



EAST AFRICAN
HUMAN RIGHTS
INSTITUTE

THRDC/EAHR Monthly Online Training Course Series

June 2026 Online Training Agenda

ENHANCING CSO UNDERSTANDING OF THE LEGAL AID ACT TO SUPPORT MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN THE DRAFT LEGAL AID POLICY MAKING PROCESS.

Proposed Date: 26 June 2026

Platform: Online (Zoom Meeting)

Organizer: Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) in Collaboration with East Africa Human Rights Institute (EAHRI)

1.0 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC), in collaboration with the East Africa Human Rights Institute (EAHRI), continues its structured Monthly Online Training Series aimed at strengthening the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in engaging with key human rights and governance processes.

THRDC and EAHRI have been jointly offering series of online training sessions, reaching a wide network of CSOs and HRDs across Tanzania and beyond. The trainings have created an important platform for learning and exchange on topical and practical issues relevant to civil society operations. These include compliance with regulatory authorities, engagement with human rights mechanisms at national, regional, and international levels, as well as resource mobilization and organizational sustainability. Through this sustained initiative, thousands of participants have been able to enhance their knowledge, skills, and coordination in advancing human rights work.

For this June's training, the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC), in collaboration with the East Africa Human Rights Institute (EAHRI), continues its structured Monthly Online Training Series aimed at strengthening the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) on enhancing CSOs understanding of the Legal Aid Act to support meaningful participation in the Ongoing process of Legal Aid Policy making process.

The ongoing development of the Draft Legal Aid Policy presents a timely and strategic opportunity for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to contribute meaningfully to shaping a legal aid framework that is responsive, inclusive, and accessible to all. As key stakeholders in promoting access to justice, legal empowerment, and human rights protection, CSOs possess valuable experience and insights that can strengthen the policy-making process. However, effective participation requires a thorough understanding of the existing Legal Aid Act, its implementation, achievements, and existing gaps that need to be addressed through the new policy.

Therefore, this training comes in at the critical time, as the policy formulation process is currently underway, with the expectations to offer a unique window for stakeholder's engagement when its due. So, by enhancing CSOs' understanding of the Legal Aid Act and its relationship with the proposed policy, the training will equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide informed, evidence-based recommendations and actively engage in policy discussions. This will help ensure that the resulting Legal Aid Policy reflects the realities and needs of

communities while strengthening access to justice and the rule of law in Tanzania. Therefore, this is a crucial door for CSOs to:

- **Understanding the Legal Aid Act;** CSOs gain clear knowledge of the Act, its framework, and mandates.
- **Identifying implementation challenges;** recognizing the gaps at community and institutional levels.
- **Evidence-based policy advocacy;** CSOs build capacity to analyze issues and draft strong recommendations.
- **Collective engagement and coordination;** strengthening collaboration among CSOs, paralegals, and other Legal Aid providers.

As an umbrella organization with a network of over 350 members across mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, THRDC has been mobilizing and coordinating civil society engagement in various human rights mechanisms including this process. By equipping CSOs and HRDs at this critical moment, the training aims to ensure meaningful participation, stronger advocacy, and increased accountability within Tanzania's human rights landscape.

2.0 THE RATIONALE OF THE TRAINING

The Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) is strategically utilizing the June 2026 online training session to broaden and strengthen the effective participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in legal aid provision, as they serve as an important bridge between communities and the formal justice system.

As frontline actors in the implementation of the Legal Aid Act, their experiences and practical insights are critical in identifying challenges, opportunities, and reforms necessary to strengthen the legal aid sector. So, it is essential that they possess a clear understanding of the existing legal framework, institutional arrangements, and emerging policy directions. Their active participation will help ensure that the policy is practical, responsive to community needs, and reflective of the realities faced by legal aid providers and beneficiaries.

This training is therefore not only essential for strengthening the knowledge and engagement of CSOs and Human Rights Defenders, but it is also envisioned to respond to:

- i. **Limited Awareness and capacity;** the need for enhanced understanding of the Legal Aid Act and its implementation framework. But also, strengthening the capacity of CSOs and HRDs to provide informed and evidence-based contributions to the Draft Legal Aid Policy-making process,

- ii. **Implementation gaps;** existing gaps in awareness of the rights, obligations, opportunities, and responsibilities arising under the legal aid framework;
- iii. **Inclusivity and Collectivity;** ensuring that the voices and experiences of grassroots communities, vulnerable groups, and legal aid providers are reflected in the policy development process;
- iv. **Fragmented participation and coordination;** strengthening coordination, collaboration, and accountability among legal aid stakeholders,
- v. The need to promote a sustainable, accessible, and people-centered legal aid system that advances access to justice and the rule of law in Tanzania.

By equipping participants with the necessary legal and policy knowledge, the training will enable them to engage more effectively in policy dialogue, advocacy, implementation, and monitoring processes, thereby contributing to the development of a stronger and more responsive legal aid system in Tanzania.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE TRAINING

To strengthen the capacity of CSOs and legal aid actors to understand the Legal Aid Act, identify implementation gaps and emerging challenges, and prepare them to provide evidence-based and meaningful input during the making process of the Draft National Legal Aid Policy.

Specific Objectives

- i. Increase understanding of the Legal Aid Act and institutional mandates; Provide training and simplified resources to help CSOs and legal aid actors clearly grasp the Act, its framework, and the roles of key institutions.
- ii. Enhance recognition of practical challenges and gaps; Facilitate participatory dialogues and community-level consultations to surface real barriers in implementation, both at grassroots and institutional levels.
- iii. Improve CSO capacity for evidence-based policy input; Strengthen skills in policy analysis, data collection, and documentation so CSOs can prepare credible recommendations for the Draft National Legal Aid Policy.
- iv. Strengthen coordination and collective engagement; Promote networking and coalition-building among CSOs, paralegals, and legal aid providers to ensure unified advocacy for an inclusive legal aid system.

- v. Increase awareness of the link between legal aid policy, legislation, and access to justice; Build knowledge on how legal aid frameworks connect to Tanzania's broader justice obligations, ensuring CSOs can advocate with a holistic perspective

4.0 TRAINING COVERAGE AND MODULES

Module 1: Understanding the Concept of Legal Aid, Legal and Institutional Framework in Tanzania, and the Role of HRDs/CSOs

Facilitator: Adv. Onesmo Olengurumwa – THRDC

Key Areas:

- a) Meaning and principles of legal aid
- b) Who deserve legal aid services
- c) Constitutional and human rights foundations of legal aid in Tanzania
- d) National legal and institutional framework governing legal aid
- e) Who deserve legal aid services
- f) Roles of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
- g) Access to justice challenges among vulnerable groups
- h) Community legal empowerment approaches

Module 2: Normative and Implementation Challenges of the Current Legal Aid Framework in Tanzania

Facilitator: Dr. Veronica Buchumi-UDSM Legal Aid Centre

Key Areas:

- a) Analysis of the Legal Aid Act and related laws
- b) Practical implementation gaps in the implementation of the current legal Aid Act
- c) Institutional and financial challenges
- d) Coordination challenges among legal aid providers
- e) Lessons from practice and case studies
- f) Key Recommendations

Module 3: The Way Forward and the Need for a New Legal Aid Policy

Facilitators: GIZ

Key Areas:

- a) Rationale for a national legal aid policy
- b) Emerging trends in access to justice
- c) Policy objectives and strategic priorities
- d) Stakeholder roles in policy making and implementation

- e) Opportunities for reform and partnerships

Module 4: Professional Standards for Legal Aid Services and Challenges Facing Legal Aid Providers and Paralegals in Tanzania

Facilitator: LSF

Key Areas:

- a) Ethical and professional standards in legal aid provision
- b) Quality assurance mechanisms
- c) Accreditation and regulation of paralegals
- d) Operational challenges facing legal aid providers
- e) Capacity building and sustainability issues
- f) Best practices for effective legal aid services

5.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND TARGETED GROUP

The training is expected to reach more than 300 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working on human rights and legal aid service providers, including both THRDC member and non-member organizations, from mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. By the end of the training, the following results are expected to be achieved:

- i. Increased understanding of the Legal Aid Act, its implementation framework, and institutional mandates among CSOs and legal aid actors.
- ii. Enhanced understanding of practical challenges and gaps affecting implementation of the Legal Aid Act at community and institutional levels.
- iii. Improved capacity of CSOs to analyze legal aid policy issues and prepare evidence-based recommendations for the Draft National Legal Aid Policy making process.
- iv. Strengthened coordination and collective engagement among CSOs, paralegals, and legal aid providers in advocating for an inclusive and responsive legal aid system.
- v. Increased awareness on the relationship between legal aid policy, legal aid legislation, and access to justice obligations in Tanzania

6.0 0 FACILITATION

The session will be facilitated by experienced practitioners in legal aid, democracy and Rule of Law and human rights advocates, including representatives from THRDC, EAHRI and legal aid networks.

7.0 CONCLUSION

This training offers CSOs a timely and strategic opportunity to deepen their understanding and ensuring meaningful and informed participation of the Legal Aid Act and its implementation. By addressing existing gaps in awareness, analytical capacity, and participation, the program will empower CSOs to provide evidence-based contributions, harmonize their advocacy efforts, and ensure that grassroots realities are reflected in the policy framework. Ultimately, the training will

strengthen CSOs' collective role in shaping a responsive and inclusive legal aid system that advances access to justice for all.

