

Mid-Year Newsletter

Citizen Empowerment | Policy engagement | Institutional Development



East African Civil Society
Organizations Forum

18th July, 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the first half of 2025, EACSOF has continued to play a central role in promoting participatory governance, strengthening civil society engagement, and advancing people-centered regional integration within the East African Community (EAC). Through sustained dialogue, stakeholder collaboration, and targeted advocacy, EACSOF has worked to ensure that civil society voices are meaningfully represented in shaping regional priorities.

Key areas of focus during this period included enhancing institutional coordination, deepening citizen awareness of regional frameworks, and fostering inclusive policy development.

With ongoing support from national chapters and partners, EACSOF remains committed to reinforcing civic space, democratic accountability, and regional solidarity.

This newsletter provides a snapshot of progress made so far and invites continued collaboration as we work toward a more inclusive, just, and united East African region.



The East African Civil Society Summit 2025



THEME:

Harnessing EAC Citizens Potential and Participation in Regional Integration Processes

SUB THEME:

Innovating for Regional Intergration: Advancing Governance, Economic Growth, and Social Inclusion in the Digital Age

The East African Civil Society Summit 2025 Is Here!

Nairobi, Kenya | September 29 – October 1, 2025

After a long wait, the time has come—this September, Nairobi will host the East African Civil Society Summit 2025, a major regional gathering bringing together over 400 delegates from all eight EAC Partner States.

Organized by EACSOF, the summit will serve as a vibrant platform for civil society, government, the private sector, media, and academia to co-create regional solutions to today's most pressing challenges.

Theme:

"Innovating for Regional Integration: Advancing Governance, Economic Growth, and Social Inclusion in the Digital Age."

Through high-level dialogues, strategic workshops, and dynamic networking, participants will generate bold and practical ideas to drive people-centered integration in the region, powered by technology, inclusion, and accountability.

Get ready to be part of the change.



REGISTER NOW

Regional Highlights



Strengthening NSA Engagement in SADC Policy Spaces

In partnership with the Southern Africa Trust, EACSOF organized two impactful events during the 2025 SADC CSOs Week: a Media Engagement Workshop (27 February) and a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue (28 February).

These platforms empowered journalists and non-state actors to champion issue-based reporting and amplify civic voices, contributing to greater transparency and regional policy accountability. The events marked a strategic step in enhancing NSA influence in SADC decision-making processes.

Strengthening Legal Recognition of NGO Networks in Tanzania

EACSOF participated in a high-level dialogue convened by TANGO and the Office of the Registrar of NGOs to address governance and legal gaps affecting NGO networks in Tanzania. The meeting focused on recognition challenges under -



the NGOs Act and system limitations, particularly the NGO Information System (NIS - Jamii). EACSOF advocated inclusive legal reforms and reaffirmed its commitment to civic space, transparency, and stronger civil society ecosystems.

Regional Solidarity on Civic Space Protection

In April 2025, EACSOF joined 20 civil society leaders from across Africa at a Regional Ideation & Learning Retreat in Nairobi, focused on safeguarding civic space. Organized by UNNGOF, the forum tackled growing restrictions on freedoms and the misrepresentation of NGOs. EACSOF contributed to co-developing a responsive framework to defend civic space and reaffirmed its commitment to citizen engagement and democratic governance.



Advancing CSO Voices in EAC Integration – EACSOF at CSO Week 2025

During CSO Week in May 2025, EACSOF joined a high-level session on strengthening civil society engagement in EAC integration. The discussion highlighted challenges such as low public -

awareness, limited CSO inclusion in dialogue processes, and weak grassroots representation. EACSOF called for better coordination, communication, and early involvement of CSOs in policymaking. The East African Court of Justice was recognized as a key channel for upholding accountability. This engagement reinforced EACSOF's dedication to inclusive and people-centered regional integration.

EACSOF at Global Policy Forum 2025

In June 2025, EACSOF participated in the Global Policy Forum for Development in Brussels, representing East African civil society. EACSOF advocated for locally led development, equitable financing, protection of civic space, and inclusive policies aligned with the SDGs.

The forum provided a valuable platform to ensure that regional voices have an influence on global development priorities.



Training on Rights in Commercial Investment Schemes

In April 2025, EACSOF participated in a regional training hosted by SEATINI Uganda to address human rights risks in large-scale land and infrastructure investments. The workshop gathered civil society actors from across East Africa to strengthen skills in monitoring, legal literacy, and advocacy.

EACSOF contributed regional perspectives, supported strategy development, and emphasized the need for community land rights, environmental protection, and inclusive investment planning.



EACSOFF Participated in International Customs Day Commemoration

In January 2025, EACSOFF participated in International Customs Day at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha. The event highlighted the role of technology—particularly Artificial Intelligence—in enhancing customs efficiency and combating illicit trade.

Regional CSOs Unite for EAC Engagement

In early 2025, EACSOFF convened the Regional Committee Dialogue at the EAC Secretariat, bringing together CSO representatives from all eight Partner States. The session featured the handover of the CSO Steering Committee Chair to EALS and submission of key civil society -

recommendations from the 2024 Secretary General's Forum. The dialogue reinforced EACSOFF's role in promoting inclusive, accountable, and participatory regional integration.

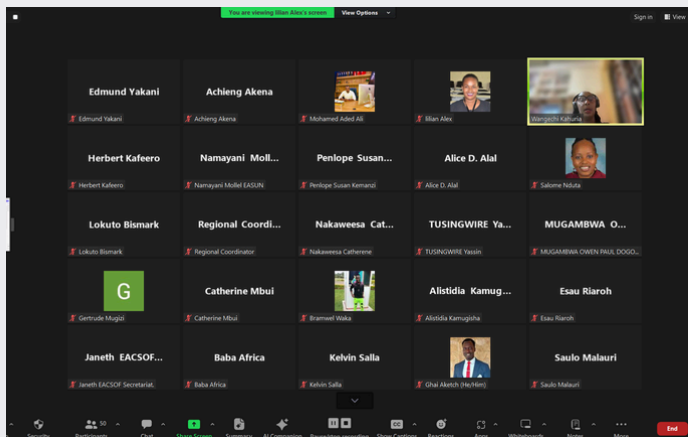
Online National Consultations

In May 2025, EACSOFF, in partnership with GIZ, conducted a series of online national consultations across all eight EAC Partner States. The consultations aimed to deepen civil society engagement in regional integration by gathering grassroots perspectives on democratic governance, policy priorities, and participation in EAC decision-making processes.

The sessions offered an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of the Secretary General's Forum, while capturing regional insights to guide future advocacy. Key themes emerging from the consultations included the need for greater awareness of the EAC Treaty, stronger inclusion of CSOs in the ongoing Treaty amendment process, enhanced peacebuilding linkages, and increased focus on digital transformation.

These discussions reaffirmed the importance of civil society ownership in the regional integration agenda and the urgent need to strengthen coordination, visibility, and engagement within national EACSOFF chapters.

Regional Webinar on Civic and Economic Freedoms



In July 2025, the East African Civil Society Organizations' Forum (EACSOF) convened a regional webinar aimed at fostering inclusive dialogue on reclaiming civic and economic freedoms within the East African Community (EAC). The session brought together civil society experts, legal professionals, and trade policy specialists from across EAC Partner States to examine growing constraints on civic space, governance challenges, and trade justice issues.

Panelists reflected on the state of civil liberties and economic rights in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Key issues raised included increasing restrictions on civil society organizations, shrinking funding for rights-based work, and the urgent need to operationalize regional mechanisms like Article 127 of the EAC Treaty to protect civic participation.

As a way forward, participants were urged to strengthen cross-border CSO coalitions, advocate for regional accountability, and actively prepare for the upcoming CSO Summit 2025 in Nairobi, Kenya.

[Watch the Webinar](#)

Policy Spotlight: EACSOF Advisory on Somalia's Human Rights Commission Formation.

The East African Civil Society Organisations' Forum (EACSOF), through its Somalia Chapter, has issued a critical advisory on the formation of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in Somalia. The statement calls for a credible, inclusive, and constitutionally grounded process that reflects both national aspirations and regional democratic principles.

This intervention comes at a pivotal moment, as Somalia deepens its engagement within the East African Community (EAC). The advisory underscores the importance of upholding human rights, promoting transparency, and fostering public trust as key pillars for establishing strong and independent oversight institutions.

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EACSOF's Continued Commitment to Peace, Human Rights, and Regional Stability

In early 2025, EACSOF continued its efforts as a regional voice for peace, justice, and human rights in East and Southern Africa. Through strategic statements and joint advocacy, EACSOF collaborated with regional and continental institutions to address humanitarian and security challenges—thereby laying a solid foundation for the implementation of its 2025 agenda.



CONDEMNING ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EAST AFRICA

EACSOF issued a strong statement addressing the persistent issue of enforced disappearances and the alarming rise in human rights violations within the East African region. The statement called on governments to uphold international human rights standards, ensure accountability, and protect civil society actors and ordinary citizens from arbitrary detention and abuse.

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URGENT CALL FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN GOMA AND EASTERN DRC

As violence escalated in Eastern DRC, EACSOF released an urgent appeal for immediate action to restore peace and stability in Goma and surrounding regions. The organization called on regional leaders to prioritize diplomacy, protect civilians, and ensure that humanitarian access is not hindered during conflict.

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JOINT CIVIL SOCIETY APPEAL TO AFRICAN UNION, EAC, AND SADC

In collaboration with civil society actors from across East and Southern Africa, EACSOF co-signed a joint submission to the African Union, the East African Community, and SADC. The appeal highlighted the need to de-escalate tensions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and take coordinated action to safeguard civilian lives and regional harmony.

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ADVOCATING FOR PEACE AND UNITY IN SOUTH SUDAN

EACSOF also stated South Sudan, urging for an inclusive dialogue process that brings together political actors, civil society, and community leaders. The call emphasized regional solidarity in addressing the country's fragile peace process, with recommendations to support grassroots engagement and reconciliation efforts.

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● Visits & Engagements

Visit by SONSA Somalia Chapter

The Somalia National Chapter (SONSA) paid its first official visit to the EACSOF Secretariat, focusing on deepening cross-border CSO collaboration and regional solidarity. The visit signaled SONSA's active commitment to advocacy within the EAC framework.



Visit by Uganda Governing Council Member – Mr. Henry Muguzi

Mr. Henry Muguzi, EACSOF Board Member, visited the Secretariat and shared strategic insights on strengthening institutional governance and regional engagement. The visit underscored the value of Board-level leadership in advancing EACSOF's mission.



Engagement with E-SUN Institution

Representatives from the E-SUN Institution visited EACSOF to exchange experiences and explore areas for institutional collaboration. Discussions focused on best practices, mutual learning, and opportunities for joint programming.





East African Civil Society
Organization' Forum
*Strengthening Civil Society in
the Integration Process*



german
cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Implemented by
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



National CSO Consultation Meetings



The East African Civil Society Summit 2025



THEME:

**Harnessing EAC Citizens Potential and Participation in
Regional Integration Processes**



EAC
JUMUJWA AFRIKA MASHAURIKI



East African Civil Society
Organization' Forum
*Strengthening Civil Society in
the Integration Process*

ANNUAL EAC SECRETARY GENERAL'S FORUM 2025



Call to Action: ●



The East African Civil Society Summit 2025

Sponsorship Packages

	Platinum Sponsor ————— \$15,000 ★★★★★ 20 SLOTS Premier sponsors receive top visibility through top-tier logo placement, media recognition, a key speaking slot, prime exhibition space, and exclusive access to VIP networking events.
	Gold Sponsor ————— \$10,000 ★★★★★ 15 SLOTS Top brand visibility, media recognition, speaking opportunity, exhibition booth, and VIP-level networking access for delegates.
	Silver Sponsor ————— \$5,000 ★★★ 10 SLOTS Logo & brand visibility on summit materials and signage; acknowledgment in summit publications and media; networking opportunities for your delegates.
	Exhibition ————— \$1,000 Unique opportunity to showcase your products and services to a high-profile audience, expand your business network, and enhance your brand visibility at this important event.

Registration fee per individual: **\$200**

RESERVE YOUR SPOT!

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Let's Build It Together

The East African Civil Society Summit 2025 is a collective journey, and we're inviting partners and sponsors to walk it with us.

By supporting the Summit, you'll be contributing to a stronger, more inclusive regional dialogue that drives real change across East Africa.

Join us as a sponsor or strategic partner and help shape the future of civic engagement in the EAC.

LEARN MORE



Join EACSOFF and connect with a vibrant network of civil society organizations across East Africa. Gain access to advocacy platforms, capacity-building, and policy influence to strengthen communities across the EAC. Together, we amplify civil society's impact on governance, human rights, and social justice. Join us and be part of the change.

[Get Membership Form](#)

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