









Newsletter



Legal Education
Training For Human
Rights Lawyers
In Tanzania

1.0 Legal Education Training Equips Human Rights Lawyers with Advanced Legal Skills

Dodoma, Tanzania, on 28th and 29th June 2025 a specialized Legal Education Training for human rights lawyers from across Tanzania was held to strengthen legal capacity in defending human rights and promoting access to justice. The training strengthened the capacity of legal practitioners in Tanzania to deliver effective, inclusive, and rights-based access to justice through enhanced understanding and integration of domestic, regional, and international human rights frameworks. The training was organized by the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC), in collaboration with the East Africa Law Society (EALS), Zanzibar Female Lawyers Association (ZAFELA), Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) and the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS). The training brought together over 40 lawyers from different regions including TLS governing council members.

2.0 Background and Context

The Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) in collaboration with the East Africa Law Society (EALS), Zanzibar Female Lawyers Association (ZAFELA) and Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) is implementing a project on Safeguarding Rule of Law, Civic Space and Accountability in Tanzania through Enhanced Collaboration and Partnerships, core funded by the European Union (SCATZ Project). The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of the coalition of Civil Society Organisations, Bar Associations, and Rule of law Institutions to foster access to justice and strengthen the rule of law in Tanzania (Mainland and Zanzibar) hence the legal education training in Dodoma on 28th and 29th June 2025.

While welcoming participants to the training, Advocate Paul Kisabo, Head of Protection Programs at the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC), emphasized the importance of continuous learning for legal practitioners.



"In a rapidly changing legal and political landscape, it is essential for human rights lawyers to remain updated on laws, procedures, and international human rights instruments," said Advocate Kisabo, who also moderated the session.

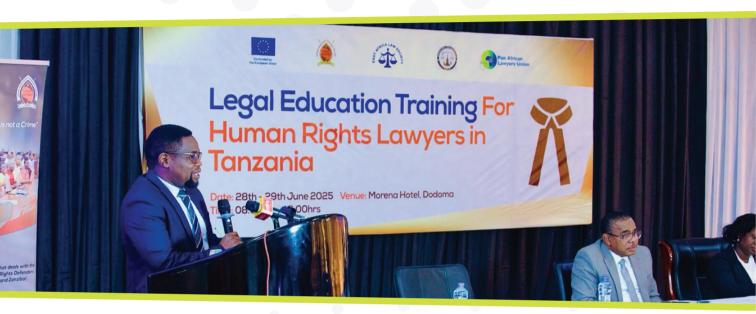
His remarks set the tone for the training, highlighting the need for legal preparedness in defending human rights amidst evolving challenges.

3.0 Welcoming Remarks by Advocate Onesmo Olengurumwa, THRDC National Coordinator

Speaking during the opening of the training, Advocate Onesmo Olengurumwa, National Coordinator of the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC), emphasized the critical importance of collaboration among civil society organizations, Bar associations, and the government in the promotion and protection of human rights and good governance.

"The success of human rights efforts cannot be achieved without cooperation between these key actors," he stated. "The SCATZ project strongly emphasizes building the foundations of this partnership."

As the country moves closer to the 2025 General Elections, Advocate Olengurumwa stressed the vital role lawyers play in identifying, analyzing, and addressing legal challenges that may arise before, during, and after the electoral process. He noted that this training provides participants with a unique platform to engage in discussions on constitutional rights, the rule of law, and the strategic use of legal tools to protect the public interest.



"Election is a legal matter, and the solutions to all legal challenges related to elections lie with lawyers, it is the duty and responsibility of every lawyer to observe, analyze, interpret, and provide solutions to all legal challenges associated with the election cycle in order to promote free and fair elections." Advocate Olengurumwa

His remarks set the tone for the training, underlining the proactive role lawyers must play in strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring access to justice during politically sensitive times.

4.0 Welcoming Remarks by Advocate John Seka, Secretary General of the East Africa Law Society (EALS)

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this important Legal Education Training. On behalf of the East Africa Law Society, I bring warm greetings and express our appreciation to the organizers, partners, and every participant here today for your dedication to justice, human rights, and professional excellence.

As the regional Bar association representing over 20,000 lawyers across East Africa, the East Africa Law Society believes that one of our most essential responsibilities is to continuously build the capacity of legal professionals. We understand that strong, informed, and ethically committed lawyers are the foundation of a just society and that is why legal training is central to our mission.

Through such trainings, we aim to ensure that lawyers across the region are equipped not only with up-to-date legal knowledge but also with the tools and skills necessary to respond to emerging challenges whether in the courtroom, in policy spaces, or in defending civic freedoms.

Our focus has always been to promote cross-border learning, professional solidarity, and strategic engagement among lawyers. We believe that by bringing together expertise, experience, and shared commitment, we can collectively raise the standards of legal practice and protect the rights of East Africans across all jurisdictions.

To all the participants, I welcome you warmly and encourage you to take full advantage of this opportunity to learn, to connect, and to be inspired. EALS remains a committed partner in supporting lawyers throughout the region in their pursuit of justice and the rule of law.



5.0 Welcoming Remarks by Hon. Judge Fauz Twaib

It is a pleasure to join you at this important training. I warmly welcome all participants and commend the organizers for prioritizing legal education, particularly in the area of human rights. The rule of law is the foundation of any just society. Its protection depends not only on the judiciary but also on a strong, ethical, and well-informed legal profession. Lawyers play a vital role in defending rights, promoting justice, and ensuring that power is exercised within the bounds of the law.

The judiciary also relies on lawyers to bring forward sound arguments, to hold institutions accountable, and to support access to justice for all especially the most vulnerable. This training is a timely opportunity to reflect on that shared responsibility. Let us continue to work together, the Bench and the Bar in service of justice and the rule of law.



6.0 Opening Remarks by Advocate Laetitia Ntagazwa, Vice President of the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS)



It is with great pleasure and a deep sense of responsibility that I join you this morning behalf of the Tanganyika Law Society, to officially this important open Legal Education Training for Human Rights Lawyers. As lawyers, we hold a critical duty in the protection and promotion of justice, human rights, and the rule of law. Our profession is not just a career, it is a calling to serve, to defend the vulnerable, and to uphold constitutional values in all circumstances. Today's training is a reflection of our shared commitment strengthening that role.

The Tanganyika Law Society remains firmly committed to supporting continuous legal education, particularly in areas that empower lawyers to respond effectively to the evolving challenges of our society. This includes defending human rights, ensuring accountability, and promoting access to justice especially as we approach the 2025 General Elections.

Let me also emphasize that the challenges we face in advancing human rights and good governance cannot be addressed by lawyers alone. They require deliberate collaboration between the Bar association, civil society organizations, and the government. Each of these institutions plays a unique and complementary role in

the broader justice ecosystem. Only through constructive engagement, mutual respect, and principled cooperation can we achieve sustainable progress.

I commend THRDC and all partners involved in organizing this training. To all participants, I encourage you to take this opportunity to learn, to reflect, and most importantly, to build networks that will enhance our collective efforts to defend human rights and strengthen the rule of law in Tanzania.

With those remarks, I officially declare this training open. Thank you.

7.0 Content of the Training and Presentations

During the two days training, participants received training on the following key topics:

- a) Assessment of Tanganyika Law Society Governing Legal and Institutional Framework
- b) Understanding the concept of Public Interest Litigation and the Role of Bar Association in Advancing Public Interest Litigation Cases
- c) Application of Regional and International Human Rights Instruments for Access to Justice in Tanzania
- d) Building a Strong National Bar Association: A Comparative Analysis from Other Countries

The training combined expert-led sessions, practical case studies, and peer-to-peer exchanges.

Advocate Francis Stolla, former President of the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS), offered a historical and legal overview of the laws governing the Society since its establishment in 1954. He emphasized the unique status of TLS as the sole Bar Association for private advocates in mainland Tanzania. In his presentation, Advocate Stolla highlighted several legal and structural gaps within the current TLS legal framework. This prompted a thorough discussion among participants, who reflected on the challenges facing the Society today particularly as it marks 70 years since its founding. The discussions underscored the need for a comprehensive re-evaluation of the laws governing TLS to ensure they are responsive to contemporary legal and professional realities.



Advocate Francis Stolla when making presentation

Hon. Judge Fauz Twaib delivered a compelling presentation on the crucial role of Bar Associations in advancing Public Interest Litigation (PIL). He outlined several key areas through which Bar Associations can actively contribute to the promotion and protection of public interest, including:

- a) Policy Advocacy Engaging in law and policy reform to address systemic issues affecting public welfare;
- b) Litigants Initiating or supporting strategic litigation on matters of public interest:
- c) Capacity Building Equipping lawyers and advocates with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively handle PIL cases;
- d) Pro Bono Support Facilitating access to legal representation for underserved and vulnerable communities through voluntary legal services;
- e) Protecting Lawyers Safeguarding lawyers involved in sensitive or highrisk public interest cases;
- f) Collaboration Partnering with NGOs, academic institutions, and international legal networks to strengthen advocacy and broaden impact.

The Judge emphasized that by taking on these roles, Bar Associations not only uphold the rule of law but also reinforce their responsibility to serve the broader public good.

Hon. Judge Robert Makaramba delivered an insightful and rigorous session on the Application of Regional and International Human Rights Instruments for Access to Justice in Tanzania. His presentation focused on several key themes:

- a) The concept of access to justice
- b) Barriers that hinder access to justice in the Tanzanian context
- c) The right of access to justice as a fundamental human right
- d) The role of legal aid as a critical tool in facilitating access to justice

Judge Makaramba explained that access to justice can be defined as the ability to obtain a just and timely remedy for violations of rights, as established under both national laws and international human rights standards. He emphasized that access to justice is not merely about reaching courts or tribunals, stating:



"Access to justice is not just about access to courts and tribunals; it is much more than that. It includes how people navigate and are treated in the many transactions involved in resolving disputes." Hon. Judge Makaramba

The session encouraged participants to reflect on practical ways to utilize regional and international legal instruments to bridge justice gaps and promote equitable legal remedies for all.

Advocate John Seka, former President of the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) and current Secretary General of the East Africa Law Society (EALS), delivered a presentation titled "Building a Strong National Bar Association: A Comparative Analysis from Other Countries." Reflecting on the proud history of TLS since its establishment on January 1, 1955, and its 70 years of stewardship, Advocate Seka highlighted TLS's pivotal role in upholding the rule of law, maintaining professional standards, and advancing justice in Tanzania.

He underscored the importance of Section 4 of the TLS Act, which remains fundamental to TLS's core mandate: regulating the conduct of advocates, promoting legal education, advocating for justice, and protecting the interests of its members.

Advocate Seka's presentation further examined TLS's internal strengths and identified visible gaps, drawing on comparative examples from Bar associations within Africa and beyond. His insights aimed to inform ongoing efforts to strengthen TLS's capacity and relevance in a changing legal and social landscape.

8.0 General Discussions from Participants

Participants engaged in a robust discussion on the challenges facing the Tanganyika Law Society (TLS) and proposed key recommendations.

8.1 Identified Challenges:

- a) Financial constraints, particularly over-reliance on membership subscriptions
- b) Institutional and administrative challenges
- c) Legal and regulatory limitations affecting TLS operations

8.2 Key Recommendations:

- a) Comprehensive review and evaluation of the current TLS Strategic Plan. THRDC Promised to support the evaluation of TLS Strategic Plan as part of implementing the existing MoU between THRDC and TLS.
- b) Active involvement of members in the development of the next Strategic Plan (2026–2030)
- c) Diversification of funding sources to reduce financial vulnerability
- d) Strengthening internal governance structures for better institutional performance

9.0 Participants' Reflections and Appreciation

Participants expressed sincere appreciation for the opportunity to enhance their legal skills and to connect with fellow lawyers committed to defending human rights in complex and often challenging environments. The training was widely praised for its practical relevance and empowering content.

"This training was timely and empowering. It helped me understand how to use the law more effectively to protect those whose rights are often ignored," said one participant.

Another participant added:

"Counsel, thank you for the learning opportunity through the seminars you coordinated. They were very useful, and I truly appreciate it. I look forward to working closely with you. I am available anytime and ready to defend human rights."

Another participant also shared her appreciation:

"I really just wanted to say thanks for inviting me to the training session! It was really helpful and I've taken away some valuable insights. I appreciate."

The feedback demonstrated the training's significant impact in strengthening legal advocacy and reinforcing solidarity among human rights lawyers across Tanzania.

10. Closing Remarks by Advocate Seleman Kassim Gilla

Lake Zone Leader and Member of the TLS Governing Council



As we conclude this important Legal Education Training, I want to thank all participants, organizers, and facilitators for your commitment and contributions. This training has reminded us of our crucial role as lawyers in promoting justice, protecting rights, and upholding the rule of law. The knowledge shared here on public interest litigation, access to justice, and professional ethics is timely and necessary.

Let us take these lessons forward and continue working together to strengthen the Tanganyika Law Society and the legal profession at large. I wish you all safe travels, and with those words, I officially declare this training closed.

Thank you.





































