



NATIONAL  
COALITION OF  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
DEFENDERS  
UGANDA

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



A society that upholds the rights and freedoms of every human rights defender

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACTV	African Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and People's Rights
AGA	Annual General Assembly
CEHURD	Centre for Health Human Rights in Development
CRD	Civil Rights Defenders-Sweden
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSSA	Civil Society Strengthening Activity
DCA	Dan Church Aid
DGF	Democratic Governance Facility
DPI	Defenders Protection Initiative
EU	European Union
EWMI	East West Management Institute
FHRI	Foundation for Human Rights Initiative
GWED-G	Gulu Women Empowerment in Development and Globalisation
HRNJ	Human Rights Network for Journalists
HRAPF	Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum
HRC	Human Rights Council
HRCU	Human Rights Centre Uganda
HURIFO	Human Rights Focus
HRD/s	Human Rights Defenders
ICNL	International Centre for Non-Profit Law
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights
LASPNET	Legal Aid Service Providers Network
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NCHRD-U	National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders Uganda
NETPIL	Network of Public Interest Lawyers
NTV	Nation Television
NBS	Nile Broadcasting Services
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation



OSIEA	Open Society in East Africa
POMA	Public Order Management Act
PLA	Platform for Labour Action
SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UDHR	United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders
UN	United Nations
UPDF	Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
UOBDU	United Organisation for Batwa in Uganda
UPF	Uganda Police Force
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ULS	Uganda Law Society
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
WHRC	Wakiso Human Rights Committee

## OUR IDENTITY

The National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders Uganda (NCHRD-U) is a legally registered non-governmental organization consisting of individuals and organizations working to promote the protection of human rights defenders (HRDs) in Uganda. NCHRD-U provides a platform for promoting synergy, cooperation, collaboration and sharing of best practices among HRDs in Uganda. NCHRD-U focuses its work in all the regions in Uganda and embraces all defenders regardless of race, colour, gender, religion, or political affiliation.



**Vision** A society that upholds the rights and freedoms of every human rights defender.

### Mission



To protect and promote the work of HRDs in a safe and secure environment through linkages with national, regional, and international like-minded entities.

### Core Values



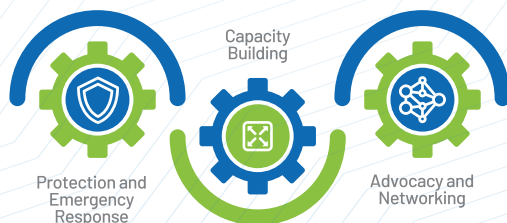
- Integrity
- Inclusiveness
- Confidentiality
- Transparency
- Responsiveness

### Institutional objectives



- To create an avenue for collective response to threats against HRDs.
- To coordinate other civil society organizations in promoting safety and security of HRDs.
- To improve protection mechanisms, safety, and security of HRDs in Uganda individually and at organizational level.
- To advocate and raise public awareness and profiles of HRDs in the country.

### Strategic pillars



## OUR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

The NCHRD-U Secretariat would like to extend its appreciation to all the development partners for the trust and confidence put in the work the Coalition has been doing since 2013. In no particular order, the NCHRD-U Secretariat would like to extend its appreciation to the following:



People  
Change  
the World

Diakonia



Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland



FORD  
FOUNDATION



Kingdom of the Netherlands



giz

Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



British  
High Commission  
Kampala



INNOVATION  
FOR CHANGE  
WHERE PEOPLE CONNECT TO CREATE TOMORROW

## WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



To all our esteemed members, stakeholders and development partners, I am profoundly honoured to present to you the NCHRD-U Annual Report for the period January 2022 - December 2022.

During the period under review, guided by the organization new Strategic Plan (2022/2026), NCHRD-U remained steadfast in fulfilling its mandate of protection and promotion of the work of HRDs in a safe and secure environment through linkages with national, regional, and international like-minded entities in Uganda.

The progress made by NCHRD-U on advocacy for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) stood out among the so many successes we achieved in 2022. I therefore take this opportunity to appreciate all our partners within and outside the Coalition that worked towards the success of the UPR. NCHRD-U significantly utilized the UPR space to develop the UPR road map highlighting several interventions and recommendations for enhancing protection of HRDs in Uganda.

On the part of networking, coordination and partnerships, NCHRD-U was able to maintain its membership at 180 HRDs spread across 70 districts in Uganda. At the 2022 Annual General Assembly, 20 new members were admitted into the Coalition each coming on board with a unique mandate hence creating diversity within the membership. We are looking forward to admitting new members as individuals and organizations. NCHRD-U also continued to maintain its existing development partners in addition to bringing on board new ones such as Ford Foundation and Open Society Foundations. In 2022, the NCHRD-U membership increased to 202 paid up members.

More interesting to note, NCHRD-U was able to discharge its mandate of strengthening the capacity of its members through a myriad of trainings on safety and security; monitoring, documenting and reporting; advocacy skills; and navigating the CSO enabling environment by HRDs. Our long-term expertise in the protection for HRDs created more opportunities for the Coalition. For instance, NCHRD-U was invited to make presentations by the Uganda Human Rights Commission and several Embassies on the promotion of the rights of HRDs.

Aware of the need to promote organizational sustainability, NCHRD-U started its fundraising drive by developing a five-year Strategic Plan geared towards amplifying the coordination role of the Coalition. We look forward to collaborating with more development partners in the promotion of the protection of the rights of HRDs in Uganda.

It is noteworthy that 2022 was not without disruption. NCHRD-U experienced challenges with continued shrinking civic space. For example, the continued suspension and later exit of the Democratic Governance

Facility (DGF) from Uganda's development funding landscape hugely impacted on the operations of the NCHRD-U Secretariat. DGF was one of NCHRD-U's institutional donors funding about 75% of the staffing as well as programme implementation. As such, NCHRD-U strategically pivoted its interventions to attract alternative funding and keep the work going.

On the side of human rights violations, NCHRD-U witnessed attacks on HRDs and activists. For example, the gruesome torture of novelist and satirical writer, Kakwenza Rukirabashaija, remains fresh in our memories. In spite of the challenges, NCHRD-U remained focused, resilient and enthusiastic towards promoting the protection of HRDs in Uganda.

Finally, on behalf of NCHRD-U, I extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to our development partners including DGF, Wellsprings, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, DanChurchAid, Freedom House, American Bar Association, East West Management Institute, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, GIZ, Small Media, DefendDefenders, and IrishAid that supported our work in 2022 as you will read from this Annual Report.

I also appreciate the NCHRD-U Board of Directors for the support and job well done. The Coalition is grateful for their commitment, professionalism, and oversight support to the work of the secretariat. Lastly, I thank the Secretariat team for the commitment and resilience to the work of the Coalition amidst the challenges. You have all done commendable work this year.

**Robert R. Kirenga**

**Executive Director,**

**National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders Uganda**



## NCHRD-U IN NUMBERS: JANUARY 2022 – DECEMBER 2022



**3**

Radio Talk shows



**58**

HRD trained in Monitoring,  
Documenting and  
Reporting



**2**

TV talk shows



**4**

Sub-Regional Coalitions  
formed



**6**

awareness sessions on  
the HRD Bill



**77**

trained in digital security



**5**

Board meetings



**66**

Rapid response cases  
handled and closed



**1,000**

IEC materials produced  
and disseminated



**6**

Collaborative meetings  
held



**15**

legal compliance checks  
conducted



## NCHRD-U ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

In 2022, NCHRD-U continued to provide a platform for promoting synergy, cooperation, collaboration and sharing of best practices among HRDs in Uganda. This was achieved through the Coalition's strategic thematic areas of protection and emergency response; capacity building; and advocacy and networking. Key achievements under each theme are summarized below.

### Capacity Building

In 2022, NCHRD-U focused on enhancing the capacity of HRDs to improve their safety and working environment. This is in line with one of the Coalition's strategic objectives of empowering 75% of NCHRD members with preventive and responsive skills, strategies and facilities that build their resilience by 2026. In 2022, the Coalition strived to empower its members with preventive and responsive skills, and strategies that build their resilience. As a result of the various initiatives, the Coalition was able to extend capacity building initiatives to 142 HRDs drawn from across Uganda throughout 2022. Key capacity building initiatives implemented are highlighted below.



### Formation and strengthening Sub-Regional Coalition Networks

In 2022, four Sub-regional Networks in Teso, Lango, Acholi and Busoga were formed through the sub-regional meetings that were conducted. The meetings attracted 74 HRDs (25 F, 39M). Noteworthy is that since 2013, NCHRD-U had been operating only at the national level. Therefore, the formation of the four Sub-regional Networks helped to decentralize and scale down NCHRD-U services in order to meet the ever-changing protection needs of HRDs, more so at the grass root. The Sub Regional Networks will also enable HRDs to assess their risks vis-a-vis their operating environment and offer more context-specific interventions.

NCHRD-U members who participated in the sub-regional meetings elected host organisations, selected a sub-regional committee, and agreed to drive regional responses around HRD risks and provide sustained coordination in joint action. Inception meetings were held with the selected

committee members per Sub-region following their establishment. This was aimed at setting the pace for the committees, develop a proposed workplan and budgets, and follow up with the selected host organizations.



*A charter technical consultant sharing with HRDs from Busoga Sub-region the Sub-Regional Coalition Charter, 2022.  
(Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*

### **Orientation workshop on best practises for improved documentation and reporting of human rights violations**

In 2022, NCHRD-U facilitated two orientation meetings in the districts of Mbale and Soroti which provided an opportunity for participating HRD organizations to learn about cost-effective advocacy initiatives, improve on their advocacy skills, and tease out advocacy plans to ensure resilient action towards achieving their respective advocacy goals within their operating environment. The trainings attracted 38 HRDs (15F, 23M)

### Training on personal and organizational digital security

In 2022, NCHRD-U conducted a three-day training on safety and security management for HRDs in Eastern and Northern Uganda. A total of 77 HRDs (33F, 44M) were trained on how to conduct risk assessments, how to enhance security measures, and how to conduct security planning. These trainings have helped HRDs to conduct their work in a safe and secure environment.



*Participants are taken through the key components of a security plan during the project security training.  
(Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*

### Training in legal compliance health checks

In 2022, NCHRD-U, in collaboration with the Uganda Law Society, identified a cohort of 15 lawyers that participated in a two-day training to build the capacity of HRD organization in conducting legal compliance audits for their organizations to identify gaps and provide legal support to enhance compliance.





*Mr. Anthony Masake (Left) facilitates a session on how to conduct legal compliance checks for CSOs in Jinja District.  
(Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*

### **Monitoring the legal enabling environment**

In 2022, NCHRD-U, with support from International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) finalized the development of the CSO legal enabling environment monitoring tool and different data collection tools including media monitoring tool, incident form, and a general civic space monitoring tool. This was followed by a two-day training held at Golf Course Hotel on April 28 and 29, 2022. A cohort of 20 monitors were selected representing the sub-regions of West Nile, Karamoja, Busoga, Central, Western, and Teso. Participants were trained in the practical use of the data collection tools, data security, verification, and reporting.

## **Advocacy and Networking**

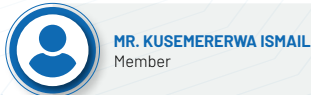
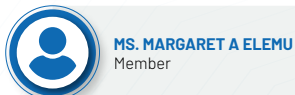
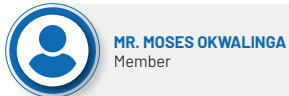
In 2022, NCHRD-U focused on strengthening its advocacy and networking reach through a number of interventions. Key advocacy and networking initiatives implemented are highlighted below.

### **Annual General Assembly**

On 5 May, 2022, NCHRD-U held its 6th Annual General Assembly (AGA) under the theme, "Promoting accountability and transparency amidst the ever-changing civic space". New NCHRD-U Board

of Directors and new Technical Thematic Working Group (TTWG) cluster heads were also elected during the AGA. On 9 December, 2022, NCHRD-U held the International Human Rights Day celebrations in Mbarara District under the theme, "Defending Civic Space: human rights defenders' voices at the centre".

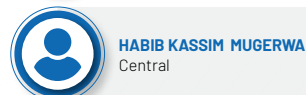
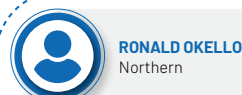
### Newly Elected Board of Directors



### New Technical Thematic Working Group Cluster Leads



### New Regional Representatives



### Strategic engagement with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights

On 19 January, 2022, a delegation from the NCHRD-U secretariat met with representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss possibility of a joint meeting with Ugandan CSOs on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in order to structure a harmonized joint Government-CSO UPR framework. While the joint meeting with Ugandan CSOs had been scheduled for 30 March,

2022, the meeting was postponed. NCHRD-U is positive that the joint meeting will take place considering the cordial engagements CSO have held with Government in the lead up to the review.



*Ambassador Arthur Kafeero (1st Right), the Director Legal and International Relations at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ms. Daphine Nyanduri (2nd Right), the Second Secretary Legal and International relations at Ministry of Ministry Affairs after a meeting with the NCHRD-U team on 19 January, 2022. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*

### **Strategic engagements on the Universal Periodic Review**

On 30 and 31 August, 2022, NCHRD-U, as the coordinating entity of CSOs on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), organized a stakeholders' forum aimed at updating CSOs on the outcome report. The outcome report highlighted the accepted recommendations with the aim of forging ways of monitoring and participating in implementation of the recommendations ahead of the mid-term reporting and next UPR review cycle.

The stakeholders' forum brought together delegates who included policy makers, legal aid practitioners, representatives of the respective Ministries of Justice, Departments and Agencies (MDAs); members of Civil Society, development Partners, Ambassadors of different Foreign Missions, relevant UN agencies and Media. In addition, various experts experienced in the UPR processes were invited to share their insights on how CSOs can collaboratively work with government in the UPR process as well as lessons learnt from the last UPR cycle.





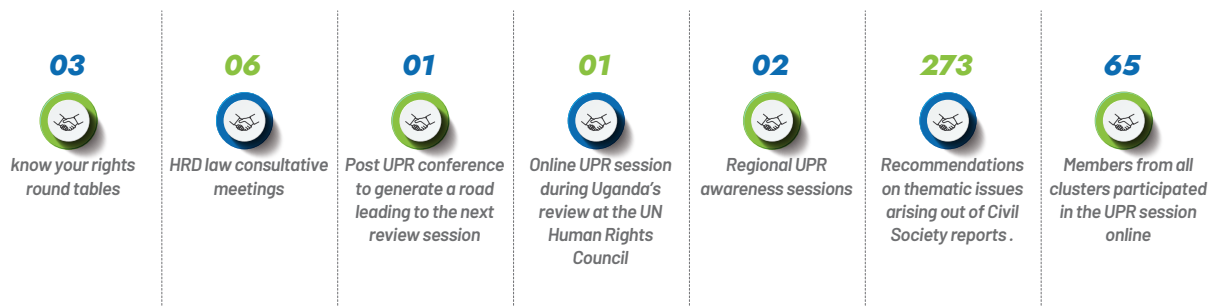
Panelists during a session on how CSOs can work collectively with government on the UPR processes. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)

On 7 December, 2022, NCHRD-U further conducted an interactive dialogue session with all stakeholders on the next UPR cycle for Uganda which is due in 2026. Below is Uganda's CSO roadmap in preparation for the next UPR cycle.



A group photo of the steering committee members and MDAs that participated in the CSO-UPR Interactive dialogue that took place on 7th December, 2022 at Serena Hotel in Kampala. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)

Following intense weeks of advocacy and engagement, Uganda was able to receive 273 recommendations on thematic issues arising out of Civil Society reports. The diversity of recommendations points to various efforts that NCHRD-U spearheaded towards generating specific thematic reports.



NCHRD-U also carried out an online UPR post-session evaluation focusing mainly on how the engagements had been impactful to the CSOs that took part in the listening session. A total of 74 submissions were received from different thematic clusters from all the regions of Uganda. The responses indicated an improvement in citizen participation in the UPR process. See illustration below for details:



NCHRD-U was also able to convene 65 participants who included 25 CSOs, and 23 Government Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs) who actively participated in the meeting. The discussion included good data collection practices like use of data published by government data entities, joint collaboration between CSO and MDAs especially on agreed recommendations. The Coalition also disseminated 65 copies of the UPR road map (2022-2026).

**Below are quotes from some participants NCHRD-U engaged during the UPR review**



"The process of UPR review is multi-faceted and there are different stages within which to participate in advocacy. For example, before the Government presents a report, and after it has presented its report. There is need to translate and popularize the different recommendations of the UPR"

Jesse Mugero,  
The International Centre for Transitional Justice



"When states combine voices towards a certain human right issue we can have attention to such issues and states can be held to account for a certain pressing human right issue. Collective responsibility in state of shrinking civic spaces can help to achieve justice"

Mugisha Imam  
Youth concern on environment and  
development (YCED)





## Media Engagements

### TV Talk Shows

In 2022, NCHRD-U collaborated with the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) and the Uganda Police Force (UPF) to conduct a live televised talk show on NTV Uganda on the UPR on 27 January, 2022. The live televised talk show created awareness about the UPR but also set the tone for Uganda's actual review held on the afternoon of the same day. The live televised talk show also provided an opportunity for the panelists to elaborately explain the UPR to different stakeholders, and also share civil society expectations from the review.



*Mr. Robert R. Kirenga (2nd Left), the Executive Director, NCHRD-U; Ms. Idah Nakiganda (2nd Right), Director Complaints, Investigations and Legal Services, UHRC; and Dr. John Kamyia (1st Right), the Commissioner of Police, Uganda Police Force, participate in the live televised talk show on NTV Uganda. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*

Below are some quotes from the participants of the televised talk show on the UPR review



"We had a small department of legal services in the Uganda Police Force, now we have a fully-fledged human rights department with human rights officers spread across 30 regions. We have also institutionalized a human rights policy and put in place standard operating procedures on use of force and firearms as a result of recommendations from Uganda's review in 2016"

Dr. John Kamyu,  
Commissioner of Police, Uganda Police Force (1st Right)



"Member states will raise issues arising out of Uganda's 2021 electoral cycle, enforced disappearances, torture, civic space and funding modalities for Uganda Human Rights Commission. We anticipate States to raise questions on law enforcement and accountability for human rights violations committed by security agencies,"

Mr. Robert R. Kirenga (2nd Left)  
Executive Director, NCHRD-U.



"Progressively government of Uganda has increased funding to the National Human Rights Institution to 80% but bringing the funding to 100% would make the difference for the institution. So we expect member states of the United Nations Human Rights Council to raise a question on funding to the human rights institution but also inquire into the progress of the National Action Plan on Human Rights inclusive of a recommendation on strengthening accountability mechanisms."

Ms. Idah Nakiganda  
Director Uganda Human Rights Commission



## Twitter Spaces

As part of events to mark the International Human Rights Day 2022, NCHRD-U hosted a twitter space discussion on 14 December 2022 titled, “The state of Dignity, Freedom and Justice in Uganda: What needs to be done to promote these freedoms?”. The panelists and participants included state actors, NCHRD-U sub-regional network members, and NCHRD-U regional focal persons.



## Radio Talk shows

Three radio talk shows were held on the UPR mechanism in Uganda which focused on implementing government supported recommendations relating to including the role of key stakeholders in monitoring, documenting and reporting on implementation. In addition, one radio talk show was held in Mbarara as a build-up to the IHRD day celebrations in Mbarara City in Western Uganda.





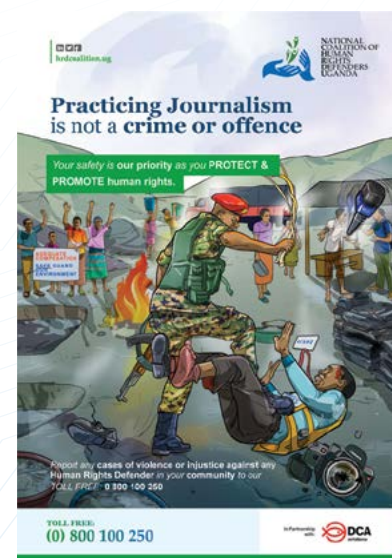
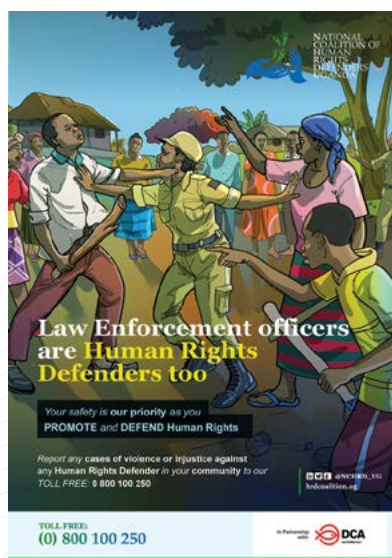
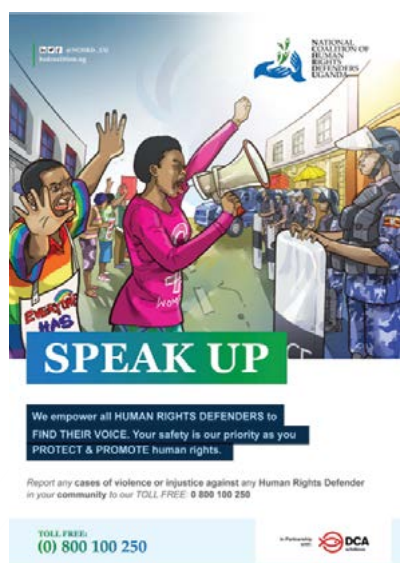
A screenshot of Mr. Robert Kirenga, the Executive Director, NCHRD-U, participating in a radio talk show to mark International Human Rights Day, 2022 in Mbarara City in Western Uganda.



Ms. Rose Amongin (3rd Left), the NCHRD-U Eastern regional focal person, and Prossy Babirye (2nd Right), the Capacity Building Officer, NCHRD-U, discuss the issue of human rights violations within Teso region on Etop FM in Soroti District. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)

## Information, Education and Communication materials

In 2022, NCHRD-U produced 3,000 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials such as posters, brochures, and flyers. NCHRD-U also produced short video clips with key personal and organizational security tips, and processes for reporting any risks for the HRDs. The copies of IEC materials that were distributed have helped in enhancing the accessibility of protection services available to HRDs in dire need, the response mechanisms following a prescribed referral pathway, and also the security tips that HRDs and CSOs can follow in order to manage security threats. Samples of some IEC materials that were produced and distributed are shared below.







In 2022, NCHRD-U supported all the 22 thematic clusters through a process to sieve and generate clear fact sheets clearly elaborating the key recommendations per thematic area for advocacy purposes ahead of the review. The developed advocacy fact sheets were widely disseminated to the permanent UN missions and also were a tool to create more awareness within CSOs to be aware of the issues raised at thematic level.

## Research

### Strategic Plan



### Civic Space Index



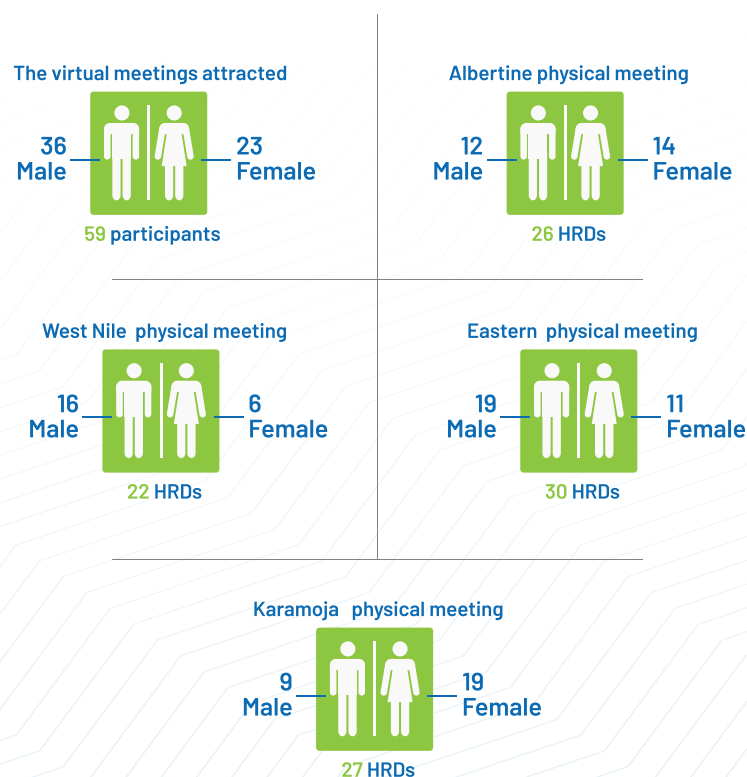
In the period under review, NCHRD-U produced two research reports. The first research report was on the national level documentation of COVID-19 related human rights violations in Uganda. Key areas documented in the report include violations within the civic space area. For example, journalists and media persons faced threats for demanding for accountability from Government in regard to handling of the COVID-19 pandemic funds. The information documented was therefore used to engage with state and other stakeholders on civic space, including foreign missions in Uganda, Uganda Police Force, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, and faith leaders.

The second research report produced was on enhancing the protection mechanisms for key population HRDs in Uganda. On 16 November 2022, NCHRD-U launched the report on the assessment of protection needs and existing response mechanisms for key populations HRDs.

## Policy Influence

On 29 September and 27 October 2022, NCHRD-U held two virtual meetings for human rights defenders in Western and Central Uganda to raise awareness among HRDs in these regions on the proposed Human Rights Defender's Protection Bill 2022. The virtual meetings attracted 59 (36M, 23F) participants. In addition to the above, four physical meetings were also as illustrated below.

The awareness creation meetings provided a platform for HRDs to demystify the proposed Bill and its



objectives as well as highlighting the roadmap. Secondly, the meetings also helped in providing a platform for a discourse on the context in which HRDs are operating in and how the Bill will address the challenges as well as agreeing on a strategy towards popularizing it.

### Grassroot advocacy campaigns

In 2022, NCHRD-U supported five advocacy campaigns on different issues raised by HRDs representing five sub-regions. These include Media for Transformative Advocacy from Teso sub-region was supported to conduct a radio talk show on human rights violations targeting journalists within the region; and Friends of Zoka from Adjumani District were supported to carry out a mitigation podcast to document and highlight voices of communities in Zoka to advocate for protection of the Zoka Forest. Gulu Women Economic Development and Globalization (GWED-G); Busogonet; and Health and Rights Initiative were also supported by NCHRD-U to undertake various advocacy campaigns.

### Know your rights roundtable meetings

In 2022, NCHRD-U held three Know Your Rights roundtable meetings for journalist, environment, and youth HRDs on the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) for purposes of empowering communities and increasing their level of participation in development and governance work. The roundtable meetings improved knowledge on participants' understanding of HRBA, improved knowledge of what needs to be done to better systems, and incorporate HRBA in joint collaborations. The meetings also facilitated discussions on the current challenges faced by youth as human rights defenders, potential areas of recommendation, and a structured tentative workplan on areas of future collaboration was compiled. A total of 67 [24 F, 43M] HRDs participated in the engagements.



*Mr. James Nkuubi, a Human Rights Expert, shares with council members the key principles on the Human Rights Based Approach. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*



## Commemoration of International Human Rights Defenders (IHRD) Day

The International Human Rights Defenders Day for the year 2022 was commemorated on the 9th December 2022 at Hotel Triangle in Matembe Hall under the theme “Human Rights as a Pillar of Peace and a fairer society”. 197 HRDs participated in the event.



*Ms. Mariam Wagadya, the Chairperson of the Uganda Human Rights Commission joined by several dignitaries and HRDs in a group photo during the IHRD day celebrations held in Mbarara City in Western Uganda. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*

## The Human Rights Defenders Walk

To commemorate IHRD day, NCHRD-U organized a HRD walk. The chief walker, Ms. Priscah Murongo, the Deputy Mayor of Mbarara City, flagged off the walk led by the Bishop Stuart University Band. The walk created awareness among communities within Mbarara City about the work of NCHRD-U. Ms. Murongo also led a tree planting exercise at the Mbarara Independence Grounds. Human Rights Defenders and other stakeholders took part in this activity planted about 100 trees of different species as a means of conserving the environment.



*Photos of participants participating in the IHRD day walk and the tree planting exercise. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*



## Blood Donation Drive

To commemorate IHRD day, NCHRD-U organized a blood donation drive to support the Mbarara Blood Bank to contribute to saving more lives. Different district leaders applauded the work of HRDs in Uganda. Security representatives from the Mbarara District called for cooperation between HRDs and security agencies.



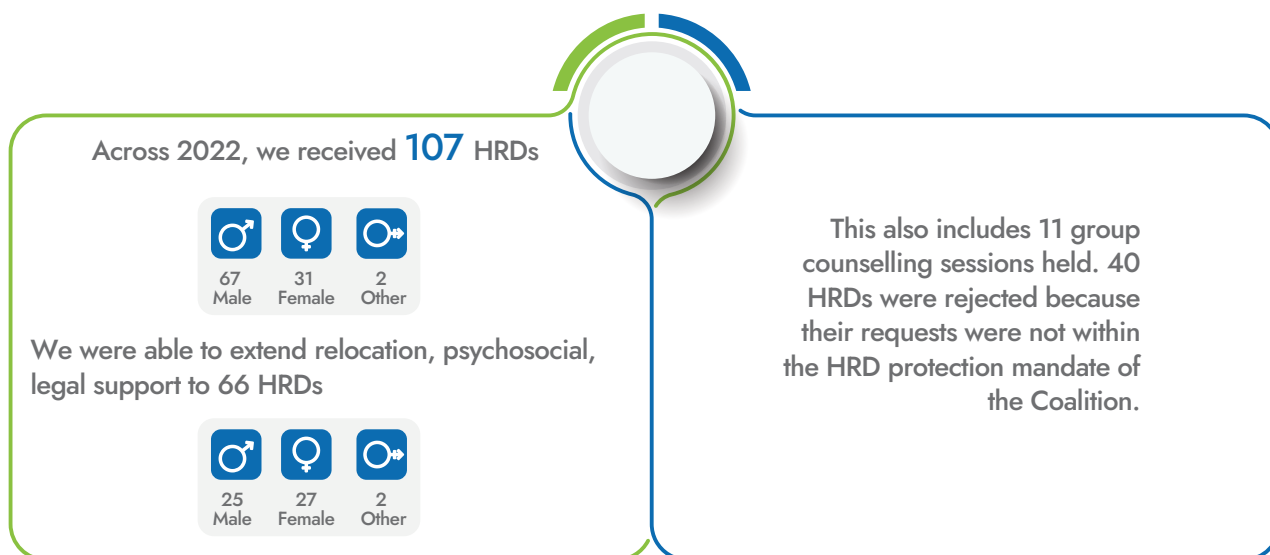
*Participants participating in the IHRD blood drive. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)*

## Human Rights Defenders Impact Awards 2022

To commemorate IHRD day, NCHRD-U also awarded outstanding HRDs from across the country. Those that were awarded are as follows:

- John Robert Turyakira – Human Rights Defender of the Year
- The late John Mark Aporu – Posthumous Award
- Janepher Baitwamasa – Outstanding Human Rights Defender (Western Uganda)
- Connie Atto – Outstanding Human Rights Defender (Northern Uganda)
- Joseph Kayira – Outstanding Human Rights Defender (Central Uganda)
- Faith Juliet Namansa – Outstanding Human Rights Defender (Central Uganda)

## Protection and Emergency Response



Under the protection and emergency response program in 2022, NCHRD-U undertook several strategic protection interventions such as disbursement of the Urgent Protection Fund to support HRDs at immediate risk through the protection desk, conducting solidarity visits to several HRDs at risk, conducting protection committee meetings, and attending security working group meetings for the sexual orientation and gender identity HRDs.

### Disbursement of the protection and emergency fund

Across 2022, NCHRD-U received 107 HRDs (67M: 31F: 20). NCHRD-U was able to extend relocation, psychosocial, and legal support to 66 HRDs (25M: 27F: 20), in addition to 11 group counselling sessions conducted. 40 HRDs were rejected because their requests were not within the HRD protection mandate of NCHRD-U, some of which included refugees, exiles, and general welfare support requests.

### Security Working Group

In 2022, NCHRD-U held a meeting with the Security Working Group representing the key population groups and they included Defenders Protective Initiative (DPI) the host, Sexual Minorities Uganda, National Security Committee, Trans Network, Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum, Gala Initiative, UNESCO, and Tala Uganda where participants had an opportunity to discuss the work context for the key population HRDs.

## Institutional Strengthening

### **Development of a Resource Mobilization Strategy**

To ensure the continuation of NCHRD-U's work with HRDs across Uganda and to support organizational sustainability, NCHRD-U developed a resource mobilization strategy. The strategy allowed the NCHRD-U Secretariat to draw out a roadmap that spells out how resources will to be leveraged to meet NCHRD-U's resource needs, in addition how to compete effectively in securing funds from donors.

### **Development of the TTWG Charter and Code of Conduct**

In 2022, NCHRD-U developed the Technical Thematic Working Group (TTWG) Charter and Code of Conduct to be used as a tool to guide the operations of the TTWG. With the election of new members, the charter, guidelines, and manual eased the orientation and aided the transition process of the new members to fit into their roles and have a guiding document for reference.

### **Held institutional reflective meeting with NCHRD-U Secretariat**

In 2022, NCHRD-U organized a two-day institutional reflective meeting for its staff to rejuvenate, reflect on the work implemented, set goals for the next implementation period, encourage team building and bonding, resolve conflicts, and engage in healing and therapeutic activities that focus on improving their wellbeing and wellness. Overall, this institutional reflective meeting aimed at improving staff morale and productivity.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and learning**

In 2022, NCHRD-U's internal monitoring, evaluation and learning was geared towards an effective, integrated, and coherent programme framework to deepen the impact of the organisation's work. In line with that NCHRD-U conducted one internal monitoring exercise, and evaluated its strategic plan. By the end of 2022, NCHRD-U had reached an average of 75% performance aligned to the strategic plan 2022-2026. To increase the effectiveness of the organisation's programmes, NCHRD-U undertook follow-up and documentation processes. Additionally, NCHRD-U followed up with individual and organization HRDs in Northern and Eastern Uganda that have directly benefited from NCHRD-U implemented initiatives. NCHRD-U also evaluated how HRDs benefitted and what still needs to be improved. The conclusions were integrated into NCHRD-U planning and trainings.

### **Board of Directors meeting**

In 2022, NCHRD-U ushered in a new Board of Directors elected at the Annual General Assembly. Members of the Board of Directors held four quarterly meetings to review both financial and program engagements and offer strategic direction.



## Partnerships and Collaborations

In 2022, NCHRD-U was hosted by Protection International Africa Hub to share the available protection mechanisms for HRDs living with disabilities. The training was facilitated by Mr. Robert R. Kirenga, the Executive Director of NCHRD-U. Further, NCHRD-U, in partnership with the Media Tech Hub project, held a two-day hybrid capacity building workshop on data literacy, safety and security of journalists, and human rights reporters targeting investigative journalists in Uganda and Kenya.

From 9 to 11 August, 2022, NCHRD-U partnered with Chapter Four Uganda, the Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa, International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, and Legal Aid Service Providers Network, to hold a three-day national conference on the theme, "Strengthening Civil Society Resilience and Sustainability in Uganda". The Conference was held under the Uganda Civil Society Strengthening Activity (CSSA) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



*A group photo of the steering committee members and MDAs that participated in the CSO-UPR Interactive dialogue that took place on 7th December, 2022 at Serena Hotel in Kampala*



## Challenges, Lessons Learnt, and Recommendations

### Challenges

1. Government's commitment to engage with CSOs remains a situational challenge with varying commitment. For example, some Government ministries departments and agencies (MDA) have not been responsive to inquiries made by CSOs and other times human rights issues raised have been politicized.
2. There has been high expectation from the key population HRDs to meet both their protection needs and humanitarian needs, with them having diverse needs which require need diverse support to ensure that they are met holistically.
3. There is limited knowledge on the HRD concept among the key population HRDs, which also continues to be a frequently asked question that needs continuous discussion to avoid misconception and interpretation of the HRDs' work and their working environment.
4. CSOs have been hindered to adequately monitor the implementation and documentation of the UPR recommendations since the suspension and closure of the DGF.
5. There is limited knowledge and participation of local communities in the UPR processes at national level.
6. Limited full participation of HRDs in NCHRD-U activities due to increased fear of security and safety threats.
7. The volatile political and restrictive legislative environment continues to be a significant risk to key population HRDs, stakeholders, partners and staff.

### Lessons Learnt

1. It is important for CSOs to make to use of evidence-based data and data published by government entities to ensure credibility of the reports used in the UPR mechanism.
2. Regular updating and verification of raw data should be shared with MDAs for credibility before sharing with any stakeholder.
3. Constructive and non-politicized feedback engagements are key to forge better working relationships between the MDAs and CSOs.
4. Managing the high expectations from key population HRDs to meet both their protection needs and humanitarian needs. The Security Working Group needs to be utilised to balance the needs of the key population HRDs and emphasize the Coalition's mandate.
5. The HRD concept among the key population HRDs needs continuous discussion to avoid misconception and interpretation of the HRDs' work and their working environment.
6. To ensure security of persons and organizations, the project will have layered safe and secure

communications channels and ensure encryption for sensitive information to ensure security of the targeted project beneficiaries.

7. In support of key population HRD organizations, there is need to conduct legal compliance workshops, conduct contextual analysis, implement the recommendations in the report, create mental health support groups at both grassroots and national levels.

### **Recommendations**

1. Regular engagements with line MDAs to agree on the recommendations to focus on the first.
2. Government to be open to receiving feedback and comments during the IMC where CSOs have a slot. This is in view to creating an enabling environment for Human Rights.
3. CSOs should map which MDA is associated with each recommendation and disseminate the recommendations at the local government level.
4. There should be related capacity building interventions by the Coalition to target CSOs, government/MDAs on the UPR process and mechanism, data collection and evidence-based documentation.

## 2022 PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS



Mr. Robert Kirenga (Left), the Executive Director of NCHRD-U, hands over a token of appreciation to H.E Nicolaj H. Petersen, the outgoing Danish Ambassador to Uganda, for his tremendous support to human rights defenders in Uganda. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)



Mr. Joseph Munyangabo (Left), the Country Representative of Westminster Foundation for Democracy, receives publications produced by NCHRD-U from Mr. Robert Kirenga, the Executive Director, after a meeting to explore areas of collaboration and support to the work of HRDs. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)



Mr. Robert Kirenga (Upper Left), the Executive Director of NCHRD-U, giving remarks during the USAID/Civil Society Strengthening Activity National Conference on 9 - 11 August 2022 at Golf Course Hotel in Kampala. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)



Investigative journalists from Uganda and Kenya participating in a two-day hybrid capacity building workshop on data literacy, safety and security of journalists and human rights reporting. (Photo credit: NCHRD-U)



## AUDITED 2022 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

**Overall Goal: By 2026, Human Rights Defenders are recognized, and are productively promoting, and protecting human rights within an enabling environment.**

		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	UGX	USD
SO 1	To establish and maintain a high-level performance coordination system that enhances member satisfaction, and their collective success regarding prioritised issues, by 2025	705,200,000	706,000,000	560,000,000	542,000,000	542,000,000	3,055,200,000	848,666
SO 2	To empower 75% of NCHRD members with preventive and responsive skills, strategies and facilities that build their resilience by 2026	1,026,760,000	1,053,624,000	961,624,000	1,015,667,600	965,667,600	5,023,343,200	1,395,373
SO 3	To raise the profile of human rights defenders in Uganda by 2026, while supporting their collective evidence-based influence initiatives, at national, regional, and international levels	1,310,960,000	1,357,154,000	1,301,154,000	1,326,677,100	1,326,677,100	6,622,622,200	1,839,617
SO 4	To improve availability, access, timeliness and utilization of emergency response and protection services to HRDs by 2024, have in place a comprehensive and accessible system, by 2025.	693,240,000	1,508,046,000	1,443,046,000	1,511,412,900	1,473,412,900	6,629,157,800	1,841,433
SO 5	To enhance governance, management and operations systems and structures of NCHRDU, establish, and establish and nurture strategic national, and trans-national partnerships by 2025	1,224,440,000	2,222,976,000	1,359,976,000	1,417,742,400	1,466,742,400	7,691,876,800	2,136,632
		<b>4,960,600,000</b>	<b>6,487,800,000</b>	<b>5,625,800,000</b>	<b>5,813,500,000</b>	<b>5,774,500,000</b>	<b>29,022,200,000</b>	<b>8,061,722</b>



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