KITUO CHA SHERIA
LEGAL ADVICE CENTRE
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# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE III OF 2026



Feature Story

## KITUO WELCOMES NEW BOARD

Leadership transitions are an important part of strengthening institutional governance and ensuring continuity in an organisation's work. Strong institutions are built on transparent, accountable and participatory governance. Kituo Cha Sheria held its Board of Directors election on 20 June 2026, followed by a handover ceremony on 6 August 2026, marking a transition in leadership and an opportunity to reflect on the organisation's achievements and future priorities.

The transition ushered in a new Board for the 2026–2029 term, chaired by CS Serah Esendi Okumu, succeeding Mr. Justus Munyithya, who served as Board Chairperson from 2019. Outgoing Board member Ms. Fatuma Dubow also concluded her term, leaving behind a record of service to the organisation.

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- https://the-star.co.ke/news/2026-09-23-land-court-strikes-out-logging-ban-petition

Reflecting on his tenure, Mr. Munyithya expressed appreciation to fellow Board members, the General Assembly, management and staff, development partners and other stakeholders for their commitment to Kituo's mission. His tenure saw the organisation continue its legal aid, advocacy and legal empowerment work while strengthening partnerships and pursuing institutional sustainability, including the proposed Justice House initiative.

"Kituo's achievements have been a collective effort. I am grateful to the Board, the General Assembly, staff, development partners and all those who have stood with us in advancing access to justice. I encourage the incoming Board to build on this foundation and continue strengthening Kituo's mission of serving marginalised communities." Mr. Justus Munyithya, outgoing board chairperson



*Incoming Board Members planting a tree following their election.*

Kituo extends its sincere appreciation to Mr. Munyithya and Ms. Dubow for their dedicated service and contribution to the organisation.

The incoming Board Chairperson, CS Serah Esendi Okumu, expressed her appreciation to the entire Board for their dedication and contribution to Kituo's work. She acknowledged that the organisation's progress had been made possible through collective effort and called



*Incoming Board Chairperson CS Serah Esendi (left) and Executive Director Dr. Wambua Kituku (centre) present a gift to outgoing Board Chairperson Mr. Justus Munyunthiya during the board handover ceremony*

for continued collaboration to build on the gains made and strengthen Kituo's work in promoting access to justice for all.

The incoming Board comprises CS Serah Esendi Okumu (Chairperson), Dr. Elkana Kimeli (Treasurer), Hon. Justice P.J. Otieno, Hon. Justice Hellen Wasilwa, Mr. Mosongo Maosa, Hon. Justice Onesmus Kamau and Ms. Sally Mbeche, alongside the leadership and oversight responsibilities entrusted to the Board for the 2026–2029 term.

As the new Board takes office, Kituo invites its General Assembly, staff, partners, development partners and justice sector institutions to continue supporting its mission. Guided by the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, Advancing People-Centred Justice in Kenya and Beyond, the organisation looks forward to building on its achievements, strengthening institutional sustainability and expanding access to justice for all.




*From right: Hon. Justice P. J. Otieno, Fatuma Dubow (outgoing Board member), Dr. Wambua Kituku (Executive Director), CS Serah Esendi (incoming Board Chairperson), Mr. Justus Munyunthiya (outgoing Board Chairperson), Glory Kairi and Elkana Kimeli pose for a group photo following the Board elections.*

# TAKING JUSTICE CLOSER TO MACHAKOS COMMUNITIES

Access to justice begins when people understand their rights, know where to seek help and have the opportunity to pursue solutions to the challenges they face.



*Kituo Legal Assistant Boniface Muite providing legal assistance during a legal aid clinic in Machakos.*

From 11–14 August 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria conducted a series of community-focused activities in Machakos County aimed at strengthening access to justice and empowering community members to understand and exercise their rights.

The activities provided an opportunity to bring legal support closer to the community, helping residents better understand their rights matters, succession and other justice-related concerns.



*Kituo Legal Assistant Boniface Muite addresses community members during a legal aid clinic in Machakos.*

Through community engagement sessions and a legal aid clinic, residents had the opportunity to share their justice concerns, access legal information and advice, and learn about available avenues for dispute resolution. Community members were also screened and provided with legal advice on various issues, including land and property disputes, family and the options available to address their legal challenges.

Kituo remains committed to advancing legal empowerment and making justice more accessible, responsive and meaningful to the communities it serves.



*Area chief addresses community members during a legal aid clinic in Machakos.*



# FOREIGN BUSINESS DIRECTIVE RAISES REFUGEE CONCERNS

The Government's recent directive targeting foreign nationals engaged in small-scale businesses has raised significant questions about the protection of refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants living and working in Kenya.

The controversy began on 2 September 2026 when President William Ruto directed the Government to begin enforcement action against foreigners operating small businesses and engaging in hawking and other small-scale trade.

On 4 September, Kituo Cha Sheria joined 12 other civil society organisations in issuing a joint statement raising concern over the directive and its potential implications for refugees and asylum seekers. The statement warned that indiscriminate implementation could expose vulnerable populations to arbitrary arrest, harassment, extortion, confiscation of property, forced closure of businesses and community violence.

**Read more:**

https://kituochasheria.or.ke/foreign-business-directive-raises-fresh-legal-concerns-for-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-in-kenya/



*Ongoing infrastructure project at the Bomas of Kenya.*

## COURT HALTS PROPOSED RELOCATION OF NAIROBI ANIMAL ORPHANAGE

The Environment and Land Court in Nairobi has issued a conservatory order restraining the implementation of the proposed relocation and upgrading of the Nairobi Animal Orphanage and associated infrastructure project, pending a ruling on preliminary objections in a case filed by Kituo Cha Sheria and JustAct against Bomas of Kenya Limited, the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and other respondents.

The order, issued on 14 July 2026 by Justice Oscar A. Angote at the Milimani Environment and Land Court, also prohibits any interference with Nairobi National Park pending the court's ruling. The matter is registered as Environment and Land Court Petition No. E019 of 2026.

The development follows a petition by Kituo Cha Sheria and JustAct challenging the proposed excision of approximately 76 acres of Nairobi National Park for the expansion of the Bomas International Convention Centre. The petitioners argue that the proposed development threatens the park's ecological integrity, biodiversity and protected wildlife habitats, raising fundamental questions about environmental protection, constitutional accountability and the management of public resources.

Under the court orders, the intended interested parties were admitted to the proceedings to advance legal and constitutional questions relating to the Rights of Nature, ecological integrity, intergenerational equity, biodiversity protection and the interests of future generations. The interested parties were directed to file and serve their submissions on the two preliminary objections within five days, with the ruling scheduled for 30 July 2026.

The conservatory order preserves the status quo as the court considers the preliminary objections. It restrains the respondents from implementing the proposed relocation and upgrading project or interfering with Nairobi National Park in the meantime. The order further warns that disobedience or non-compliance may attract penal consequences.

In the petition, Kituo Cha Sheria and JustAct question the legality of the approvals granted for the proposed project and the adequacy of the environmental assessment and public participation processes. The petitioners contend that the proposed development could lead to the loss of indigenous forest, wildlife habitat and biodiversity within a protected ecosystem that plays a vital role in environmental conservation.

The petition also invokes Articles 42 and 69 of the Constitution of Kenya, which guarantee the right to a clean and healthy environment and impose obligations on the State to protect and conserve the environment, including biodiversity and ecologically sensitive areas, for present and future generations.

The conservatory order is an interim measure and does not determine the merits of the petition. The substantive questions concerning the legality of the proposed project and the challenged approvals remain subject to the court proceedings.

**For more information:**

https://kituochasheria.or.ke/court-halts-proposed-relocation-and-upgrading-of-nairobi-animal-orphanage-pending-ruling/

## REFUGEE INCLUSION BEGINS WITH MENTAL WELLBEING

As Eastern Africa moves towards more inclusive refugee policies, one question is becoming increasingly important: what does it take for refugees not only to access work, but to thrive in it?

The Refugee Access to Work and Inclusion – Eastern Africa (RAWI-EA) initiative seeks to answer this by bringing together governments, civil society, the private sector and development partners to remove barriers to refugee employment and economic participation. Yet one critical barrier often receives too little attention: mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. If refugees are to rebuild their lives through work, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) must be recognised as an essential pillar of inclusion, not an optional add-on.

For millions of refugees, displacement is more than the loss of a home. It often means losing livelihoods, professional identities, community support systems and hope for the future. While legal reforms and livelihood programmes are expanding opportunities for refugees to work, the psychological impact of displacement can continue to limit their ability to seize those opportunities. Economic inclusion and mental wellbeing are therefore inseparable.

**Read more:**

https://kituochasheria.or.ke/refugee-inclusion-begins.../



*Refugees and members of the host community participating in a debriefing session in Kakuma.*

## KITUO STAFF REFLECT ON WELL-BEING AND TEAM COHESION

On 24 July 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria staff came together for a reflective debrief session supported by GIZ, the German Agency for International Cooperation, in Kenya.

The session provided a safe and supportive space for staff to reflect on their experiences, promote mental well-being and strengthen team cohesion. It also offered an opportunity to reflect on Kituo's shared journey and commitment to advancing people-centred justice.



*Kituo staff participating in a debrief session at Kituo Grounds.*

## KITUO CALLS FOR STRONGER SAFEGUARDS FOR KENYAN MIGRANT WORKERS



*Kituo team presenting oral submissions before a Senate Committee.*

Kituo Cha Sheria, through its Migration, Justice and Governance Department, made an oral submission on 2 July 2026 before the Parliament of Kenya's Departmental Committee on Labour on the Labour Migration Bill (Senate Bill No. 42 of 2024), advocating for stronger protections for Kenyan migrant workers and improved governance of labour migration.

In its memorandum, Kituo called for mandatory employment contracts in languages understood by migrant workers, enhanced accountability for recruitment agencies, and emergency support mechanisms for workers facing distress while abroad. These measures are intended to strengthen worker protection, promote accountability, and address vulnerabilities that expose migrant workers to exploitation and abuse.

Kituo also advocated for the inclusion of refugees in the proposed legal framework, in line with the Refugees Act, 2021, and the Shirika Plan. This would help ensure that refugees are considered within labour migration policies and have fairer opportunities to access employment and livelihood opportunities. Through the RAWI-EA Coalition, Kituo remains committed to advancing an inclusive, rights-based labour migration framework that protects all migrant workers.

# SIXTEEN YEARS OF KATIBA: PROTECTING THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROMISE

Sixteen years after the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, the story of Katiba is still a story in motion. It is a story that began long before 27 August 2010; with years of public pressure for political reform, the return to multiparty politics in 1991, constitutional review processes, the Bomas process, the rejection of the 2005 draft, and the crisis that followed the disputed 2007 elections. The 2010 Constitution emerged from that long and difficult journey, was approved by Kenyans in a referendum on 4 August 2010, and was promulgated at Uhuru Park on 27 August.



*Kituo Cha Sheria Executive Director, Dr. Wambua Kituku, participating in the Katiba Day celebrations in Nairobi.*

But Katiba was never meant to be simply a document to be placed on a shelf. Its opening words place sovereignty where it belongs: with the people. Article 1 declares that all sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya, while Article 2 establishes the Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic, binding all persons and State organs. Its promise reaches into everyday life, protecting rights and freedoms, strengthening accountability, establishing checks and balances, creating devolved government and opening greater space for public participation. The Constitution transformed the relationship between the citizen and the State by making government power subject to constitutional limits rather than placing citizens at the mercy of power.

Sixteen years on, however, the real measure of a Constitution is not only what is written in its pages, but what happens when those words meet real life. A right matters when a person can invoke it. Accountability matters when citizens can demand it. Public participation matters when people's voices shape decisions. And constitutional supremacy matters when institutions, leaders and citizens alike recognise that no office, individual or institution stands above the law.



*Participants during the Katiba Day celebrations in Nairobi.*

That responsibility does not belong to the State alone. Civil society organisations have played and continue to play an important role in constitutionalism through civic education, legal empowerment, public interest litigation, human rights defence, policy advocacy, public participation and holding institutions accountable. The Constitution itself provides space for citizens to participate directly or through representatives, while its amendment framework recognises a role for popular initiatives.

In commemoration of Katiba At 16, Kituo Cha Sheria joined other civil society and justice actors in Nairobi to reflect on 16 years of the 2010 Constitution, the journey that led to its promulgation, and the responsibility to protect its promise of rights, freedoms, accountability and people's




*Dr. Wambua Kituku delivering a speech during the Katiba Day celebrations in Nairobi.*

power. Sixteen years on, the Constitution remains the supreme law of the land and a cornerstone of Kenya's democratic and constitutional order.

Speaking during the reflections, Kituo's Executive Director, Dr. Wambua Kituku, highlighted the long struggle for constitutional reform that culminated in the 2010 Constitution and called on civil society and all Kenyans to remain active in defending constitutional gains, demanding accountability and safeguarding the rights and freedoms guaranteed by Katiba. Upholding the Constitution, he noted, is a shared responsibility, one that requires citizens, institutions and civil society to understand, use and defend it.

"Defending the sovereignty of our Constitution is paramount. As we defend the Constitution, we must also think of offensive and counter tactics to ensure that its principles are actively protected and upheld." Dr. Wambua Kituku, Executive Director, Kituo Cha Sheria

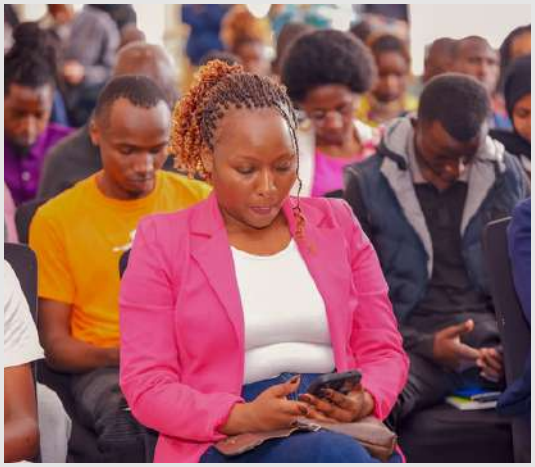
For Kenya to attain a truly just, democratic and accountable society, legal empowerment must remain at the heart of constitutionalism. Citizens need to understand the Constitution, know their rights and responsibilities, and be equipped to use lawful avenues to challenge violations and demand accountability. At a time when concerns over abductions, impunity and disregard for the rule of law continue to test the country's constitutional order, educating people on Katiba is not just about knowing what the Constitution says, it is about enabling citizens to recognise when constitutional principles are being undermined and to take informed, lawful action to protect them. Respect for the Constitution must therefore be a shared responsibility of citizens, State institutions and civil society, with continuous civic and legal education helping to ensure that the rights, freedoms, accountability and rule of law promised by the 2010 Constitution are lived realities.



*Participants during the Katiba Day celebrations in Nairobi.*

As Kenya looks towards the 2027 General Elections, that responsibility becomes even more important. Recent Katiba At 16 reflections by civil society actors have similarly focused on protecting civic space, strengthening constitutional implementation and ensuring that citizens remain at the heart of democratic life.

Katiba belongs to the people. Its strength cannot depend solely on courts, Parliament, government institutions or civil society. It lives in the citizen who asks questions, the community that participates in public affairs, the journalist who holds power to account, the human rights defender who stands with those whose rights are threatened, and institutions that respect the limits placed upon them.



*Kituo legal assistant Susan Wambui during the Katiba Day celebrations in Nairobi.*

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## EARTHWISE: GOVERNMENT VS CLIMATE

Climate change is no longer a distant threat, it is a reality affecting lives, livelihoods, and the future of our communities.

In the Earthwise episode by NTV Kenya , Kituo Executive Director Dr. Wambua Kituku shares insights on the importance of climate justice, environmental governance, and ensuring that communities are equipped to respond to the growing impacts of climate change. Earthwise documents critical climate issues and highlights practical solutions from across Kenya.

**Watch the full documentary here:**

https://youtu.be/BnKswoTRql8?si=TFnPhqTSIMtYzQVX



## KITUO JOINS PARTNERS TO ADVANCE LAND AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

Kituo Cha Sheria joined Misereor network partners for a workshop on land and climate justice, facilitated by Namati and Power Shift Africa, to strengthen collaboration and explore collective approaches to advancing justice and sustainable development.

The discussions focused on community participation in decision-making, land rights, Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), equitable benefit-sharing, accountability and access to justice. Participants shared experiences and examined approaches to ensuring that communities have a voice in decisions affecting their land, livelihoods and environment.

The workshop culminated in the formation of working groups to strengthen coordination and drive joint action on land and climate justice.



*Kituo Programme Officer Patricia Nekoye making a presentation during the workshop.*

## RIGHTS AND SAFETY IN ARTISANAL GOLD MINING

On 18 August 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria joined stakeholders from across Western Kenya in Kisumu for the Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Stakeholders' Forum, bringing together diverse perspectives and lived experiences to address challenges facing mining communities.

The discussions explored key issues affecting the sector, including environmental protection, gender and inclusion, socio-economic rights, governance and formalisation, occupational safety, children's rights, access to justice and the role of community paralegals in promoting legal awareness and protecting community rights.

Participants also highlighted the often-overlooked mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of artisanal miners and affected communities, emphasising the need for approaches that address both the immediate risks of mining and its wider social and human impact.



*Participants during stakeholders forum in Kisumu*

The forum identified key priorities for collaboration and collective advocacy towards safer, inclusive and rights-respecting mining communities that protect human rights, the environment and community wellbeing.

## ADVANCING IP RIGHTS AND LIVELIHOODS FOR REFUGEE CREATIVES



*Refugees participating in the Intellectual Property and Creative Economies Dialogue in Nairobi*

Creativity can open doors to economic opportunity, but without the means to protect their work and earn from it, talented refugee creatives risk having their contributions overlooked and their livelihoods constrained.

Kituo, with support from Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Horn of Africa, and in partnership with the RAWI-EA Coalition, convened a four-day Intellectual Property and Creative Economies Dialogue in Nairobi from 1–4 September 2026. The dialogue brought together refugee creatives from Nairobi, Kakuma, Dadaab, Mombasa, Nakuru and Eldoret to explore how they can better protect, commercialise and build sustainable livelihoods through their creative work.

Participants from music, fashion, design, visual arts, film, literature and digital media shared experiences and explored barriers to intellectual property registration, access to markets, legal status, digital platforms and decent work. These challenges can limit creatives' ability to protect ownership of their work, reach wider audiences and earn a fair income from their talent.



*Miss Achol, a refugee and Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, participating in the dialogue.*

Participants developed practical proposals to inform future engagement with the Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI), the Kenya Copyright Board (KECOBO) and other intellectual property institutions, promoting more inclusive approaches to intellectual property protection, refugee inclusion, legal empowerment and economic participation in Kenya's creative economy.

Refugee creatives deserve more than the freedom to create. They deserve the right and opportunity to protect their work, earn from their talent and build sustainable livelihoods through their creativity.



## REFUGEE INCLUSION THROUGH NAIROBI COUNTY INTEGRATION STRATEGY

On 15 July 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria, through the Refugee Access to Work and Inclusion – East Africa (RAWI-EA) Coalition, participated in the Nairobi City County Government's inception meeting to operationalise the Thematic Coordination Units (TCUs) under the Nairobi County Refugee Integration and Community Building Strategy (NCRIS) 2025–2030.

The meeting brought together stakeholders to strengthen coordination and guide implementation across five thematic areas: Education and Skills Training; Trade and Enterprise; .



*RAWI-EA Coalition members participating in an inception meeting convened by the Nairobi City County Government in Nairobi.*



*RAWI-EA Coalition members participating in an inception meeting convened by the Nairobi City County Government in Nairobi.*

Health Care and Social Services; Community Engagement and Cultural Exchanges; and Legal Information and Enforcement

The TCUs are expected to provide strategic leadership, enhance collaboration among stakeholders and coordinate interventions that promote refugee inclusion and sustainable integration within Nairobi County. The initiative presents an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between county authorities, civil society and other stakeholders in building inclusive communities where refugees and host communities can access services, pursue livelihoods and participate meaningfully in society.

## ADVANCING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR DEAF LEARNERS

On 16 July 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria joined fellow stakeholders at a consultative meeting on the proposed Accelerating Access to Deaf-Centered Justice (A2D2J) Project, convened by the Federation of Deaf Women Empowerment Network (FEDWEN Kenya), to explore collaborative approaches to improving access to justice for Deaf learners and strengthening inclusive justice systems.

Kituo continues to champion inclusive and equitable access to justice for all. Participation in such multi-stakeholder engagements contributes to ongoing efforts to address barriers faced by marginalised communities, including persons with disabilities, and advance a justice system that is accessible, responsive and people-centred.



*Participants pose for a group photo following a stakeholders' consultative meeting in Nairobi.*



## STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

On 25 August 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria hosted a team from International Justice Mission (IJM) Kenya, led by its Executive Director, Vincent Chahale, for a courtesy call to Kituo's Executive Director, Dr. Wambua Kituku.

The meeting provided an opportunity for constructive discussions on shared priorities and opportunities to strengthen collaboration, particularly in protecting communities from violence and advancing access to justice, safety and dignity. Both teams exchanged perspectives and explored practical ways to leverage their respective expertise .



*kituo Executive Director Dr. Wambua Kituku presents a gift to IJM Executive Director Vincent Chahale during IJM's visit to kituo.*





*Kituo Programme Officers Joy Nasike and Jimmy Sayi during the summit.*

## KEEPING CIVIC SPACE OPEN

A democracy is only as strong as the space it creates for people to speak, organize, question authority and demand accountability. When that space narrows, it is not only civic actors who are affected. The ability of ordinary people to participate in decisions that shape their lives begins to diminish. Protecting civic space, therefore, is about protecting the very avenues through which people exercise their rights and shape the society they want to live in.

The need to protect this space brought civic actors, human rights defenders, journalists and State institutions together in Makueni County for the 6th Annual Civic Space Protection Summit on 16–17 September 2026, under the theme "Voices Unbowed. Civic Space Protected. Democracy Strengthened." The summit moved from reflection to resolve, focusing on collective protection, resilience and the future of civic space ahead of the 2027 General Elections.

As Kenya looks towards 2027, the need for a civic environment where people can speak, organise, advocate and hold institutions to account becomes even more significant. The conversations in Makueni explored what it takes to protect that space, not only through laws and institutions, but also through solidarity, resilience and collective action.

For Kituo Cha Sheria, the summit provided an opportunity to contribute to this wider conversation and connect the protection of civic space with its work of advancing legal empowerment, access to justice and constitutional rights.

Kituo's Executive Director, Dr. Wambua Kituku, joined conversations on the role of Civil Society Organisations and State institutions ahead of the 2027 General Elections, calling for a people's manifesto for election monitoring and emphasising the importance of organised, citizen-focused civic action in safeguarding electoral accountability and constitutional rights. Dr. Wambua was also part of the session on how



*Dr. Wambua Kituku participating in a panel discussion on the role of CSOs and State institutions ahead of the 2027 General Elections during the summit.*

CSO leaders can build resilience, exploring how civil society leaders can strengthen their capacity to navigate an increasingly challenging civic environment.

Collective protection was another important thread. Kituo's Jimmy Sayi and Joy Nasike joined fellow civic space actors in conversations on protecting human rights defenders, journalists and civic actors ahead of the 2027 Elections. The discussions spotlighted the need for stronger solidarity, protection and collective action in safeguarding the space in which civic actors carry out their work.

Beyond these conversations, the summit examined the wider environment for civic action, including civic oversight, collaboration and civic space lawfare. These conversations reflected the reality that protecting civic space requires more than responding when it comes under pressure; it requires building systems, relationships and collective capacity that can sustain it.

Kituo's contribution also extended to the summit exhibition, where we showcased our work and impact through an exhibition booth. The booth provided an opportunity to highlight our commitment to protecting civic space, advancing legal empowerment and strengthening access to justice, while connecting participants with the work we continue to do with communities.

From Makueni came a clear reminder that civic space is not an abstract idea, it is the ability of citizens to raise concerns, journalists to ask difficult questions, human rights defenders to stand with communities and civil society to demand accountability.

The work of protecting that space, ultimately, belongs to all of us.




*Kituo team pose for a group photo during the summit.*

## EXPLORING COLLABORATION TO STRENGTHEN PIL

On 21 August 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria hosted Zainab Onuh-Yahaya from PILnet for a courtesy call to Executive Director Dr. Wambua Kituku to explore potential areas of collaboration, particularly in strengthening Public Interest Litigation (PIL).

The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange experiences, identify shared priorities and explore ways to advance strategic litigation and people-centred access to justice. Both organisations look forward to exploring opportunities to strengthen public interest law and advance meaningful justice for communities.



*Zainab Onuh-Yahaya (second left) from PILnet with the Kituo team during her visit to Kituo's offices.*

## KITUO EXPANDS GRASSROOTS ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN MOMBASA

Kituo Cha Sheria conducted a community legal empowerment session with Port Reitz village elders in Mombasa on 3 August 2026, equipping them with knowledge to support community-level dispute resolution and improve access to justice.

The session covered the Small Claims Court, the importance of preserving evidence and the role of village elders in resolving disputes amicably before they escalate. Elders were also sensitised on guiding community members towards appropriate legal pathways when disputes cannot be resolved locally.

Kituo also conducted legal aid screening to identify community members requiring legal assistance and connect them with appropriate support, strengthening grassroots access to justice.



*Kituo Programme Assistant Tirus Makumi addressing participants during the forum in Mombasa.*



*Dr. Wambua Kituku addressing participants during the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances commemoration organised by the Missing Voices network in Mombasa.*

## JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

For families still searching for answers, justice is not merely a promise; it is a right that demands action, accountability and truth. Kituo Cha Sheria joined members of the Missing Voices network in marking the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances during a community commemoration event in Mombasa.

This year's theme, "Victims First. Actions Now," calls for a shift from statements and promises to concrete action that delivers truth, justice, accountability and reparations for victims and their families.

For years, Kituo has stood with victims and families affected by enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, challenging impunity and advocating for justice, accountability and stronger legal protections. In 2025, the High Court held that the prohibition of enforced disappearances forms part of Kenyan law and directed the State to strengthen accountability mechanisms.

Families seeking answers about their loved ones deserve timely justice. Their rights and dignity must be upheld through efforts to establish the truth, hold perpetrators accountable and provide redress.



## BRIDGING JUSTICE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES

Justice is not only about resolving disputes; it is also about understanding people's experiences, addressing trauma and restoring relationships within communities.

On 21 August 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria convened a stakeholder workshop bringing together refugee leaders, refugee-led organisations, representatives from the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) and the National Steering Committee on Alternative Justice Systems (AJS) to inform the development of a practical training toolkit integrating AJS and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS).

The workshop brought together community experiences, technical expertise and institutional perspectives to shape a toolkit responsive to the realities of refugee communities and strengthen the capacity of those supporting their access to justice and appropriate psychosocial care.

Building on this process, Kituo later convened justice actors, MHPSS practitioners, government agencies, refugee-led organisations and development partners to validate the AJS–MHPSS Community Training Toolkit and a policy brief on operationalising AJS under the Shirika Plan.

The Toolkit provides practical guidance for frontline and community actors to identify and respond to justice and psychosocial needs, strengthen dispute resolution, and adopt trauma-informed, restorative and people-centred approaches that reflect the realities of both refugees and host communities.

Integrating justice and psychosocial support, seek to strengthen community capacity, address conflict constructively and foster peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. They also contribute to advancing more accessible and responsive justice pathways that recognise the interconnectedness of legal protection, psychosocial well-being and community resilience.

## KITUO PAYS A COURTESY CALL TO DRS

Kituo Cha Sheria held a stakeholder engagement with the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) on 24 September 2026 to explore opportunities for stronger collaboration in advancing refugee protection and access to justice.

The discussions focused on strengthening the RAWI-EA Coalition, joint advocacy and public awareness, legal and policy reforms, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Alternative Justice Systems (AJS), and building the capacity of justice actors to respond to refugee-related matters.



*Kituo team with the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) team during a visit to the DRS headquarters.*

The meeting also highlighted the importance of including host communities in justice and peacebuilding initiatives to promote peaceful coexistence and equitable access to justice.

Both parties emphasised the need for stronger coordination and collaborative approaches that meaningfully involve refugees and host communities in shaping solutions to the challenges affecting their access to justice and protection.




# STRENGTHENING ALTERNATIVE JUSTICE SYSTEMS IN NAKURU

Kituo Cha Sheria, with support from GIZ (German Development Cooperation), continued to strengthen access to justice in Nakuru County through community consultations and stakeholder engagement on Alternative Justice Systems (AJS) on 29 and 30 July 2026.

On 29 July 2026, Kituo convened a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with refugee and host community members to gather feedback on AJS hearings conducted in the area. The discussions explored community experiences, outcomes of AJS processes and opportunities to improve dispute resolution. The feedback provided valuable insights into how community-based justice mechanisms can become more accessible, responsive and effective in addressing disputes.



*Dr Wambua Kituku contributing during the review of the Nakuru County AJS County Action Plan (CAP) in Nakuru*



*Refugee and host community members participating in Focus Group Discussion in Nakuru*

Kituo has been working with refugees and host communities to integrate AJS with Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) as complementary approaches to promoting peaceful coexistence. Through community dialogues, capacity strengthening and continuous engagement, the initiative supports amicable dispute resolution, strengthens social cohesion and contributes to building resilient and inclusive communities.

Kituo also, in partnership with the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of Alternative Justice Systems (NaSCI-AJS), on 30 July 2026, convened a stakeholder engagement to validate the reviewed Nakuru County AJS County Action Plan (CAP) and reactivate the Nakuru AJS Working Group. The review marked an important milestone, as Nakuru became the first county in Kenya to undertake a review of its AJS County Action Plan.

Kituo has been working with refugees and host communities to integrate AJS with Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) as complementary approaches to promoting peaceful coexistence. Through community

# ETHIOPIA MINISTRY OF JUSTICE VISITS KITUO

On 21 July 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria hosted a delegation from Ethiopia's Ministry of Justice, accompanied by representatives from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Ethiopia and UNODC Eastern Africa, for an experiential benchmarking and knowledge-sharing visit as Ethiopia advances the development of its legal aid legislation.



*Delegates from UNODC, Ethiopia's Ministry of Justice and Kituo pose for a group photo after a meeting at Kituo's offices.*

Led by Executive Director Dr. Wambua Kituku, the Kituo team shared Kenya's experience in advancing an inclusive legal aid framework through civil society leadership. Drawing on Kituo's role as one of the pioneers behind Kenya's Legal Aid Act and the community paralegal movement, the team highlighted the contribution of non- governmental organisations to strengthening the rule of law, coordinating and supporting paralegal self-regulation, standardising training and ethical practice, and integrating grassroots legal aid into formal justice institutions.

The team also showcased Kituo's regional and global leadership through the African Centre of Excellence for Access to Justice and its longstanding partnership with the Grassroots Justice Network, demonstrating how collaborative, people-centred approaches advance legal empowerment and expand access to justice across Africa and beyond.

The visit strengthened regional collaboration and facilitated the exchange of experiences and best practices to inform Ethiopia's efforts to develop an inclusive legal aid framework while advancing people-centred justice across the region.



*Delegates from UNODC, Ethiopia's Ministry of Justice, and Kituo Cha Sheria during a meeting at Kituo's offices.*

# STRENGTHENING PEOPLE-CENTRED JUSTICE IN KENYA



*Participants pose for a group photo at the conclusion of a workshop convened by HiiL to contextualise Kenya's Justice Needs and Satisfaction (JNS) Survey.*

Understanding people's justice needs is essential to building responsive justice systems.On 16–17 July 2026, Kituo participated in a stakeholder co-design workshop convened by HiiL to contextualise Kenya's Justice Needs and Satisfaction (JNS) Survey. The workshop brought together justice sector actors, government institutions, civil society and researchers to ensure the survey reflects Kenya's legal, social, economic and cultural realities.

Discussions focused on refining survey tools, mapping justice pathways and identifying barriers to accessing justice and resolving legal problems. Kituo also presented the proposed JNS methodology for Alternative Justice Systems (AJS) in Kenya for stakeholder review ahead of piloting and implementation.

The survey will generate nationally representative evidence to inform policies and investments that improve access to justice across Kenya.




# ADVANCING CLIMATE JUSTICE AND REFUGEE INCLUSION IN LABOUR MIGRATION

Climate change is increasingly shaping livelihoods, labour mobility and displacement, raising important questions about workers' rights, refugee inclusion and access to justice.

These issues featured at the Fourth Employment and Labour Relations Annual Symposium and Exhibition (ELRASE IV), held from 16–18 September 2026 at Strathmore University in Nairobi, under the theme "Labour Migration and Access to Justice: Strengthening Judicial Responses for Inclusive and Effective Labour Justice Systems." The symposium brought together justice sector actors and other stakeholders to examine emerging challenges in labour migration and access to justice.

Kituo Cha Sheria Programme Officer Glory Kairi participated in a discussion on climate-induced labour migration, exploring the connections between climate change, livelihoods, displacement, labour mobility and conflict. Climate-related pressures, including drought and loss of livelihoods, can increase vulnerabilities and influence migration decisions, making rights- based responses essential.

The organisation's Migration Justice and Governance Manager, Magret Kemuma, also participated in a panel discussion on refugee inclusion, contributing to conversations on the importance of ensuring refugees and asylum seekers are included in labour justice frameworks and can access decent work and legal protection.




*Kituo Cha Sheria team poses for a group photo after the symposium.*




*Kituo Cha Sheria Programme Officer Glory Kairi speaking during a panel discussion at the symposium.*

The discussions highlighted the need for intersectional approaches linking climate change, migration and labour rights, while strengthening social protection, regional labour mobility, decent work and legal empowerment to ensure refugees, migrant workers and affected communities access protection and opportunities without discrimination.

# RAWI-EA COALITION ADVOCATES FOR REFUGEE RIGHTS AND INCLUSION



*RAWI-EA coalition members pose for a group photo following the monthly Reflection, Learning and Action (RLA) session in Nairobi*

On 30 July 2026, the Refugee Access to Work and Inclusion – Eastern Africa (RAWI-EA) Coalition held its monthly Reflection, Learning and Action (RLA) Workshop in Nairobi, bringing members together to review progress, exchange experiences and identify priorities for advancing refugee rights across the region.



*RAWI-EA coalition members participating in the monthly RLA session in Nairobi.*

The workshop provided a platform for coalition members to reflect on achievements, share lessons and innovative approaches, and discuss emerging opportunities and challenges affecting refugees and other forcibly displaced populations. Members also explored ways to strengthen collaboration and coordinate advocacy efforts for more inclusive policies and improved access to rights and opportunities.

The session concluded with agreed advocacy priorities and joint actions to guide the coalition's work in promoting refugee inclusion, expanding access to employment and livelihoods, and strengthening protection for forcibly displaced populations across Eastern Africa.

Through coordinated regional advocacy, the RAWI-EA Coalition seeks to address the legal, policy and socio-economic barriers that limit refugees' access to employment, livelihoods, essential services and protection. By strengthening partnerships, sharing knowledge and aligning advocacy priorities, the coalition aims to influence inclusive policies and practices that recognise refugees' rights, support their self-reliance and promote their meaningful participation in host communities across Eastern Africa.



*RAWI-EA coalition members participating in the monthly Reflection, Learning and Action (RLA) session in Nairobi.*



# KITUO PROVIDES FREE LEGAL AID TO THE COMMUNITY

People-centred justice starts with making legal support accessible, practical and responsive to people's everyday needs.

On 31 August 2026, Kituo Cha Sheria, with support from Misereor, held a Free Legal Aid Clinic at Kituo's grounds, providing community members with free legal assistance to address their concerns, understand their rights and explore available remedies.



*Kituo Legal Assistant Susan Wambui providing legal assistance to a community member during a legal aid clinic in Nairobi.*

During the clinic, community members consulted legal practitioners, received guidance on their cases, understood their rights and explored available legal options. By bringing legal services closer to the community, Kituo continues to empower people to navigate legal challenges and pursue justice.

KITUO CHA SHERIA
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