



NEWSLETTER

Issue 1



Table of Contents

Welcome Note	Page 4
Background to Eastern Africa Nationality Network	Page 4
EANN Objectives	Page 4
How EANN Works	Page 5
How we Coordinate	Page 5
How we communicate	Page 6
EANN Membership	Page 7
Meet the Founding Members of the Eastern Africa Nationality Network! Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)	Page 8 Page 9
Child Rights Watch	Page 10
Dignity Kwanza	Page 11
Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development (GLIHD)	Page 12
Haki Centre	Page 13
Haki na Sheria	Page 14
Hold the Child	Page 15
Minority Rights Group	Page 16
Namati	Page 17
Nubian Rights Forum	Page 18
Prison Fellowship Rwanda	Page 19
Women Advocates Association in South Sudan (WAASS)	Page 20
Other Founding EANN Members	Page 21



Welcome Note

Welcome to the first issue of the Eastern Africa Nationality Network (EANN) Newsletter. This inaugural edition takes an inward-looking approach, introducing EANN—our shared purpose, ways of working, membership, and founding members. In future issues, we will provide updates on key developments related to statelessness and citizenship in the Eastern Africa region, share highlights from network activities, and showcase the work of our members as we collectively advance efforts to end statelessness in the region.



In this issue, you'll be able to read more about the founding of EANN, our objectives and meet the network's founding members.

Background to Eastern Africa Nationality Network



EANN was established in May 2022 by 15 civil society organizations from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, Sudan, and Rwanda. EANN covers a geographic scope including East Africa, the Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region. Our vision is 'Eastern Africa free from Statelessness' and our mission is 'Advancing nationality rights and strengthening collaboration to end statelessness across Eastern Africa.'

EANN Objectives

1. Reinforce solidarity among CSO partners and actors on ending statelessness in the Eastern Africa region.
2. Foster joint regional and state-level advocacy with a common voice
3. Increase visibility, awareness, and resources to promote nationality rights and end statelessness in Eastern Africa.
4. Build capacity of civil society organizations, stateless-led organizations, and other stakeholders in the region on prevention of statelessness through peer learning and exchange.

To learn more about EANN's strategies and workplan, check out [our website](#).



How EANN Works

EANN is a network of organizations and individuals working collaboratively to advance nationality rights and contribute to efforts to end statelessness across Eastern Africa. EANN provides a platform for members to coordinate and amplify advocacy on statelessness and citizenship, share learning and best practices, and strengthen collective visibility and engagement with relevant stakeholders at national, regional and international levels. We aim to amplify member priorities, support coordinated advocacy, strengthen knowledge exchange, and elevate the leadership and participation of people with lived experience.

How we coordinate

EANN coordinates through a member-led governance and coordination structure. A Steering Committee provides strategic direction and oversight, while a Secretariat supports day-to-day coordination, convening, documentation, and follow-up. The Network also operates through thematic Working Groups that drive specific workstreams, share technical input, and propose joint actions.



The following are the 4 main EANN's working groups

Cross-learning and Capacity Building Working Group

This working group supports peer learning across members through targeted exchanges on what is working in different country contexts. A priority for the coming period is identifying practical capacity gaps and curating short learning sessions and tools that members can apply in ongoing advocacy, documentation, and participation work.

Advocacy Working Group

This working group tracks key legal and policy developments and supports coordinated advocacy messages at national and regional levels. Current focus includes aligning member advocacy with continental and international standards and reinforcing safeguards that prevent statelessness and strengthen pathways to nationality.

Visibility & Communications Working Group

This working group strengthens EANN's public visibility through coordinated messaging, editorial planning, and improved communications products. It also reinforces ethical storytelling approaches, including consent, safeguarding, and do-no-harm practices—when documenting lived experience.

Fundraising Working Group

This working group supports efforts to strengthen sustainability through resource mobilization and better coordination around funding opportunities. Priorities include mapping opportunities, improving joint planning where relevant, and strengthening internal systems that support effective delivery and accountability.

Coordination in these working groups is maintained through regular meetings and agreed focal points, enabling members to share updates, align priorities, and advance collective advocacy and communications where appropriate.

How we communicate

EANN communications are designed to complement member communications, not replace them. Where possible, members coordinate messaging to strengthen consistency, visibility, and impact, while respecting organizational identities and mandates.

How to propose joint advocacy or communications

Members are encouraged to share opportunities for joint statements, campaigns, convenings, or key moments. Proposals should briefly outline the issue, desired outcome, suggested audiences, and any time sensitivity.



EANN Membership



JOIN US!

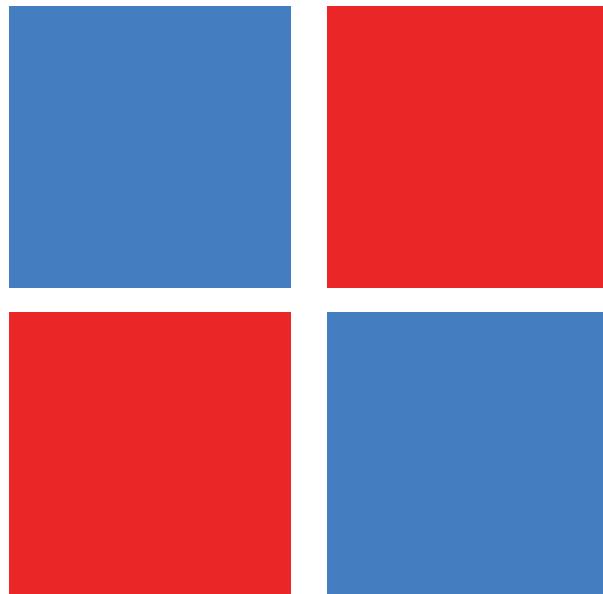


EANN membership is open to civil society organizations/community-based organizations working on statelessness in the region, individual members, which include people with lived experience of statelessness, academics, or other individuals working on statelessness in Eastern Africa. EANN is currently in the midst of an outreach and membership drive to expand our reach following an initial phase of setting-up and strategic planning. To join, potential members must agree to sign on to the Eastern Africa Nationality Network's Memorandum of Understanding and be willing to commit time and energy to EANN initiatives.

Are you interested in joining EANN? To apply to join or to seek further information on membership, please contact info@eanationalitynetwork.org



Meet the Founding Members of the Eastern Africa Nationality Network!



Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)



The Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) is a premier and flagship Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in Africa with a mandate of enhancing human rights-centered governance at all levels; a vision of a society of free people and a mission to root human dignity, freedoms, and social justice in Kenya and beyond.

To address systemic human rights violations and governance deficits, KHRC applies a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) that is double-prolonged; targeting both the affected people (rights-holders) and the violators (duty-bearers) involved.

The KHRC has been a pioneer in working with minority, marginalized and disadvantaged groups to enable them to defend and realize their human rights. One such constituency that KHRC has supported is the stateless

communities in Kenya. The KHRC has advocated for elimination of all forms of discrimination with regard to the right to citizenship since 1998.

Following sustained advocacy efforts by the KHRC, several stateless communities have attained Kenyan citizenship. This includes the Makonde community in 2016, the Shona community in 2020, and the Pemba community in 2022. The KHRC continues to support the stateless Rwandese and Rundi communities. The KHRC also supports communities at risk of statelessness who face administrative discrimination in accessing nationality and identity documents. KHRC has also been at the forefront of fighting discrimination and ensuring adequate inclusion of marginalized communities during the proposed roll out of Digital ID systems in Kenya.





Child Rights Watch

Child Rights Watch (CRW) is established as a Sudanese non-governmental organization dedicated exclusively to the promotion of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

CRW provides advisory and capacity-building support to the Government of Sudan, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the international development community in their efforts at implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Since 2003, CRW's actions have followed several key mandates within the different areas of the country where we work. These mandates have included working with all concerned parties in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, supporting peacebuilding efforts, providing capacity building for duty bearers, holding a special focus on issues related to child soldiers and child labor, and strengthening the practical and conceptual capacity of partner organizations on providing quality protection to vulnerable groups of children and women, among others.

CRW has a citizenship and statelessness program that focuses on birth registration and awareness raising to end statelessness and leading an all-Sudan campaign over the past three years in collaboration with UNHCR and Sudan government line ministries.





DIGNITY Kwanza

DIGNITY Kwanza – Community Solutions (DIGNITY Kwanza) is a non-profit organization registered in Tanzania to safeguard and promote the human rights of people affected by forced displacement, people at risk of statelessness, and vulnerable women and children to live with dignity and attain social and economic development.

The rollout of national ID has left in question the nationality of certain individuals and communities in the country, leaving them at risk of statelessness. Pending resolutions of their issues, these populations experience unintended social and economic exclusion. DIGNITY Kwanza, as the only organization engaging in citizenship rights, provides legal services to individuals and group legal assistance to people who are at risk of becoming stateless, or stateless; in 2018, DIGNITY Kwanza won a landmark case on the right to nationality in Africa before the African Court of Human and Peoples Rights (Court).

Through Advocacy, Capacity Building, and Awareness raising programs DIGNITY Kwanza works with the government and the affected communities to find lasting solutions. Through DIGNITY Kwanza's Community Empowerment program, individuals and communities at risk of statelessness in Zanzibar were also empowered to understand their situation and engage authorities to find solutions. As the result of their close follow up, the Government announced a decision to grant them citizenship through naturalization.



Great Lakes Initiative For Human Rights And Development (GLIHD)



Founded in 2011, GLIHD is a human rights and public interest organization with a mission to contribute towards respect, promotion and fulfillment of the rights of individuals and groups through human rights monitoring and advocacy of both national and international human rights normative frameworks in Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region. GLIHD's intervention strategies are advocacy, capacity building and public interest litigation. GLIHD has recorded best practices and experience in its partnership with different public institutions and civil society organizations in Rwanda.





HAKI CENTER

Haki Centre Organization (HCO) is a Non-Governmental Organization working in the coastal region of Kenya to promote social justice through human rights education and advocacy, peacebuilding, and legal empowerment focused on nationality rights.

HCO has been working on the issue of statelessness since 2014 when the #IBelong campaign was launched. HCO has been actively involved in actions seeking to reduce existing situations of statelessness, prevent the emergence of new cases of statelessness, and protect the rights of stateless persons in Kenya.

Our citizenship rights program advocates for legal identity for all including birth registration (SDG 16.9) through a legal empowerment approach (paralegal work) that supports and empowers affected communities to overcome administrative obstacles in accessing nationality documentation. Recognizing the importance of birth registration in the prevention of statelessness, HCO has been conducting a robust campaign to promote universal birth registration in Kenya since 2014 through a multifaceted approach including community sensitization and paralegal assistance, capacity building of registration agents, and supporting Civil Registration Services (CRS) to conduct mobile civil registration in areas that are underserved due to distance to registration centres.

Working closely with stateless communities and other minority groups facing citizenship challenges, HCO has been promoting equal and non-discriminatory access to nationality documentation through community-led advocacy actions, public interest litigation, and advocacy for policy reform.



Haki na Sheria



Haki na Sheria was founded in 2010 as a caucus by Kenyan Somali law students at the University of Nairobi from Garissa in the run-up to the promulgation of the Kenyan constitution. The early days of the organisation were characterised by advocacy to redress the history of gross human rights violations on communities of the region that had been a mainstay. One of those main issues was discriminatory issuance of persons with identity cards through ethnic and religious profiling and denial of certain basic rights such as freedom of movement.

One of the successful methods the organisation has used to empower local communities is through the paralegals whereby young people have been given skills to navigate the unjust government systems. This empowerment of the youth has been a key pillar in fighting for equals rights for the Somali populations in the region. One of our focus areas is assisting individuals through the processes of obtaining relevant government documents such as birth certificates, Identification Cards (IDs) and support on the pre-registration vetting processes.

Haki na Sheria has been working on the double registration challenge - Kenyans whose fingerprints are in the refugee database - since its founding. This issue affects upwards of 40,000 people. In January, 2022 the first batch of around 14,000 people were issued with I.D.s. Haki na Sheria will continue to push for the rest as well.



Hold the Child

Operational since 2011, Hold the Child is a South Sudanese based relief, development and advocacy organisation, set out to inspire and champion a collaborative action by families, communities, authorities, key stakeholders among actors towards optimal child welfare and development.

Towards Universal free birth registration, every child's right to identity in a policy, resource and logistically constrained South Sudan, Nationality rights and Civil documentation became a fundamental aspect of our programming.

Through different partnerships including UNHCR, Hold the Child has and continues to Sensitize and engage South Sudan CSOs on nationality rights; National and grassroot awareness on nationality rights and statelessness; Provide direct sponsorship for nationality documentation to economically challenged persons at the risk of statelessness; and Contribute to policy process as a party to the Civil registration and vital statistics technical working group.

In selected communities of marginalized groups and recently high arrivals from Sudan, Hold the Child teams work to provide counseling services and referrals for civil documentation support.



Minority Rights Group



minority
rights
group
international

Minority Rights Group International (MRG) founded 50 years ago campaigns worldwide with around 150 partners in over 50 countries to ensure that the voices of marginalized and disadvantaged Minorities, and Indigenous peoples voices can be heard. MRG has been in Africa for more than 30 years and works in more 16 countries with over 50 partners. We strive to address marginalisation, respond to migration and persecution of minorities and address climate change, justice and environment degradation in so far as it affects minorities and indigenous peoples. We have largely worked on ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities, indigenous peoples and on statelessness with focus on border communities and those affected by historical migrations.

We work through partnerships for the purposes of supporting minority -led organisations design and implement their own interventions. We engage with the African Commission and United Nations human rights mechanisms where we support the participation of minority representatives and facilitate their active engagement in advocacy. We have led strategic litigation efforts pioneering cases such as the Endorois and Ogiek cases thus setting pace for justiciability of minority and indigenous rights in Africa.



Namati advances social and environmental justice in six countries by building a movement of people who know, use, and shape the law. Namati and our partners have been on a quest to democratize the law: to take it out of books and courtrooms and combine it, instead, with the other key asset that communities have – people power. Namati and our partners train and deploy community paralegals to take on some of the greatest injustices of our time and solve problems at the grassroots: protecting community lands, enforcing environmental law, and securing rights to healthcare and citizenship. Together with communities, we strive to translate the lessons from our grassroots experience into positive, large-scale changes to laws and systems.

Namati co-founded and convenes the Grassroots Justice Network, the world’s largest community of justice defenders with 12,300+ members representing over 3,400 organizations across 175 countries. The network fosters connection, learning, and action to bring justice everywhere.

Namati's Citizenship Program works with communities who are citizens in law but who face discrimination in attempts to access proof of nationality and documentation like birth certificates, ID cards, and passports. Paralegals from these communities, supported by Namati and our partners, empower others to overcome discriminatory treatment to access legal identity documents and drive changes to national legal frameworks on citizenship rights.



Nubian Rights Forum



The Nubian Rights Forum (NRF) is a community based civil and human rights organization with a primary aim to agitate and champion for the rights of the marginalized and minority Nubian community. NRF works across citizenship, land, and human rights issues such as gender based violence and civic education.

In February 2013, Nubian Rights Forum initiated a community empowerment program focused on access to documentation for the Nubian community. Their intervention was a community paralegal approach where they trained and supported the first group of community-based paralegals to work in the Nubian community in Kibra. The paralegals conduct outreach and community education to mobilize people to obtain legal identity documents – with a focus on birth certificates,

national identity cards, passports, and death certificates.

In addition to their work on citizenship and access to documentation, the Nubian Rights Forum has been at the forefront of advocating for the implementation of a digital ID system in Kenya, including through taking legal action around the Huduma Namba system. NRF recognizes the potential for abuse and discrimination if the system is not properly designed and implemented. As a result, they are actively engaged in discussions around the development of digital ID policies in Kenya, working to ensure that the rights of marginalized communities are protected, and that any system is fair and accessible for all Kenyans.





PRISON FELLOWSHIP RWANDA

Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) is a faith-based organization operating in Rwanda since 1995, contributing to the transformation of disadvantaged people through peacebuilding, livelihood, justice, and psychosocial and spiritual resilience.

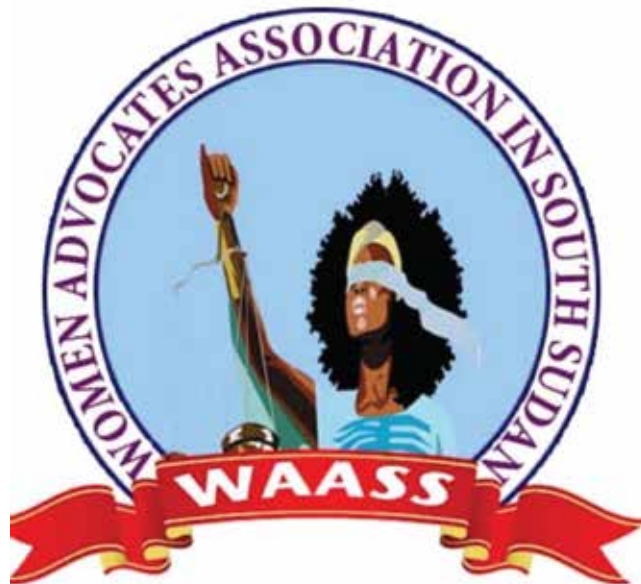
Since January 2020, Prison Fellowship Rwanda in partnership with UNHCR and Rwanda's Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) is implementing the project entitled "Community Based Protection and Legal Assistance".

The overall objective of this project is to strengthen refugee communities' resilience, engagement and empowerment in a systemized and comprehensive manner in collaboration with UNHCR, MINEMA and other partners in all refugee camps, Gashora Transit Centre and urban settings of Huye and Kigali. The project ensures access to justice and respect for human rights, providing legal assistance, representation, civil registration and documentation to refugees living in camps, and urban areas.

Prison Fellowship Rwanda is currently in partnership with the government of Rwanda and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to support the implementation of national commitments on addressing statelessness as well as the establishment of a national task force on statelessness.

Prison Fellowship Rwanda also conducted field data collection for a regional study "Protracted Displacement, Risks of Statelessness and Durable Solutions," which was commissioned by the UNHCR Regional Bureau.





Women Advocates Association in South Sudan (WAASS)

The Association has a team of specialized professionals and competent female advocates with profound experience in litigation of civil and criminal matters, immigration, corporate affairs, assets planning, bankruptcy, administration, constitutional development, regulations and others.

Additionally, WAASS focuses on provision of free legal aid services and consultancies to vulnerable groups, organizing training programmes, seminars and workshops on professional ethics and conduct, leadership, legal procedures and any related matter to the public and conduct legal researches and analysis as may be required and provision of legal literacy programmes to the public through media, workshops, seminars and others and mentor young women interns, law students and paralegals.



Other Founding EANN Members Include:

Justice Access Point (Uganda)

Sudan Organisation for Development (Sudan)

Zanzibar Legal Service Centre (Tanzania)





Eastern Africa Nationality Network

info@eanationalitynetwork.org

 @EANationalityNetwork

 @EANationality

Website: eanationalitynetwork.org

EANN Founding Members

