





ANNUAL REPORTMAKING HEADWAYS





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ABBREVIATION & ACRONYMS

CBO Community-Based Organization

CECM County Executive Committee Member

CFF Civic Freedoms Forum

CIDP County Integrated Development Plan

CSO Civil Society Organization

EKN Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

HRD Human Rights Defender

ICNL International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law

KCDF Kenya Community Development Foundation

KICTANet The Kenya ICT Action Network

KIPPRA Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis

MACSON Makueni Civil Society Organizations Network

MCCN Machakos County CSO Network

MoU Memorandum of Understanding

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

PBO Public Benefit Organization

PEN Kenya Partnerships 4 Empowerment & Networking in Kenya

PMDC PEN Management and Development Consultants

SEKEB South Eastern Kenya Economic Block

UNDP United Nations Development Program

PEN KENYA ACTIVITIES FOR 2023

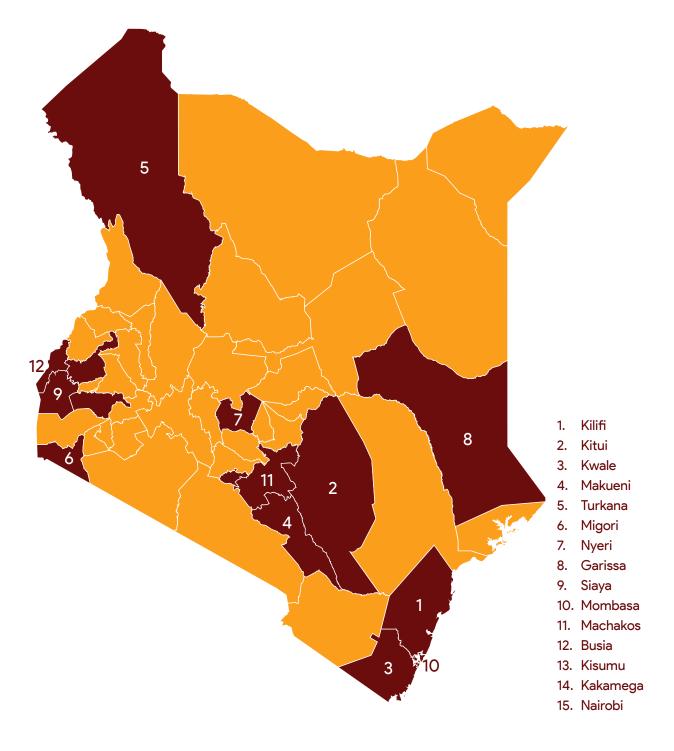






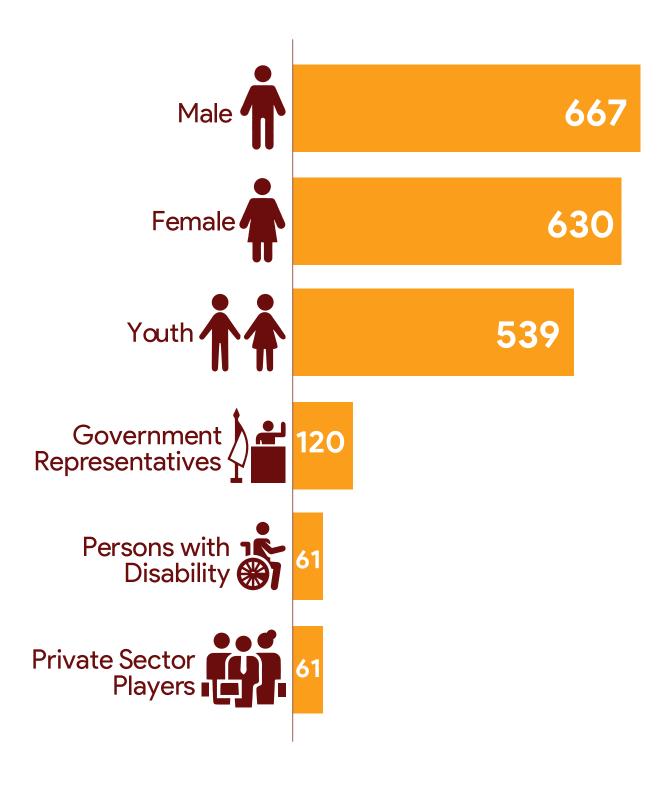


COUNTIES WHERE PEN KENYA INTERVENTION REACHED





OVERALL ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE







Partnerships 4 Empowerment & Networking in Kenya (PEN Kenya) is a Kenyan non-governmental organization (NGO) officially registered in December 2001 as the Poverty Eradication Network (PEN).

PENKenyabelieves that a strong civil society sector is fundamental to the development of any country and its ability to have a sustainable impact on poverty. PEN Kenya was established to contribute towards the eradication of absolute poverty in East Africa, through fostering partnerships that build and strengthen the institutional capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) and other not-for-profit organizations and public institutions.

PEN Kenya opines that to support communities in being responsible for their development, CSOs must deliver impact and ensure their long-term viability. Strong and sustainable civil society groups require highly motivated, committed and

competent leadership, good governance, strong management, clear strategy, successful and sustainable fundraising, demonstrated results, public profile, and effective policies, procedures and organizational systems. CSOs therefore need affordable, appropriate, competent and effective capacity-building inputs and technical assistance, if they are to build upon their capacity and strong commitment to their causes.

PEN Kenya works with four main stakeholders: citizens, their organizations (CBOs, CSOs etc.), public sector and private sector, to enhance coordination and networking with the key aim of ensuring citizens are at the centre of all development processes. PEN Kenya has



progressively built partnerships with several organizations and movements across the country (both at national and county levels). It continues to partner with county government departments in selected counties.



To enhance institutional capacity and coordination for effective service delivery and citizen transformation through institutional capacity strengthening, technical assistance and coordination of partnerships.



- Communities
- Civil Society Organisations (CBOs, NGOs, FBOs)
- Government and Public institutions
- Private Sector



A Kenyan society with strong sustainable institutions that enhance the equity and dignity of citizens.



- Respect for human rights, and equity
- Respect for the innate potential, and ability of all people to design their destiny
- Active participation and engagement
- Transparency and accountability.







Building Institutional Capacity of PEN Kenya

PEN Kenya has been focusing on her fundamental organizational building blocks like investing in people, systems, tools and processes while leveraging on strategic partnerships to enhance its effectiveness in strengthening community voices and agency for empowered communities. PEN Kenya has enhanced its organizational

capacity by building the technical and organizational skills of its staff to be able to deliver integrated programs.



Strategic goal:

To strengthen and enhance PEN Kenya's sustainability and ability to deliver on its development mandate more effectively and efficiently.

Under this strategic goal, the key interventions will include:

- Improving its staffing numbers, skills and compensation to the current market rates.
- Increasing its resourcing through expanded fundraising, collaboration, endowment and other forms of income-generating activities.



- Strengthening institutional leadership through revamping of the Board of Directors and succession planning for the management.
- Adopting technology as a way of improving PEN Kenya's efficiency and effectiveness.
- Building PEN Kenya's research, knowledge management and communication capacity to ensure it becomes a learning organization.
- identified issues.
- Strengthening Collaborations and Networks among CSOs, the private sector and the government.
- Capacity Building and Technical Assistance.



Effective and Sustainable Citizens Organizations and Public Institutions

Citizen organizations and public institutions are at the core of enabling development at all levels, their effectiveness and sustainability are directly connected to their ability to offer services or to create the demand – side of service delivery, accountability and transparency. PEN Kenya has always strived to develop and deliver programs that ensure these organizations and institutions are effective and sustainable.



Strategic Goal:

To empower both citizens and public organizations for sustainability, effective partnerships and networking.

Under this strategic goal, the key interventions will include;

 Research and Analysis on the effectiveness and sustainability of citizen organizations and public institutions among others to be



Citizen Participation and Engagement in Public Affairs

Citizens are the key ingredients of development and their participation and engagement in public affairs accords them an opportunity for ownership and taking charge of their development. PEN Kenya has consistently developed and delivered programs that enable citizens to engage with the relevant civic bodies and carry out social justice and advocacy work that not only enhances their dignity but also improves mainstream welfare.



Strategic Goal:

To promote effective citizen participation and policy influencing for social justice and sustainable development of communities.

Under this strategic goal, the key interventions will include;

- Citizen sensitization to build on their knowledge and skills to identify and respond to various issues that affect them or engage duty bearers in solving the issues.
- Citizen mobilization to demand accountability from duty bearers and other institutions.
- · Civic and political education among the



- Kenyan citizenry to foster public engagement in political processes and enhance their decision-making capabilities at the ballot and beyond.
- Promote and ease access to information to enable citizens to make informed decisions and to effectively participate in public affairs.



Building Resilient Communities

Communities face threats and vulnerabilities occasioned by challenges of unpredictable climate and environmental degradation, food insecurity, political instability, lack of social cohesion and poor community information flow. For these communities to stay resilient in the face of the above vulnerabilities, PEN Kenya will codesign interventions targeting the communities, their institutions, and the government's adaptive capacity to respond to the shocks.



Strategic goal:

To promote innovative and sustainable technologies and interventions that ensure that communities become more resilient to threats and vulnerabilities.

Under this strategic goal, the key interventions include;

 Promoting the adoption of efficient technologies that can be used across various sectors such as agriculture and water among others.

- Promoting value addition and market chains among producers in the agricultural sector and cottage industries.
- Promoting and developing Disaster
 Preparedness and Early Warning Systems will
 ensure that communities are able to better
 prepare, mitigate and rebuild after disasters.
- Enhancing mitigation measures on climate change and environmental degradation.
- Promoting collective community actions that mitigate the effects of disasters that befall communities.
- Promoting policies that strengthen benefitsharing between communities, the private sector and the government.

"PEN Kenya has consistently developed and delivered programs that enable citizens to engage with the relevant civic bodies and carry out social justice and advocacy work"



ACHIEVEMENTS





Building Institutional Capacity of PEN Kenya.

In July 2023, capacity of PEN-CFF staff was enhanced through training on public policy by a consultant from KIPPRA. This training enabled the project team to understand some of the political reasons behind the delayed commencement of the Public Benefits Organizations Act of 2013.

One of the staff, Michelle Mwelesa, also attended the Litigators Convening in Johannesburg, South Africa sponsored by Media Defense from 22 to 24 August 2023. The convening was aimed at building the capacity of female litigators on data protection in the context of Artificial Intelligence and Biometric Data; the role of social media platforms in protecting freedom of expression; navigating challenges and opportunities arising from defamation litigation; and the role of regional courts in protecting freedom of expression.

Another staff, Mary Mutuku, attended the Quarterly Learning Platform – 26 November – 1 December 2023 supported by UNDP Amkeni Wakenya. The forum focused on: Strengthening Civil Society and Citizen Voices for the Realization of Sustainable Development Goals-SDGs in Kenya 2021-2024 (EKN); the Process of Developing



a Communication Strategy; Branding and Visibility; and Communications and Knowledge Management.

Additionally, more staff attended various training and fellowships on Data Protection, Digital security Management, Fundraising and resource mobilization and Economic Sustainability of Human rights defenders/Civil Society Organizations.



Effective and Sustainable Citizens Organizations and Public Institutions

PEN Kenya held advocacy meetings with the State Department of Social Development on the state of implementation of Community Groups Registration Act No. 30 of 2022. Some of the outputs of these meetings include the inclusion of PEN Kenya and CFF and other CSOs into the sub-committees which will be responsible for the development of the various regulations to the Act. The proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between PEN Kenya /CFF and the State Department of Social Development initiating formal engagements on the implementation of the Act. We also developed simplified versions of the Act in audio-visual forms to catalyze awareness among citizens and their organizations.

PEN Kenya engaged in the review of Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2006 on NGOs in collaboration with the NGOs Coordination Board, Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) and Kenya Law Reform Commission (KLRC). The review aimed at; to identify specific gaps with a focus on the contextual changes in

the civil society space in Kenya since 2006 as well as identifying challenges of implementation of the policy in preparation for the commencement of the PBO Act. This process was supported by UNDP Amkeni Wakenya and ICNL.



CFF and Partners during a courtesy visit to the Director, State Department of Social Development (February 2023)

PEN Kenya, under the umbrella of Civic Freedoms Forum, will proceed with further policy dialogue processes on the review process. The process will also include the commencement of the PBO Act, rejuvenating the NGO Council and the development of a preparatory paper for NGOs in anticipation of the commencement. PBO Act has since been commenced.



Participants making contributions during the validation forum of Sessional Paper No.1 of 2006 on NGOs



With support from the Ford Foundation, CFF and PEN Kenya were able to conduct a two-day Civic Space Academy for CSOs in Kisumu. The CSO leaders drawn from Siaya, Kisumu, Busia and Kakamega counties were trained on Privacy Rights and Data Protection, Economic Sustainability for HRDs/CSOs, Community Groups Registration Act and Digital Security Management. A total of 32 CSO leaders and representatives including 16 youths and 2 persons with disability participated in the training.

of 2023. The Bill is expected to strengthen the participation of citizens in the county government affairs. Additionally, it will also improve civic education and access to information. This was done through collaboration with the County Government who provided support through the office of the County Solicitor in the process of reviewing and consolidating of CSO views and feedback.



Participants following keenly during civic space academy for CSOs



A section Kitui CSO Network leaders hand over the Kitui Public Participation Bill to the Kitui County Solicitor to forward the Bill to the County Cabinet

PEN Kenya provided technical support to the Kitui CSO Network towards the development and review of the Kitui County Public Participation Bill



Citizen Participation and Engagement in Public Affairs

The third Civic Space Protection Summit under the auspices of Civic Freedoms Forum (CFF) took place on November 1st and 2nd in Kisumu County at the Grand Royal Swiss Hotel. The Summit's theme was, "Taking Stock of Civic Space Achievements and Challenges Thirteen Years after Promulgation of the Constitution". The theme provided an opportunity for civil society actors to assess the milestones realized in human rights since 2010. The 3rd Summit also reflected on the resolutions of the 1st and 2nd summits with the aim of assessing the status of implementation. Deliberations during the summit revolved around public order management; freedom of association; digital and privacy rights; and freedom of expression and the media.





Siaya governor and Kisumu deputy governor together with CSO leaders during the 3rd civic space protection summit in Kisumu

PEN Kenya with the support of UNDP Amkeni waKenya carried out a study on CSOs and County government engagement in Kenya. The report was produced, printed, and shared throughout the PEN/CFF interventions forum.

CSO Networks in Makueni, Kitui, Kwale and Machakos counties participated in the validation of the County Integrated Development plans in their respective counties. They also participated in public participation to input the County Fiscal Strategy Paper. Kwale County Consortium held a pre-budget analysis, an action that allowed them to interact with the budget document before the actual public participation giving them a chance to engage meaningfully and submit memoranda. Machakos County submitted a memorandum on the 3rd generation CIDP 2023-2027.

One joint advocacy forum was carried out on the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes [Critical Information Infrastructure and Cybercrime Management] draft regulations 2023 where a Submission was done to the Ministry of Interior and National Coordination on the gaps and recommendations identified. The forum was attended by 50 CSO leaders.

PEN Kenya in collaboration with Civic Freedoms Forum (CFF) held Sensitization Forums on the Community Groups Registration Act No. 30 of 2022 nationally and in the counties of Makueni, Busia, Kwale, Mombasa, Garissa, Siaya, Migori, Machakos, Nyeri, Kisumu, Kakamega. The fora involved awareness creation of community groups on the implementation of the Act with support from KCDF, ICNL and Ford Foundation. These sessions brought together 221 Community group leaders, 115 of whom were male, 121 female, 60 youth, and state officers 15 and 14 being Persons with Disabilities.



CSO leaders pose for a photo after awareness of the CGR Act in Garissa

Additionally, PEN Kenya undertook sensitization meetings on laws and policies that affect CSOs' work at the county level in four counties of Turkana, Kitui, Kwale and Kilifi with 96 CSO leaders and government officials attending. Advocacy meetings led to the production of county-specific policy briefs across the four counties of Kwale, Kitui, Kilifi and Turkana. The development of county policy briefs was held in two phases; phase one, CSO leaders giving feedback whereas the second phase involved bringing in government officials for their input and feedback.

The meetings aimed at discussing issues that affect an enabling environment for CSOs in the country and the counties. A total of 223 CSO leaders and government representatives attended the meetings. The policy briefs are currently used for project years 2 and 3.



PEN Kenya also facilitated the establishment of CSO-County Engagement frameworks in the four counties of Turkana, Kilifi, Kwale and Kitui with the support of the UNDP Amkeni Wakenya project.

Two counties of Kilifi & Kitui] held forums and courtesy calls with the CECMs aligned to public participation/Citizen engagement where commitments on structured way of engagement between the county governments and CSO networks were made. Turkana and Kwale Counties held forums to agree on the ideal strategies for enhancing a structured way of engaging their county governments after the targeted departments failed to honor the request for physical meetings. The four activities reached a total of 93 Participants including government officials.

Kilifi County agreed to hold monthly meetings with the Devolution Department, and County Executive Committee Member [CECM] while Kitui County agreed to hold sittings before any public participation to review documents intended to go out to the public.

The Turkana County CSO Taskforce was expanded during the meeting to spearhead the dialogues with the government towards establishing the framework while the Kwale CSO Consortium met the CECM Devolution/Economic planning and agreed on strategies towards establishing the framework.

Advocacy review meetings were held in four counties of Kilifi, Kwale, Kitui, and Turkana where key advocacy successes were identified since the onset of the UNDP project. The challenges as well as strategies to address them were also identified. PEN Kenya also began capacity building of CSO Networks in the four regions and by the end of 2023, PEN Kenya had engaged 23 leaders of the Kitui CSO Network on resource mobilization training.

With the support of African Voices Foundation, the three South Eastern Kenya Counties (Kitui, Machakos & Makueni) were brought together and allowed to engage the County governments on public participation and service delivery based on a radio survey conducted in 2022 and early 2023. The organization has continued to sensitize citizens through radio and the use of community resource persons to enhance their active role in participating in decision-making at the different levels



Building Resilient Communities

The Mutulani Community in Makueni County has continued to enjoy the benefits of the Integrated Community Water Project implemented by PEN Kenya in partnership with Mutulani Welfare Association (MAWE) CBO. They have developed water users' guidelines to aid in the management and sustainability of the project. This project serves not only the two schools (Mutulani Primary School and Mutulani Secondary School) and the Mutulani Dispensary but also the entire neighboring community which was affected by the long drought experienced in the area.

"The organization has continued to sensitize citizens through radio and the use of community resource persons"









The solar system for pumping

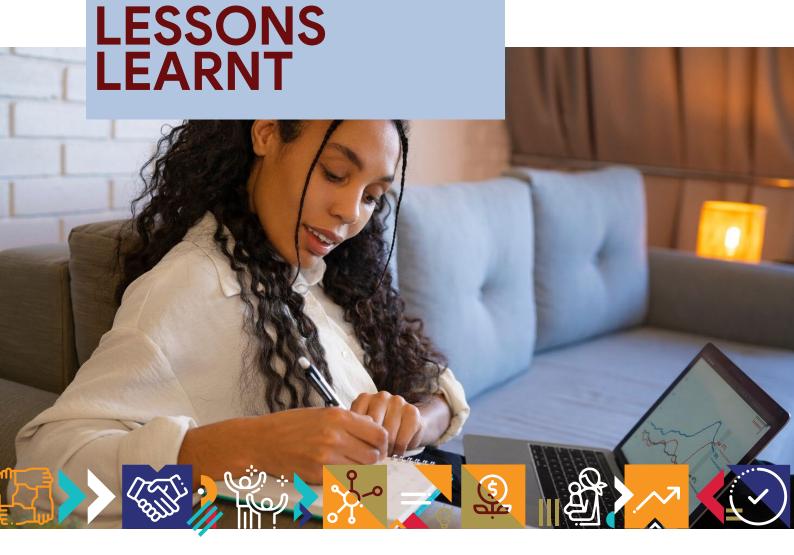
Notably, the continuous supply of water from the borehole have been possible due to the rapid conservation of the nearby Muumandu forest and the current long rains.



Conversation efforts by community members







These are mainly drawn from year 1 and 2 implementation of the UNDP Amkeni Wakenya project.

- The inclusion of KIPPRA in the review of Sessional Paper No.1 of 2006 has been very crucial. Their expert advice on the need to review the policy document convinced the NGO Coordination Board and other sector members to support the process.
- In Turkana, the establishment of the sevenmember task force has been crucial in the coordination and mobilization of CSOs in the absence of a county CSO network.
- Working closely with Amkeni Wakenya Implementing partners at the county level

has made coordination of activities and CSOs easier. In Kwale and Kitui, PEN Kenya has managed to pool resources with the partners to have joint forums. The partners have also been able to support PEN Kenya, with the mobilization of the CSO members.

- Leveraging CFF's partnership made it easier for PEN Kenya to engage the NGOs Coordination Board and the State Department on national advocacy interventions involving the review of Sessional Paper No.1 of 2006 and the Community Groups Registration Act respectively.
- For assignments that would need county-level resource persons such as the development of the policy briefs, a national-level expert will need to be identified to lead in quality



assurance and standardization of documents.

 Periodic joint meetings with Amkeni Wakenya partners improved coordination and implementation at the county level.

The other lessons are majorly informed by the findings and recommendations from the CSO – County Government Engagement Baseline Study Report and our several interactions with county CSOs and government officers. From the report the following findings are key:

- i. There exists policy and legal provisions that address engagements between CSOs and county governments but there is no evidence of legislative or policy frameworks developed by county governments to provide an institutional framework for engagements with CSOs. However, CSOs feel that such frameworks would be useful in facilitating such engagements by ensuring better coordination, accountability, and even funding.
- ii. None of the counties under review provided financial resources for engagement with CSOs. While county governments facilitated public participation forums, there was no direct support to CSOs to participate and mobilize citizens to participate in the same.
- iii. Other than Makueni which had made elaborate provisions for public participation beyond the provisions of the Public Participation in County Governance Act 2012, Counties tended to implement the bare minimum of what was required of them to comply with the law. Engagements with CSOs largely centered on activities that were required by law to ensure public participation.
- iv. There were also concerns regarding the capacity of both government officials and CSO representatives to effectively engage with each other. Nonetheless, according to a representative from the Council of Governors (CoG), CSOs

needed to put more effort into pursuing engagements with county government.

v. Coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of CSO county engagements was weak and fragmented and Counties had not fully institutionalized the County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation (CIMES) framework.

Joint planning on the county establishment of engagement frameworks assured continuity through the CSO networks and the partners

The partnerships with other sector players are critical, for example, working with KICTANET, ARTICLE 19EA, ICNL, Defenders Coalition and Kenya Humans Rights Commission (KHRC) on the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes draft Regulations of 2023 enabled PEN Kenya to reach 38 more CSO leaders than the 12 planned

"The partners have also been able to support PEN Kenya, with the mobilization of the CSO members."



CHALLENGES



- Despite achieving many results across the country, PEN Kenya and CFF are yet to fully invest in the communication office to enhance documentation, branding and publicity of the results and achievements. This has, partly, contributed to low fundraising power. To this end, PEN Kenya and CFF have put in various strategies to remedy the challenge. For instance, PEN Kenya and CFF have partnered with InformAction to support continuous documentation (photography and videography) of key activities and success stories. PEN Kenya and CFF have also hired a staff who will work closely with other resource persons to oversee branding, visibility and documentation.
- While the Strategic Plan 2022-26 envisions a workforce of at least 15 staff, PEN Kenya has

only nine staff. In addition, during the first quarter of 2023, PEN Kenya lost two staff who transitioned to other areas of employment. This limitation makes it difficult for staff to effectively operate. However, PEN Kenya works together with the CFF Secretariat to bridge the gap as the leadership continues to fundraise for additional human resources.

Organizational funding continued to be a challenge as the available resources did not meet the demand created by our target beneficiaries. More counties and CSO networks continue to seek the support of PEN Kenya but with limited resources, PEN Kenya has only managed to support fifteen counties. PEN Kenya continues to fundraise both individually and with other partners and has secured three multi-year grants and one of them being partly core/institutional support grants.





In 2023, PEN Kenya published the reports. These and other documents can be accessed on our website – https://penkenya.org/knowledge-hub/

- Four Policy Briefs on Public Participation for the 4 counties of Kitui, Kilifi, Turkana and Kwale
- Community Groups Registration Act No.30 of 2022 – Frequently Asked Questions
- 3. Rapid Assessment of Civic and Democratic Space within Counties
- 4. Civic and Democratic Space Index in Kenya
- 5. 3rd Civic Space Protection Summit Report
- 6. Baseline Study Report on CSOs-County Government Engagements.



SUSTAINABILITY

The continued stifling funding environment and shifting donor interests, which began in 2010 after the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya, led PEN Kenya to re-strategize its fundraising approaches hence the incorporation of PEN Management and Development Consultants (PMDC) Limited in 2012. PMDC is a value-driven social enterprise, a consultancy arm of PEN Kenya dedicated to ensuring sustainability by engaging in consultancy services for not-for-profit, private, and public organizations. The idea was to ensure that income generated by PMDC would be donated or plowed back to PEN Kenya to support not-for-profit program interventions, personnel, and administration costs in occasions where there are funding gaps.

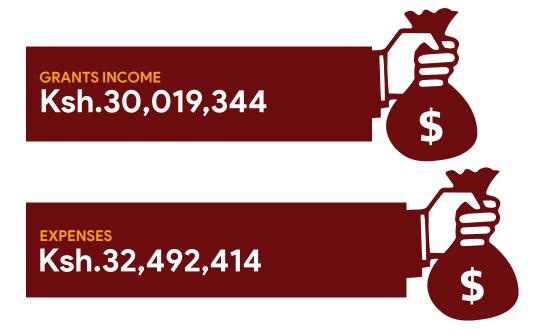




FINANCE



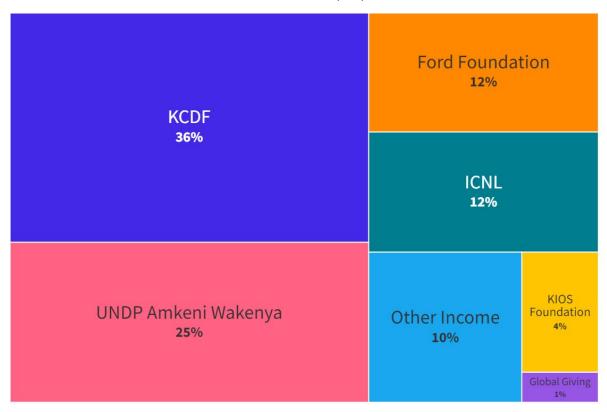
Feel free to explore the Grants Income & Expenses data on the next page on





GRANTS INCOME

TOTAL INCOME 30,019,344



EXPENSES

TOTAL INCOME 32,492,414

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

88%

EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITIZENS ORGANIZATIONS AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



9%

BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF PEN KENYA

2

2%

BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

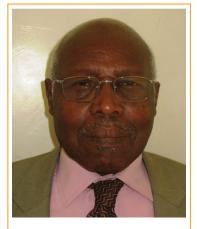
1%

Source: PEN Audited Accounts



PENGOVERNANCE - THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The year 2023 is marked as the beginning of a transition for the Board of Directors. The process of transition began a few years ago to enable the leadership to acquire new skills and experiences from the younger generation as well as from other sectors. The transition process is expected to end by May 2024. The following are the current and outgoing Board of Directors.



DR. SAMSON MUTTAI
Board Chairman



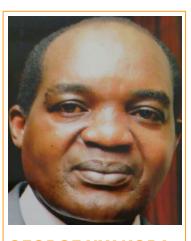
RESPER ANYANGO GOGO Board Vice Chairperson



KOROSO
Board Secretary



JOHN MARK OKONDO Board Treasurer



GEORGE NYAKORA
Board Member



PROF. ELIJAH K. BIAMAH Board Member



PEN MANAGEMENT & STAFF



CHRIS MBITI
Executive Director



OCHIENG'
GONDI
Finance &
Administration
Manager



ANNE
MACHARIA
IRARA
Financial Compliance
Officer



MARY KANINI MUTUKU Project Officer



JOHN OWEGI Coordinator – Civic Freedoms Forum (CFF)



OMBONYA
Project Assistant



MICHELLE MWELESA Communication & Advocacy Officer – CFF



Office Assistant



YVONNE MUTUA Intern Accountant



PEN KENYA PARTNERS























Building Alliances - Better Lives pen is a trade name

pen is a trade name of Poverty Eradication Network

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