



LEGAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

Mlinzi wa Haki Newsletter

April 2025 Edition



GREETINGS FROM LHRC

Esteemed Readers,

Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) is pleased to share with you the April 2025 edition of the Mlinzi wa Haki Newsletter. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our development partners the Embassies of Sweden, Norway, and Ireland, as well as the Ford Foundation and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund for their continued support and commitment to advancing human rights and justice in Tanzania.

April was a month of active engagement and advocacy for democratic governance and human rights. In this edition, we highlight key initiatives that reflect our ongoing dedication to building a just and equitable society.

As part of our efforts to promote civil and political rights and good governance, LHRC hosted leaders from ACT-Wazalendo to discuss the upcoming elections and electoral legal reforms. We also held a strategic meeting with the Clerk of the National Assembly to strengthen collaboration on human rights and accountability.

We were proud to participate in the World Press Freedom Day commemorations, advocating for freedom of expression and stronger legal protections for the media. We also stood in solidarity with children with autism during the Run for Autism Tanzania and continued to empower citizens through the provision of legal aid at our Legal Aid Clinics and Integrated Justice Centres.

We further strengthened our international partnerships through visits from delegates of the Royal Norwegian Embassy and students from Whitworth University (USA), reflecting the growing global recognition of our work.

We remain deeply grateful to all our partners and supporters for walking with us on this journey toward a just and rights-based Tanzania.

Mr. Fulgence Massawe (Advocate)
Acting Executive Director, LHRC



ACT-Wazalendo and LHRC discusses six issues for electoral reform.

On April 8, 2025, Legal and Human Rights Centre hosted leaders of the ACT-Wazalendo party, led by Party Chairperson Dorothy Semu and Mainland Vice-Chairperson Issihaka Mchinjita. The purpose of the visit was to share party's observations and recommendations for electoral reforms with LHRC considering her strength and influence in advancing democracy and electoral reforms in the country. During the meeting, the discussion was around six priority areas ACT Wazalendo had observed and recommends for reform to ensure a free and fair electoral process. The six points were:

- 1.The need for appointment of Electoral Commission members through a competitive process.
- 2.The possibility of using District Executive Directors as election returning officers despite amendment of the law.
- 3.Protection of opposition candidates from unfair disqualification.
- 4.Prevention of interference by security agents in election.
- 5.Effective control of fake ballot papers during elections.
- 6.Ensuring political parties agents are allowed to carry out their duties without obstruction.



Group photo of ACT-Wazalendo leaders together with the LHRC team at the LHRC Headquarters in Kijitonyama, Dar es Salaam

Ms. Semu emphasized that these issues are part of a long-standing movement to uphold the fundamental right of Tanzanians to vote freely and fairly. LHRC's Ag. Executive Director Adv. Fulgence Massawe committed to continue advocating for a democratic and rights-based society by pushing for legal and policy reforms at national, regional, and international levels.



ACT Wazalendo leaders and LHRC team during their visit to LHRC on April 8, 2025, Dar es Salaam.

LHRC strengthens collaboration with the Parliament in advancing democracy, good governance, and protection of rights.

On April 9, 2025, LHRC paid a courtesy visit to the Clerk of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Baraka Leonard. The meeting aimed to strengthen collaboration between LHRC and the Parliament in promoting human rights, democratic governance, and accountability.

Representing LHRC, Mr. Deogratias Bwire, Director of Empowerment and Human Rights Response, outlined the organization's ongoing efforts to advance good governance, democratic principles, and the protection of human rights in Tanzania. During the meeting, he presented key LHRC reports, including the Human Rights and Business Report, the 30-Year Democracy Report of Tanzania, and the Legal Aid Report, which reflect LHRC's commitment to evidence-based advocacy and informed engagement with key stakeholders.

This courtesy visit marked another step in LHRC's ongoing efforts to contribute meaningfully to national development through evidence-based advocacy and institutional collaboration.



A group photo of the LHRC team with Mr. Baraka Leonard, Clerk of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Partnership in Progress: LHRC Welcomes Norwegian Embassy Delegation.

On April 17, 2025, LHRC had the honour of hosting a delegation from the Royal Norwegian Embassy at both its headquarters in Kijitonyama and Legal Aid Clinic in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam. The visit aimed to formally introduce Mr. Øyvind Gressetvold, the newly appointed Governance Officer at the Embassy, and to deepen mutual understanding of LHRC's ongoing work in the promotion and protection of human rights in Tanzania.

The delegation was hosted by LHRC's Acting Executive Director, Advocate Fulgence Massawe, who offered a detailed presentation on the LHRC's mission and operations. He highlighted LHRC's key interventions, which include the provision of free legal aid services, strategic litigation, advocacy for law and policy reforms, rapid response to human rights violations, civic education, and human rights research.



During the discussions, LHRC also presented an overview of the broader human rights context in Tanzania, touching on issues of democracy, governance, civic space, rule of law and accountability.

At the Kinondoni Legal Aid Clinic, the delegation was able to observe firsthand legal aid provision which is provided free to vulnerable and underserved populations. LHRC also shared data illustrating number of clients served and emphasized the growing demand for legal education and awareness across the country.

Mr. Gressetvold expressed appreciation for LHRC's impactful work and reaffirmed the Norwegian Embassy's commitment to continued cooperation and support. He commended LHRC's dedication to advancing justice and human rights, noting the role such organizations play in strengthening democratic institutions and protecting the rights of all citizens.



Fulgence Massawe Introducing Mr. Øyvind Gressetvold, the newly appointed Governance Officer of the Norwegian Embassy at LHRC Kinondoni Legal Aid Clinic, Dar es Salaam on April 17, 2025.

LHRC strengthens its commitment to inclusivity by standing in solidarity with children on the autism spectrum.

On April 2025, LHRC proudly participated in the fourth edition of the Run for Autism Tanzania Half Marathon organized by Lukiza Autism Foundation. This annual event seeks to raise public awareness about autism spectrum disorder (ASD), reduce stigma, and promote a more inclusive society where people with autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions are fully recognized, understood, and supported.

Children with autism face a unique set of challenges in Tanzania and globally. These include social stigma, discrimination, lack of access to specialized education, healthcare, and therapy services, as well as limited awareness among caregivers, educators, and the public. Many families struggle in silence due to the cultural misconceptions surrounding autism, often isolating affected children instead of providing the support they need to thrive.

As a human rights organization, LHRC recognizes that disability rights are human rights. LHRC integrates disability inclusion across its programs and continues to advocate for systems that ensure persons with disabilities (PWDs), including children on the autism spectrum, can access equal opportunities, quality services, and live with dignity.



Team LHRC on the move for autism awareness.

Extending Students' Human Rights Networks Globally: LHRC Hosts Whitworth University Delegation.

On 23rd April 2025, LHRC had the privilege of welcoming a delegation from Whitworth University, USA, consisting of eight students. The visit aimed to provide the students with a unique opportunity to gain an understanding of LHRC's work in human rights protection. During the session, LHRC shared its strategies, ongoing projects, and the challenges it faces in promoting and protecting human rights across Tanzania and beyond.

The visit from Whitworth University students serves as a powerful reminder of LHRC's growing international influence and the global commitment to advancing human rights particularly through Students Networks and Clubs.

As a human rights organization in Tanzania, LHRC has established over 360 human rights clubs across the country, ranging from primary schools to universities. This widespread network plays a key role in educating and empowering future generations to become human rights defenders.



Director of Empowerment and Human Rights Response sharing insights with Whitworth University students during their visit to LHRC.

From Law to Action: LHRC Pushes for Media Freedom at World Press Freedom Day 2025.

LHRC actively participated in this year's World Press Freedom Day commemoration, held from 27th to 30th April 2025 at Gran Melia Hotel in Arusha. The event convened key actors from across the media, legal, and human rights sectors to discuss the future of journalism and freedom of expression in the era of rapid technological transformation.

With the global theme ***“Reporting in the Brave New World: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and Media,”*** the 2025 commemoration explored both the risks and opportunities presented by AI in shaping the media landscape. Discussions addressed the need for ethical standards, data protection, and laws that uphold press freedom while regulating new technologies.

LHRC collaborated with the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) and the Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF) to host a high-level side event titled *“Legal and Regulatory Framework & Role of the Parliament in Media Freedom.”* This session examined the current legal environment governing media operations in Tanzania, highlighted the gaps in regulatory protections, and called for meaningful reforms to ensure media independence and accountability.



Fulgence Massawe, Acting Executive Director of LHRC (first from the left), moderating in one of the panel discussions during the IWPFD side event.

The keynote address in this side event was delivered by Hon. Dr. Kizito Muhagama, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Administration, Constitution, and Legal Affairs. In his remarks, Dr. Muhagama highlighted seven notable reforms introduced by the Media Services Act (Amendment) of 2023. He highlighted the need for continuous dialogue and collaboration between Parliament and media stakeholders to enhance press freedom and accountability.

Dr. Muhagama also emphasized Parliament's role in safeguarding media freedom in Tanzania, citing Article 63 of the Constitution, which empowers Parliament to represent citizens, enact laws, approve the national budget, and oversee the Executive branch.



Hon. Joseph Kizito Muhagama responding to some of the issues raised in the panel discussion during side event on role of parliament and citizen participation legal and regulatory framework on media laws.

Through an interactive exhibition booth, LHRC engaged with journalists, civil society actors, students, and members of the public, highlighting its ongoing efforts to promote freedom of expression, media rights, and access to justice. LHRC distributed educational materials, offered on-site legal advice, and facilitated discussions on the importance of a free press in a democratic society. This outreach not only emphasized LHRC's obligation to defending press freedom but also served as a platform to empower citizens with knowledge of their rights and the legal mechanisms available to protect them.



LHRC officers at the LHRC booth during World Press Freedom Day, providing legal education services.

Legal Aid Services in Courtrooms: LHRC assists indigents at Judiciary Integrated Justice Centres (IJSs)

Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) continues to strengthen its partnership with the Judiciary of Tanzania by maintaining a strong presence at Integrated Justice Centres (IJC). This collaboration is part of LHRC's broader mission to promote access to justice and legal empowerment for all.

In April, LHRC provided a wide range of support at Integrated Justice Centers, including legal education, individual legal advice, reconciliation assistance, and empowerment sessions for justice seekers. Sessions for public awareness at the IJC in Dodoma, run every Tuesday and Thursday. LHRC plays a role in these sessions by offering simplified legal education on court procedures, citizens' rights, and available legal remedies, making the justice system more accessible and less intimidating for the public.



LHRC officer providing legal aid education to citizens at the Integrated Justice Center in Dodoma

Our development partners.



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Mlinzi wa HAKI
English Version



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OUR
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To Improve
Legal and
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To Reduce
Incidences of
Violence and
Discrimination
Against Women,
Children and
PWDs



To Enhance
Accountability
of Duty Bearers
to Address
Citizen Needs
and Concerns.



To make
LHRC more
Efficient,
Effective,
and
Sustainable.