media proprietors penalized contrary to the laws and regulations in Tanzania.





Because a pen, a piece of paper and even a camera are regarded as greatest weapons of a journalist, authorities have used them as a reason for arbitrary arrests of journalists including Veronica Bisendo, Charles Komba, Erick Kabendera, Joseph Gandye and Haruna Mapunda. Joseph Gandye (Watetezi TV journalist) was accused of publishing false information; Veronica Bisendo was accused of taking a picture of a public building in a prohibited area; Haruna Mapunda's arrest was due to a riot; Erick Kabendera and Charles Komba still have pending cases. Kabendera is charged with serious economic crimes. All these cases have been under the coordination of THRDC.

"I never thought I would be in police custody because of my profession, for I have always worked on balanced investigative stories and in accordance with the laws and regulations of journalism. Advocates from THRDC stood by me, the Coalition and a lot of media authorities (both regional and international) raised their voices for me; Thank you very much" Joseph Gandye – Watetezi TV reporter who was arrested for allegedly publishing false news and kept in police custody for 3 days.

Our desire is to provide a secured and protected working environment for human right defenders and journalists. Self-protection guidelines for human right defenders in Tanzania have been clearly laid out by the Coalition in a very user-friendly publication (Swahili and English versions) with the aim to continue strengthening security of journalists in our country. These self-guidelines entail various self-protection measures that HRDs can take to mitigate and/or prevent the risks that HRDs/journalists face.



Detained Journalist, Eric Kabendera during one of Court Sessions in Dar es Salaam

Did you know that the Tanzania Internet users hit 23 Million (45% of the total population) as of August 2019? THRDC has realized the opportunity to online crusades in advocating for press freedom. #FreeErickKabendera #FreeJosephGandye #JournalismIsNotACrime and many others have helped raising public awareness about the arbitrary arrests of journalists and their freedom.



Producer and Associate Head of Watetezi TV. Joseph Gandye (Right) together with Advocate Chance Luoga immediately after his release at Mafinga Police Post on 28th August 2019.

"The current situation is scaring. Thank you THRDC for opening my eyes and guide me on how to protect myself whenever I sense abnormality, especially during my professional activities. This training has equipped me with relevant knowledge and skills, I can not wait to share them with my colleagues and the next generation", One journalist from Iringa region expressed his joy on how the capacity building training was useful for journalists who work in Tanzania's southern highlands.





THRDC Photos



ΔΔ From the left, THRDC National Coordinator (Mr. Onesmo Olungurumwa), Party leader ATC Wazalendo (Mr. Zitto Kabwe), THRDC Board Chairperson (Ms. Vicky Ntetema), Martina Kabisama (Coordinator-SHRINGON) and other members of the coalition listening attentively to a presenter during a meeting on evaluation of the manifesto.



ΔΔ THRDC National Coordinator, Mr. Onesmo Olungurumwa (on the left) handing THRDC's publication to the Retired Judge Robert Makaramba (on the right) at the Coalition's Resource Centre in Mikocheni



ΔΔ Improving the Relationship between Human Rights Defenders and the Government: The THRDC National Coordinator, Mr. Onesmo Olungurumwa exchanging ideas with Ms. Neema Mwanga, the former Registrar of NGOs.



ΔΔ THRDC member contributing ideas during an evaluation of the 2015 CSOs Election Manifesto.



ΔΔ A group photo of the Watetezi TV team with Maxence Mello from Jamii Media (forth from left), THRDC National Coordinator (4th from right) and other staff form the Advocacy Department, after the training session on the proper use of social media.



ΔΔ Watetezi TV journalist, Mtapa Ng'wanandagula reporting live from the scene during Eid El Fitri celebrations.



ΔΔ Adv. Leopold Masha, THRDC Advocacy officer (Right) submitting the THRDC 2018 Human Rights Defenders Situation Report to the Kwanza TV Journalist, Edwin Hilary, after attending a TV Program at Kwanza TV. The Discussion was based on the situation of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Tanzania and Enforced Disappearance of People and HRDs.

DEFENDING CIVIC SPACE THROUGH WATETEZI TV



In the wake of a rising wave of advancement in Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T) and a surge of internet users globally, THRDC recently adopted an I.C.T strategic advocacy approach as a way of implementing THRDC's new Strategic Plan (2018-2022), by establishing an Online Television: WATETEZI TV to convey its message to relevant government authorities, human rights stakeholders and the general public. As an advocacy strategy for policy and legal reforms of laws and policies governing Tanzania Human rights defenders, this initiative will help raising awareness of HRDs work and enhance access to information related to Human Rights Defenders in Tanzania.



Watetezi TV crew displaying their work to the Representative of the Minister for Work, Transport and Communications, Dr Mulembwa Munaku during the 6th Anniversary of the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Day



The media has also conducted online campaigns on defending and promoting the increase of online and offline civic space.

Watetezi TV constantly covers human rights events held by THRDC members and many other interventions. This initiative has helped to shed light on the wonderful work done by the members, call upon the public to join in the fray and keep them motivated to do more. All activities conducted by the

Coalition are being shared with the public through Watetezi TV and THRDC website (www.thrdc.or.tz).

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS RESOURCE CENTRE: ONE STOP HUB OF ALL KEY INFORMATION ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Education is a key aspect in ensuring that people are aware of their rights, human rights defenders and what to do when those rights are violated. THRDC has ensured that both the mass/public and human rights defenders are updated on this factor, through the Resource Centre.

There are so many publications on human rights defenders' rights, security management and risk assessment produced under THRDC resource centre.



The documents are disseminated online through the Website (www.thrdc.or.tz) for members of the public to access, and physically when attending various events that THRDC hosts, participates or sponsored.



THRDC Advocacy Officer, Adv. Leopold Moshia, (First right) Manning the THRDC booth at the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) Annual General Meeting in Arusha in April.

The publications are also disseminated during physical visitations to other offices or when THRDC headquarters receives visitors.

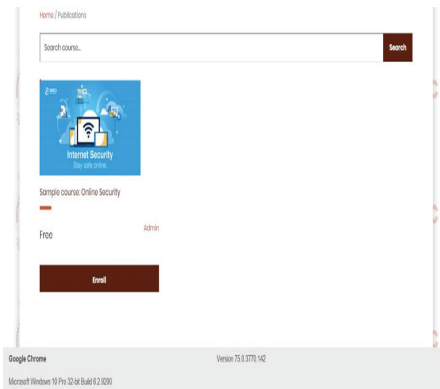


A Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders and Civic Space in Tanzania was launched on the 3rd of April 2019. According to the report there has been an increase of rights violations against Human Rights Defenders.



THRDC Resource Centre Officer handing THRDC Publications to Ms. Harieth Macha-UNIC Librarian

In order to deepen learning experience and reach extensive number of HRDs in all parts of the world, various methods of training are used to impart knowledge to HRDs courses with low fees. This comes as one of the 2013-2017 evaluation report on the THRDC's financial sustainability and fundraising strategies. Online courses platform is not yet in place but THRDC capacity building and IT officers are working on the platform to ensure it is activated.



Using THRDC Website to Offer Online Courses to HRDs, scheduled to start next year

Physical Visitations

In advocating for effectively claiming and utilizing the online and offline civic space, THRDC has visited several organizations to empower them on the matter. Some of them include Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT), Arusha Press Club, Tanzania Mines, Energy, Construction and Allied Workers (TAMICO), Tanzania Horticulture Association (TAHA) and Trade Union Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA).



THRDC Advocacy Officer, Adv. Leopold Mosha, with Mama Masaidia Chimwaga (Zonal General Secretary of the Tanzania Mines and Industrial Workers Union-TAMICO) in Arusha



Ms. Lisa Kagaruki (Assistant Advocacy Officer) together with Sheikh Ally Furukutu at the BAKWATA Regional Office in Mbeya





Government interventions

Since the government is the maker of the law and regulations, adjudicators and law enforcers, it is crucial to involve them as far

as advocating for civic space goes. THRDC has been able to involve the government on various issues on defending and increasing the civic space in Tanzania.

When the rights of human rights defenders are violated, THRDC considers it as its personal mission to defend them, know their whereabouts whenever they go missing it uses Watetezi TV to raise an uproar against the injustices until the desired solution is attained. The Coalition also assigns Advocates to human rights defenders who are accused of committing crimes. For example, when Adv. Maneno Mbunda went missing, the coalition stood with his family and relatives in raising an uproar until the Director for Public Prosecutions, admitted that he was being detained at a police station.



THRDC Protection officer, Adv. Jones Sendodo, (left) and Advocacy Officer, Adv. Leopold Masha, (right) holding the certificate awarded to THRDC for sponsoring the Tangayika Law Society Annual General meeting in April.

Taking part in community services



Adv. Maneno Mbunda's sister holding the photo of her missing brother and asking for the government's help in finding his whereabouts at THRDC headquarters





Trainings and Workshops

The Anniversary was preceded by a two days workshop to Human Rights Defenders on the use of online platforms to promote and protect human rights. The workshop was attended by 134 members who were trained on how to use the Internet to advocate for human rights as the law permits, digital security, data protection and freedom of expression.

Recognizing the role of technology and online Media in transferring information, it is now important for Human Rights Defenders to consider it as an effective means of sharing information, promoting human rights, doing advocacy and generally contributing to national development. Although online and digital media are considered as important tools for facilitating development and the protection and promotion of human rights, there have been many challenges engulfing internet freedoms. These challenges are not only in Tanzania but in many other African countries.



Participants to the Workshop on the use of online platforms to protect and promote human rights

Participating in the Regional and International Treaty Monitoring Bodies

On 14th to 15th March, 2019, the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) in collaboration with Article 19 conducted a two days training workshop to strengthen the capacity of CSOs, Journalists and Lawyers on how to engage with the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACPHR) and the East African Court of Justice (EACJ).

Security Management Training to New THRDC Members 2019

As part of implementation of its strategic plan, through capacity building and empowerment outcome, THRDC is determined to enlighten its members with security tips, HRDs ethics and at the same time remind them their core activities as defenders. This goal is achieved among other things through conducting security management training thematically to HRDs groups at risk. Following the acceptance and approval of about 40 HRD NGOs from across the country applications for THRDC membership by THRDC Board of Directors and the Annual General Assembly in 2018, THRDC conducted the security management and risk assessment training to these new members. The training took place from 26th to 28th February, 2019, at Kisenga International Conference Centre, LAPP Building, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

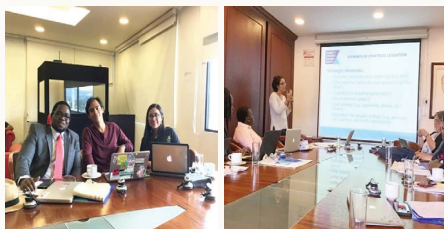


The Coalition also focuses on Capacity Building to human rights defenders and the Secretariat as well. In house trainings on security management and risk management have been conducted as well. This has helped to ensure that it is a competent team that serves human rights defenders in Tanzania.



Training on Security Management and Risk Assessment to THRDC Staff

The Secretariat also attended National, Regional and International trainings to enhance their capacity in defending human rights defenders.



THRDC National Coordinator, Mr. Onesmo Olungurumwa, attending a workshop in Quito, Ecuador on Inter-Regional Strategic Litigation for the Protection of Civic Space from 18th to 20th June, 2019

CSOs ENGAGEMENT ON THE ENACTMENT OF THE MISC. AMMENDMENT ACT NO. 3 OF 2019: AN ACT TO AMMEND SEVERAL LAWS GOVERNING CSOs IN TANZANIA

Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) in collaboration with other CSOs conducted several meetings to discuss and compile recommendations regarding the CSOs laws reform Bill. The recommendations were submitted to the Parliamentary Committee.



One of the key achievements was that the definition of the word NGO was expanded to include organizations working on issues of advocacy and human rights. This was one of the threats under the Bill.





“The government knows the importance of CSOs no one will say that they do not see the contribution of this sector”. Executive Director, Door of Hope to Women and Youth Tanzania, Clemence Mwombeki.



A cross section of Participants during the meeting that was focused on discussing and compiling recommendations regarding the CSOs Laws Amendment Bill. The Recommendations were later submitted to the Parliament.

ADVOCACY AT REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

THRDC has been able to participate in international conferences and forums. These aim at boosting the Coalition’s capacity in defending human rights, how to attain the desired mechanisms (particularly ratification of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders), sharing experience, strengthening regional and international cooperation and building significant connections.



HRDC National Coordinator, Mr. Onesmo Olungurumwa, addressing HRDs at the African Defenders Reflections Conference conducted in Zanzibar from 12th to 14th June 2019



Facilitating and Coordinating Universal Periodic Review (UPR) processes at National Level

THRDC was part of the Task Force organized by the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs to review the draft implementation plan of the 131 UPR accepted recommendations by the government of the United Republic of Tanzania held in Singida in May.



Joint photo of the Task force to review the 131 UPR recommendations accepted by the government of Tanzania

A POOL OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS ESTABLISHED AND NATURED TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS

Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition being the only Coalition working towards ensuring a safer working environment for human rights defenders in Tanzania receives a lot of cases against human rights defenders. Many of the cases which the Coalition receives, requires legal representation while others requires medical support, short term relocation as well as referral support.

In a bid to ensure Tanzania has enough human rights advocates, THRDC has established a Tanzania Human Rights Lawyers Working Group (THRLWG) for the purpose of increasing the number of advocates involved in human rights and public interest litigations in Tanzania. This is because in Tanzania, lawyers have no specialization. Once you graduate, you become master of all. Human Rights and Legal Aid Law is taught in many Universities as an optional subject. Therefore, not all lawyers opt to study human rights at their undergraduate studies. Under the name of THRWG, human rights advocates will get regular trainings to keep abreast of the changing and emerging issues of human rights and public interest litigations.

Practicing advocates have to understand human rights defenders working environment, show interest in litigating public interest cases, and develop the spirit and passion on human rights cases, democracy and rule of law. Realizing this the Coalition conducted several trainings to selected practicing advocates and human rights lawyers aimed at empowering them on how to effectively litigate human right cases and public interest litigations in Tanzania and other jurisdictions.

“Other rights are acquired and can be transferred but human rights are not acquired, they are there by virtue of humanity. No one can give them. It is therefore the duty of the state to promote and protect your rights and my rights. Human rights are guaranteed by the law. They are not given in the Bills of rights. The Bills of rights merely recognize them” Rtd. Chief Justice Augustino Ramadhani

“There is an African Charter on Election, Democracy and Good Governance which has been signed and ratified by many African Countries. Unfortunately, Tanzania has not done any of the two. We all know Tanzania’s human rights records. It doesn’t click to see this Charter is not signed by Tanzania. This I leave it to Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition to champion for the signing and ratification of this very important Charter” Chief Justice (Rtd) Augustino Ramadhan.



Rtd. Chief Justice Augustino Ramadhani addressing Lawyers during the launching of a Training to Lawyers on How to Handle Election Petitions, Human Rights and Public Interest Litigation. The training was organized by the THRDC



“Your job is not only to come to challenge election results, you should also be engaged in the whole electoral process, for example, registering a voter in two different offices it is illegal. You lawyers should be there”-Rtd. Judge Robert Masaramba.



Lesson to Advocates: “Drafting a good election petition has been one of key problems for many lawyers. You must learn how to draft

good election petitions. Sometimes when a Petition is filled in Court the judges remain puzzled due to mistakes in the document, and therefore they are forced to start by rectifying them”. Rtd. Judge Robert Makaramba addressing Lawyers during a Training on how to handle Election Cases.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE THRDC AND ITS PARTNERS IMPROVED



On 17th April 2019 the THRDC signed a contract with the Foundation for Civil Societies to support Coalition’s activities in the protection of Human Rights Defenders in Tanzania



The Ambassador of Italy to Tanzania Hon. Roberto Mengoni (3rd from right) together with some of the THRDC Staff during his visit to the Coalition’s Office on 8th July 2019




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