



Top News

1. Annual General Assembly 2025
2. Launch of the Civic Space Index Report 2024
3. Commemoration of the World Press Freedom Day 2025
4. Services providers meetings held
5. Albertine and Karamoja sub regions HRDs trained in MDR.
6. HRDs and DNMCs meetings held.

About NCHRD-U

The National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders Uganda (NCHRD-U) is an organization of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) working in Uganda that was formed in June 2013.

It seeks to strengthen the work of HRDs throughout the country through synergy and collaboration at national, regional and international level, to enhance the protection mechanisms for HRDs and their capacity to effectively defend human rights.

Our 03 core programs are; Capacity building, Advocacy and Networking, and Emergency and Protection.





Robert R. Kirenga
Executive Director

Word from the Executive Director

Dear Our Esteemed Partners and HRDs,
Welcome to this edition of our newsletter from the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders Uganda (NCHRD-U). In these pages, we share key highlights of our recent work, partnerships, and ongoing efforts to protect and support human rights defenders across the country.

As the civic space continues to evolve, we remain committed to amplifying the voices of HRDs and strengthening protection mechanisms from grassroots to national level. We thank all our partners and stakeholders for walking this journey with us.

Together, we defend rights and protect defenders in Uganda.

Thank you!

Advocacy Engagements



Strengthening Regional Protection for HRDs: NCHRD-U Participates in East African HRD Protection Hub Meeting

On 2nd April 2025, the NCHRD-U, represented by the Executive Director Mr. Robert Kirenga participated in the East African Human Rights Defenders Protection Hub meeting in Mombasa, Kenya. The meeting convened leaders and staff from Hub member organizations to reflect on program implementation and deepen regional collaboration.

It served as a platform for peer learning, engagement, and dialogue on enhancing protection mechanisms for HRDs, especially in cross-border contexts. Discussions focused on strengthening solidarity, addressing emerging challenges, and aligning strategies for more effective interventions. The meeting reaffirmed a shared commitment to unified protection efforts and ensuring no HRD is left behind, regardless of location.

NCHRD-U launches the Civic Space Index Report 2024

The NCHRD-U launched the 4th Civic Space Index Report 2024 titled “Citizenry perspective on the trends, patterns and prospects on civic engagement landscape in Uganda.” This report is more than a publication, it reflects the realities of freedoms in Uganda—freedom of expression, assembly, and association. It captures the voices of citizens, civil society, and human rights defenders working to build a just and inclusive society.

The overall objective of the report was to examine the state of civic space in 2024 in Uganda through citizenry perspectives highlighting the emerging trends, patterns, the challenges and opportunities for state and non-state actors in protection of this space.

The launch event was attended by HRDs from different parts of the country, state actors, private sector, development partners and the media fraternity.





NCHRD-U PRESENTS KEY CSO CONCERNS AT QUARTERLY DIALOGUE

During the quarterly dialogue between the Ministry of Internal Affairs, government MDAs, and civil society, NCHRD-U Executive Director Robert Kirenga presented a CSO issues paper on behalf of the sector.

He highlighted five pressing concerns: the flawed accreditation process, growing state mistrust and politicization of CSO work, violence and intimidation, restrictions on CSO-led election observation, and ignored calls for electoral reforms.

His presentation sparked meaningful discussions and reaffirmed the critical role of CSOs in promoting transparency, accountability, and democratic governance in Uganda.



Advocacy Engagements



NCHRD-U Marks UN Day in Support of Torture Victims

On 26th June 2025, NCHRD-U joined ACTV and UHRC to commemorate the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

The commemoration began with a joint press conference and statement under the theme: "Torture and a Violence-Free Election; For All, by All." This was followed by a stakeholder dialogue, radio talk show, and X Space discussion.

The commemoration amplified calls to end torture, promoted accountability, and emphasized the need for peaceful, inclusive electoral processes as Uganda heads toward future elections.

NCHRD-U Strengthens Collaboration with DNMCs in Western and Northern Uganda

On 19th and 21st June 2025, NCHRD-U held successful District Non-Governmental Monitoring Committees (DNMCs) meetings in Western and Northern regions of Uganda respectively.

The meetings created a vital platform for DNMC members and human rights defenders to discuss ways to collaborate and coordinate efforts in protecting and promoting human rights at the grassroots level.

This engagement strengthened local networks, improved information sharing, and enhanced community-led responses to human rights challenges, contributing to more effective protection and advocacy across the region.





NCHRD-U HOLDS 8TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On 12th June, 2025, the NCHRD-U successfully held its 8th Annual General Assembly in Kampala, bringing together members to review progress and shape the Coalition's future.

Key highlights included the election of new Board members and Thematic Technical Working Group (TTWG) members.

The assembly worked as a platform for strengthening governance, reinforcing member ownership, and renewing commitment to advancing the protection of human rights defenders in Uganda.



COMMEMORATION OF WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY 2025

The NCHRD-U marked this significant occasion under the theme: "Reporting in the Brave New World – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media."

With the growing influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on media landscapes, journalists in Uganda face new opportunities and threats from AI-generated misinformation to surveillance risks.

This started with a X (formerly twitter) Space on the 02nd May 2025. The discourse was centered around addressing the role of Ugandan journalists in defending human rights in the AI age. 469 people managed to tune in, listen and participate to the discussion.

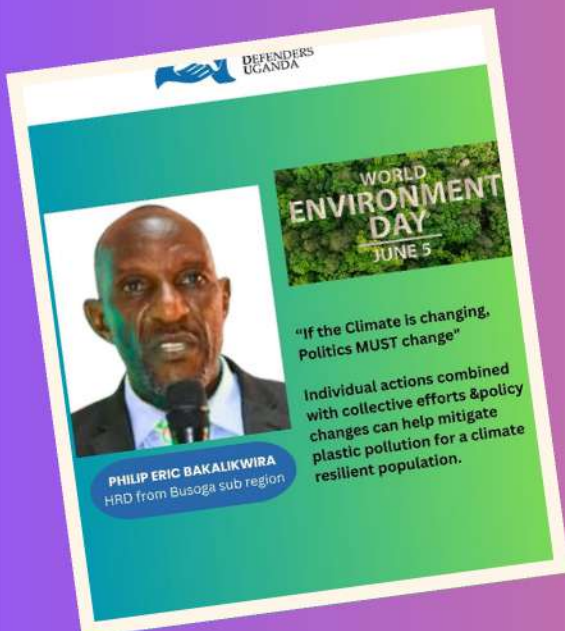
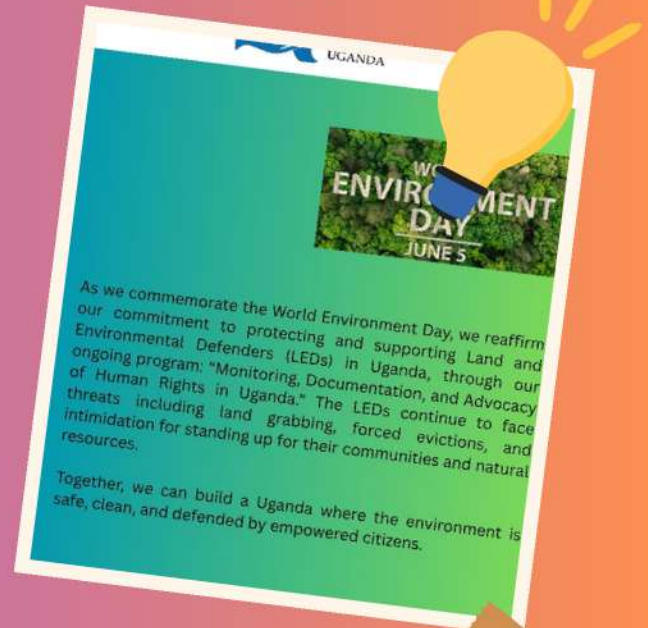


Disseminated 10 flyers (IEC materials) with grass root Journalists HRDs and their inspiring messages about the day on our X (formerly twitter) platforms. This managed to reach 4209 people.



NCHRD-U Commemorates World Environment Day 2025

To mark World Environment Day 2025, NCHRD-U amplified the voices of land and environmental defenders through a series of impactful activities. We hosted a live X Space that attracted 354 listeners, and held radio talk shows on Spice FM (Hoima) and Ateker FM (Moroto), reaching over 10,000 people across the Albertine and Karamoja sub-regions. Additionally, we designed and shared 10 advocacy flyers on social media, engaging 2,673 users online. These efforts raised awareness, sparked public dialogue, and reinforced support for the protection of environmental rights in Uganda.

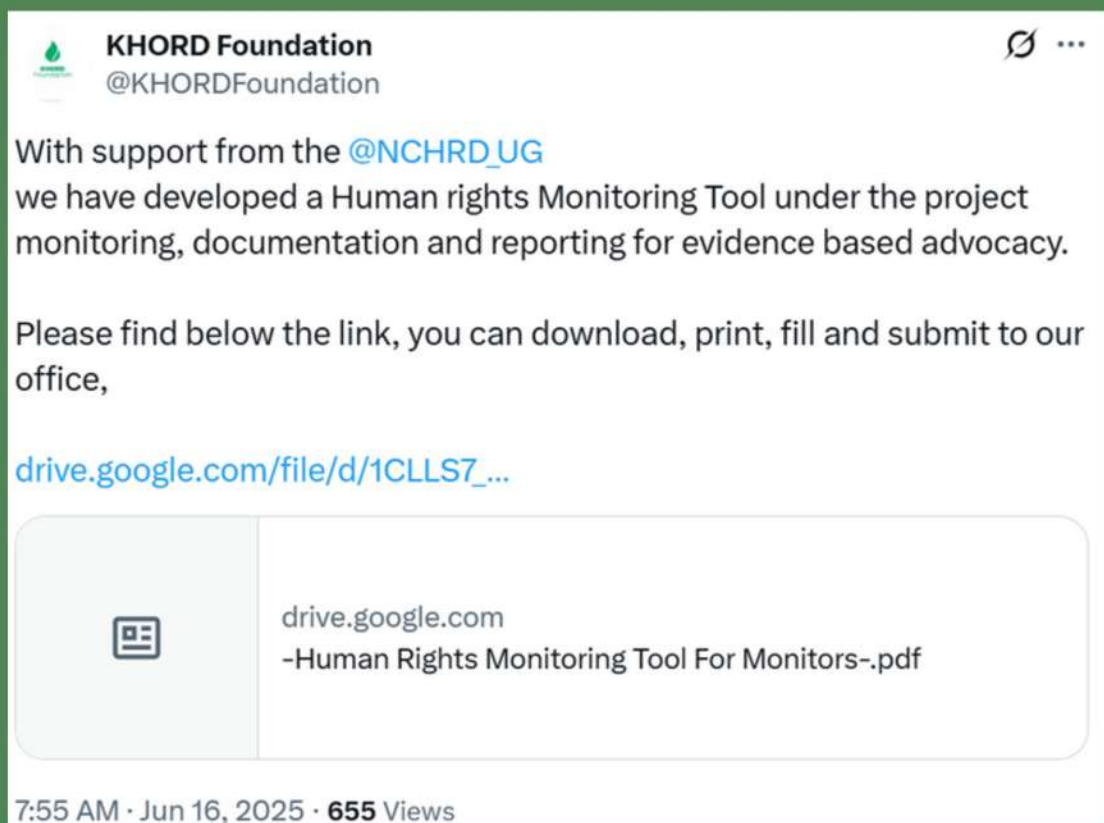


HRDs' Voices of Change

Human Rights Monitoring Tool Developed for Evidence-Based Advocacy.

This tool developed by KHORD Foundation is a major milestone in strengthening evidence-based advocacy by enabling human rights defenders to systematically track, document, and report human rights violations in Karamoja sub region.

The tool has already enhanced coordination among HRDs and improved the quality of reporting, leading to stronger, data-driven advocacy for justice and human rights protection.



Strengthening Regional HRD Protection in Mid-Western Uganda



NCHRD-U held a regional referral network and leadership committee meeting in Mid-western Uganda on 15th May, 2025 to assess and respond to threats against human rights defenders.

The meeting aimed to enhance coordination, cooperation, and protection service delivery from grassroots to national level.

It fostered stronger collaboration among local actors, improved threat documentation, and boosted timely response to HRD protection needs across the region.





HRDS EQUIPPED WITH SKILLS TO MONITOR, DOCUMENT AND REPORT CIVIC SPACE VIOLATIONS

On 17th and 18th June 2025, NCHRD-U conducted a Monitoring, Documentation, and Reporting (MDR) training for selected human rights defenders from Karamoja and Albertine sub-regions.

The training aimed to build the capacity of HRDs to effectively track, document, and report civic space violations and human rights abuses in their communities.

This initiative enhanced local-level accountability, improved early warning systems, and strengthened the ability of HRDs to respond to threats and advocate for greater protection and respect for human rights in their regions as we head towards election period.





NCHRD-U TRAINS PROTECTION SERVICE PROVIDERS IN MBALE AND HOIMA CITIES

On 24th and 26th June 2025, NCHRD-U conducted a training for protection service providers, including state actors, in Mbale and Hoima Cities.

The session covered the human rights defenders' working environment, associated risks, available protection mechanisms, and the role of service providers in case management.

Participants also discussed challenges faced in offering protection and exchanged best practices and strategies to enhance support.

This training strengthened the capacity of protection actors, fostering improved coordination and more effective protection services for human rights defenders in the region.



Protection and Emergency support

NCHRD-U remains pivotal in protecting HRDs at risk

 NATIONAL COALITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS UGANDA

Report any cases of violence or injustice against any human rights defender in your community to our toll-free line

 Call toll-free
0800 100 250

 Call Helpline
0763 565 154


or write to info@hrdcoalition.ug



Amidst limited resources, the NCHRD-U continues to stand firmly with HRDs facing threats and risks. Through our protection program, we provided timely support to HRDs in distress ranging from relocation to safer spaces, safe transport, medical and psychosocial support, to upkeep and Legal support.

Where our internal mechanisms could not fully meet the specific needs of an HRD, we ensured seamless referrals to trusted partners capable of providing the necessary intervention.

If you or someone you know is an HRD in need of assistance, please reach out to us through any of the following channels:

 Helpline: 0763 565 154

 Toll-Free Line: 0800 100 250

 Referral Portal: <https://referral.hrdcoalition.ug>

 USSD Code: 284*444# (for HRDs in Albertine and Karamoja sub-regions)

 Email: info@hrdcoalition.ug

HRDs safety is our priority. Together, we defend rights and protect defenders.

MOST COMMON CYBER SECURITY THREATS TODAY HRDs MUST BE AWARE OF.

Surveillance and Digital Monitoring

Phishing Attacks (Deceptive emails, messages, or websites designed to trick HRDs into revealing login credentials or downloading malware)

Account Hacking and Credential Theft

Data breaches and leaks due to poor data protection or compromised systems.

Digital Harassment and Doxxing.

Creation of fake profiles on social media to discredit HRDs or spread misinformation.

NCHRD-U Hosts Partners for Strengthened Human Rights Collaboration

NCHRD-U was pleased to welcome representatives from Total Energies Uganda, Lutheran World Federation Uganda, American Friends Service Committee, and DW Akademie for a courtesy visit to our office. The engagements focused on exploring areas of partnership, coordination, and future collaboration in advancing human rights defense in Uganda.

The visit strengthened mutual understanding, opened doors for joint initiatives, and reaffirmed the shared commitment to protecting human rights defenders and promoting a more just and inclusive society.





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