

EXTRAORDINARY POWER IN THE HANDS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE



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From Left: Director of Public Prosecutions Noordin Haji (2018-2023) and Deputy Chief Justice Philomena Mwilu at Amnesty International Kenya 10th Anniversary Celebrations

“The Judiciary of Kenya commends Amnesty Kenya for a decade of mobilizing and campaigning for human rights. The Judiciary will always be a strong and committed partner to Amnesty.”

Deputy Chief Justice Philomena Mwilu

“We thank Amnesty Kenya for taking the front seat in protecting and promoting human rights and, at times, putting their lives in danger.”

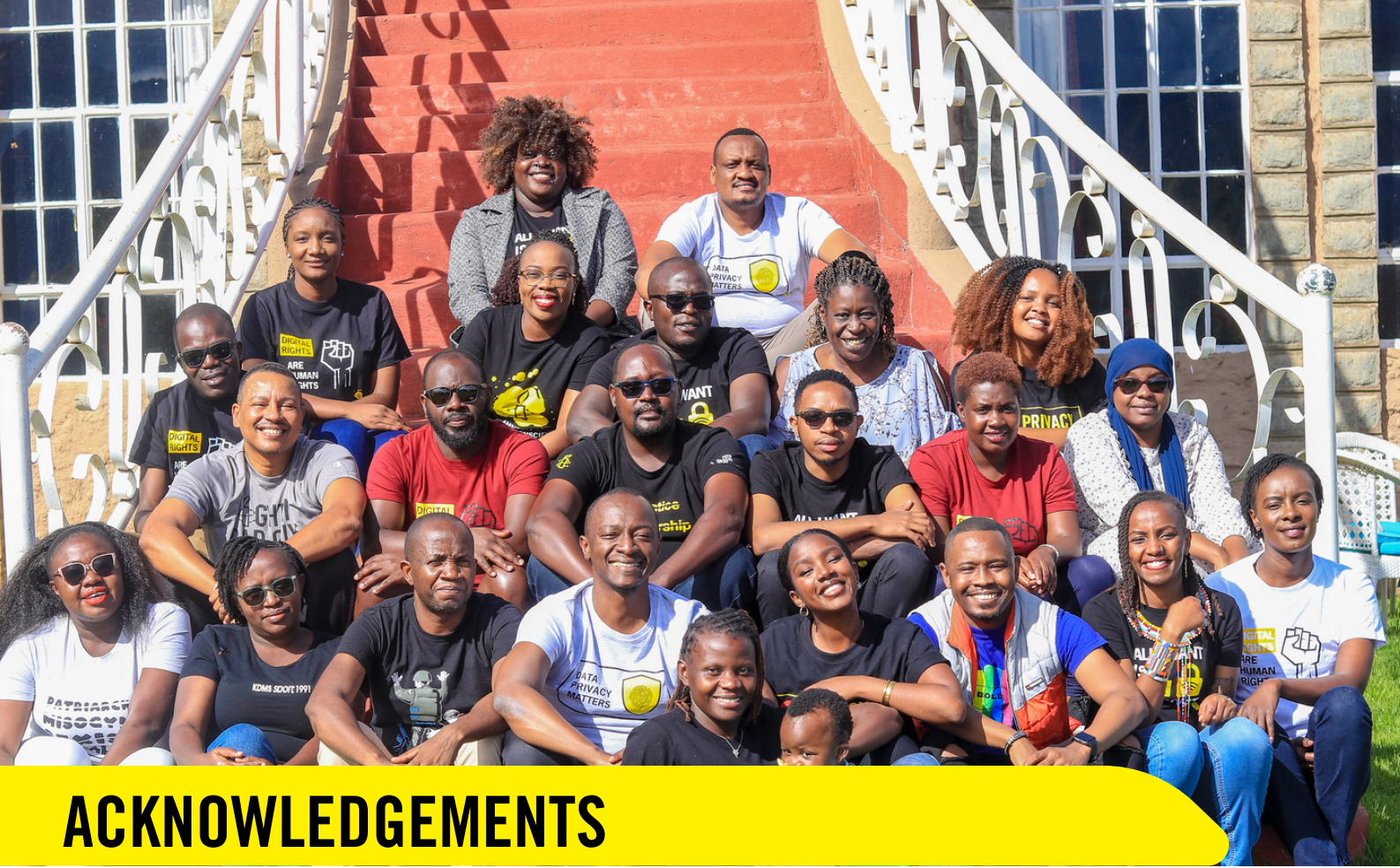
Director of Public Prosecutions Noordin Haji (2018-2023)

Message by the Chairperson Ayiecho Awuor

Since Amnesty International Kenya was registered in 2012, the organisation has had at least seven strategic plans. The 2020-2023 Strategic Plan was probably the most ambitious. It paved the way to recognition as a National Section governed by members and a national statutory board. Amnesty International became highly visible within Kenya, regionally and internationally. On behalf of the Board, I thank you for your leadership and encourage you to continue supporting us.

Message by the Executive Director Irungu Houghton

This Strategic Framework builds on the foundations of the last seven strategic plans. There have seen several milestones and turning points. 400 Kenyans were involved in the strategic choices we have made in this Framework. For the very first time in the history of Amnesty International Kenya, this Framework was discussed and adopted by an Annual Delegates Conference of members. On behalf of the staff, we invite you to join us by keeping your membership up to date, participating in our campaigns and holding us to our four values in all we do. May justice be our shield and defender always.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Some members of Amnesty Kenya Board and Staff

The route map to this Strategic Framework was prepared in accordance with Amnesty International's global strategy and core standards under the association's constitution. The Board approved the route map within their duty of stewardship and oversight of organisational performance in their March 2023 Board meeting. The Board-approved version of this Strategic Framework was discussed and adopted by the 29-30 September Annual Delegates Conference (ADC) in accordance with the mandate to approve multi-year strategic plans and budgets.

This Strategic Framework was written by staff between April and August 2023 and informed by a highly intense, participatory, and inclusive process. The analysis and strategic choices are informed by past strategy evaluations, literature desk reviews and the surveyed views of over 400 members, supporters, representatives of community-based and national allies, duty-bearers, Amnesty International and other stakeholders.

We are thankful to the Strategic Planning Working Group and Strategic Reference Group (some board members, members, and external experts), who guided the analysis and decisions before the Board recommended this framework for approval to the ADC. The ten-person Strategic Task Force includes Kevin Mwachiro (Chairperson), George Mwangala, Tabitha Saoyo-Griffiths, Hafswa Shirazy, Stephen Okwany, Hussein Khalid, Jennifer Gitiri, Irūngū Houghton (Secretary), Irene Odenyi, Fredrick Olwal and Emily Marang'a. The Staff Strategic Plan Task Force includes Emily Marang'a (Chairperson), Lavender Namdiero, Helena Kithinji (Resource-person), Benta Moige, Mathias Kinyoda, Zaina Kombo, Cynthia Alusa, Victor Ndede, Levi Mulei and Ramadhan Rajab, Demas Kiprono.



INTRODUCTION

Mukuru Kwa Njenga residents who resisted and survived the demolitions of their homes in 2021

This Strategic Framework was completed on the 60th anniversary of Kenya's national independence. Six decades ago, Kenyan men and women of all ages, abilities, classes, and ethnicities from all parts of Kenya celebrated political independence from settler colonialism and British imperialism. On 12 December 1963, 5 million Kenyans voted to dismantle identity-based discrimination and establish social equality and political freedom for all.

Nearly forty years later, Kenyans voted for a constitution that is founded on the idea that all human beings are born free and fully self-expressed. The rest of our lives are dedicated to expanding this freedom to the extent that it does not restrict the freedom of others. Being independently in control of our life choices and safe in our relationships with others is key.

Under Article 3(1) of the Constitution, this current generation is responsible to the freedom fighters of the last century to challenge prejudice, discrimination, and violence against anyone. The current 47+1 governments have a duty to expand our political freedoms, inform civic responsibility and progressively deliver on the constitution. The price of our freedom today is the historical obligation we bear to disrupt the normalisation of exclusion, prejudice and pain in all spaces within the Republic of Kenya.

WHAT IS OUR PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND THEORY OF CHANGE?

Like other countries, Kenya faces the global poly-crisis of catastrophic climate change, cost-of-living, democratic recession, and social polarisation. Despite the shift in national and county administrations during the recent August 2022 General Elections, Kenya continues to grapple with the deadly venom of inequalities, impunity, and discrimination. While the hustler versus dynasty class narrative captured the grievances of many jobless and economically disenfranchised Kenyans worn down by COVID-19, ultra-capitalism and failure of institutions to respond to corruption, rising intolerance and extremism are undermining societal resilience to human rights abuses, identity-based discrimination and violence, service denial and the prolonged economic crisis.

Living costs are spiking, state appetite for taxation is intensifying and violent public protests are accelerating. Early signs suggest that the voice, visibility, and influence of non-governmental organisations and investigative media journalists will continue to reduce in the face of a national administration focused on wooing domestic businesses, foreign investors, and governments.

For Kenya to retain its international and regional geo-political influence, all fundamental freedoms, constitutional rights, and responsibilities must be protected and expanded. Key among them are freedom of expression and the right to assembly and protest. Also critical for any functioning democracy is the right to association, life, dignity, public participation, and equality under the law. Without this, it is predictable that citizen disillusionment with an unfulfilled elections policy mandate may spiral into restless violence.

Our analysis suggests that the following six political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal (PESTEL) trends will determine the realization of human rights over the next five years.

Political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal (PESTEL) trends.	
Political instability ⁽¹⁾	Despite challenges, Kenya ranks 94th and is the only East African nation in the top ten most democratic countries of the world. Public institutions will be challenged by decreasing budgets, declining public trust, corruption, and impunity, clamping down on lawful dissent, constitutional freedoms and dissent and a troubled region.
Social polarisation ⁽²⁾	Kenya is ranked as moderately polarised alongside Brazil and the United Kingdom. Increasing poverty and marginalisation shall strain household security and prosperity and accelerate identity-based discrimination and extremist intolerance.
Economic vulnerability ⁽³⁾	Kenya is a highly vulnerable and inequitable nation that will be further impacted upon by the global economic recession leading to higher taxation, wastage through corruption and impoverishment.
Digital technology transformation ⁽⁴⁾	Increased investment and Government e-service digitisation combine to make Kenya a global flagship and laboratory for artificial intelligence, mass surveillance technologies, social media-based disinformation, and online radicalisation.
Climatic catastrophes ⁽⁵⁾	Kenya ranks 152 of 181 countries most vulnerable to climate change impact. Erratic rainfall and resource-based competition will increase conflict and food insecurity, but Kenya will continue to be a renewable energy policy and practice global leader.

1. <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2022/>

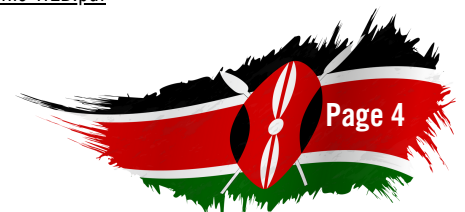
2. <https://www.africa.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss536/files/2023-04/2023%20Edelman%20Trust%20Barometer%20Kenya%20Report.pdf>

3. <https://gain-new.crc.nd.edu/country/kenya#:~:text=The%20high%20vulnerability%20score%20and,the%20152nd%20most%20ready%20country.>

4. <https://kippra.or.ke/building-a-robust-digital-economy-in-kenya/#:~:text=Digital%20Infrastructure%20pillar,->

[Kenya%20has%20implemented&text=Globally%2C%20Kenya%20is%20ranked%20number,Inclusive%20Internet%20Index%20\(2022\).](https://kippra.or.ke/building-a-robust-digital-economy-in-kenya/#:~:text=Digital%20Infrastructure%20pillar,-Kenya%20has%20implemented&text=Globally%2C%20Kenya%20is%20ranked%20number,Inclusive%20Internet%20Index%20(2022).)

5. https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/15724-WB_Kenya%20Country%20Profile-WEB.pdf



Within this volatile and challenging context, AI Kenya has emerging opportunities to employ innovative, community-led, mass mobilization initiatives that can introduce non-violent leadership and real change. Over the last two years, AI Kenya has demonstrated capacity to catalyse community-based #ChambuaUongozi dialogues. Dialogues on leadership integrity, human rights, and accountability across seven counties, 69 wards and nationally took place before the elections on topics such as misgovernance, corruption, sexual and gender-based violence, women's land rights, LGBTIQ+ hate crimes, and extrajudicial killings among others.

There remains a need to invest in creating a critical mass of local community-based leaders capable of authentically shaping local, national, and global conversations. Leaders who intelligently and powerfully utilise available online and offline spaces for activism are central to the future of the nation.

A new, young, fearless, and dynamic generation of human rights defenders is also emerging, forging social movements beyond traditional offline bureaucratic structures to realise change. Supported by Amnesty International, activists have voluntarily embraced digital technology to champion new innovative ways to exercise the freedom to express, associate, dialogue, and dissent where necessary.

We shall support these nascent voices to reduce stigma, discrimination and violence against women and girls and LGBTIQ+, persons of disabilities and other minorities. After concerns that Kenyans continue to cherry-pick group rights, we have started to see powerful constituencies beginning to see the intersectionality between classism, ageism, ableism, sexism, and heterosexism.

Amnesty International Kenya's legitimacy as an NGO rooted in local membership and governed by a Kenyan board offers local activists, the possibilities of acting locally and thinking globally, protected by an international movement of 17 million members and supporters.



Peaceful demonstrators at the 2022 International Womens Day March.



WHAT IS OUR VISION FOR KENYA?

Members of Mount Kenya University Amnesty Chapter

AI Kenya believes in an inclusive society where all live in dignity, freedom, diversity and prosperity, and everyone enjoys the full range of constitutional freedoms, rights, and responsibilities.

AI Kenya exists to boldly confront and skilfully transform all forms of injustice and human rights violations with members, supporters and allies through campaigning, research, human rights education, and public interest litigation.

WHAT ARE OUR VALUES AND PROMISE TO THOSE THAT ENGAGE WITH US?

Integrity

We are transparent, leaderful and accountable to our communities and partners at all levels.



Inclusive

We are anti-discriminatory and embrace the dignity of all persons and feminist leadership in all digital and physical spaces.



Courageous Solidarity

We will work with others to build a movement that stands for the Constitution, social justice, and the rights of all.



Innovative Creativity

We consistently seek fresh approaches to human rights protection within Amnesty International global values, digital citizenship, and an appreciation for continuous learning



WHAT ARE THE SIX OUTCOMES WE SEEK TO TRANSFORM BY 2028?

Outcome 1

Citizens movements actively resourced to demand democratic governance, freedoms, and justice.

Strategic Partners:^[6] Circles of conscience, social justice centres, activists, members, supporters.

Boundary Partners:^[7] County governments, Activists, National Government, AIK members, Supporters.

Outcome 2

Constitutional values, human rights standards and sustainable development principles drive the implementation of laws, policies and budgets across the Executive and Legislative arms of government.

Strategic Partners: Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights, Occupation-based associations. Kenya Democracy and Human Rights Parliamentary Caucus, Mzalendo Trust.

Boundary Partners: Office of Presidency, County Government, Line Ministries and Parliament.

Outcome 3

All persons and groups experience safety and equal access to fair and swift justice in line with the Constitution and the rule of law.

Strategic Partners: Police Reforms Working Group, Missing Voices Alliance, Independent Policing Oversight Authority, Witness Protection Agency, Law Society of Kenya, National Council on the Administration of Justice and Judiciary National Council on the Administration of Justice, Law Society of Kenya, Identity-based activist associations, Judges and Magistrates.

Boundary Partners: Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, National Police Service, Interior Ministry.

Outcome 4

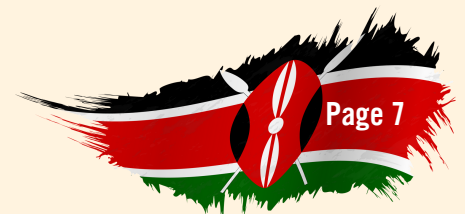
Rights-based governance protected against corruption and impunity by national and International financial institutions.

Strategic Partners: National Council on the Administration of Justice, Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, Office of the Auditor General, Law Society of Kenya, Amnesty International Secretariat and national entities.

Boundary Partners: World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations, Diplomatic Missions.

[6] Strategic partners are those partners that we share common values and mission.

[7] Boundary partners are those agencies that have a mandate, power and bear a responsibility to Kenyans



Outcome 5

Data governance and citizens' digital rights in the Data Protection Act (2019) promoted and protected against disinformation, invasive breaches of big data, and personal privacy.

Strategic Partners: Office of the Data Protection Commissioner, National Cohesion and Integration Commission, The Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet), Open Institute, Strathmore University, Namati.

Boundary Partners: Ministry of Interior and National Administration, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, Corporates, Communications Authority.

Outcome 6

A value-based AI Section that is sustainable, results-oriented, efficient, relevant, well-resourced, and professionally managed organisation that maintains internal democracy. (This will be supported by documented and updated systems in human resources, communication, and finance with clarity of decision-making. This will be achieved through effective resource mobilisation and improved technical, functional, organisational and leadership capacity).

Strategic Partners: Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK), Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), Institute of Human Resource Management (IHRM), Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK), AIK Board, Staff, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) Coordination Board, Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA).



Nanjala Nyabola, former AI Kenya Board member outside late 13 year old Yassin Moyo's home.



WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT FROM A DECADE OF ORGANISING?

Makao ni haki protestors demonstrating against the cost of living in 2018.

After a decade of human rights organising and a rigorous independent assessment, the Amnesty International Board granted section status to the Kenya office in December 2022. Amnesty International Kenya is now independent of the International Secretariat and joins seventy other national sections in the governance assembly of Amnesty International. While bound by international core values and standards and part of the global movement, the 2024–2028 Strategic Plan is approved and ultimately governed by Kenyan members and a national board for the first time.

For the last decade, we have rallied with families, communities, civic coalitions, and duty-bearers to protect and demand justice for victims of gender-based violence, extrajudicial executions, impunity, identity-based profiling, forced evictions, and patient detentions, among other rights violations. From the communities of Kiamaiko to Kianjokoma, the Sengwer to Soweto, Deep Sea and Kibos, we have documented, lobbied, built capacities, and marched with affected communities and persons at risk. Unlike many, we integrated civil and political rights with economic and social rights, avoided an anti-state approach and consciously expanded the movement to all sectors of Kenyan society. This playbook has helped to anchor our relevance and expand respect for human rights beyond our direct program impact.

Two independent strategy evaluations and a management review inform management and board appreciation of past achievements, missed opportunities and areas for strategic change. Over the “Amnesty Kwa Ground: Equality, Freedom, and Citizenship” strategy period (2021–2023), we deepened our domestic accountability to an annual membership forum, thirteen members (all Kenyan) statutory board, 3,500 paid-up members and 107 Circles of Conscience across twelve counties.

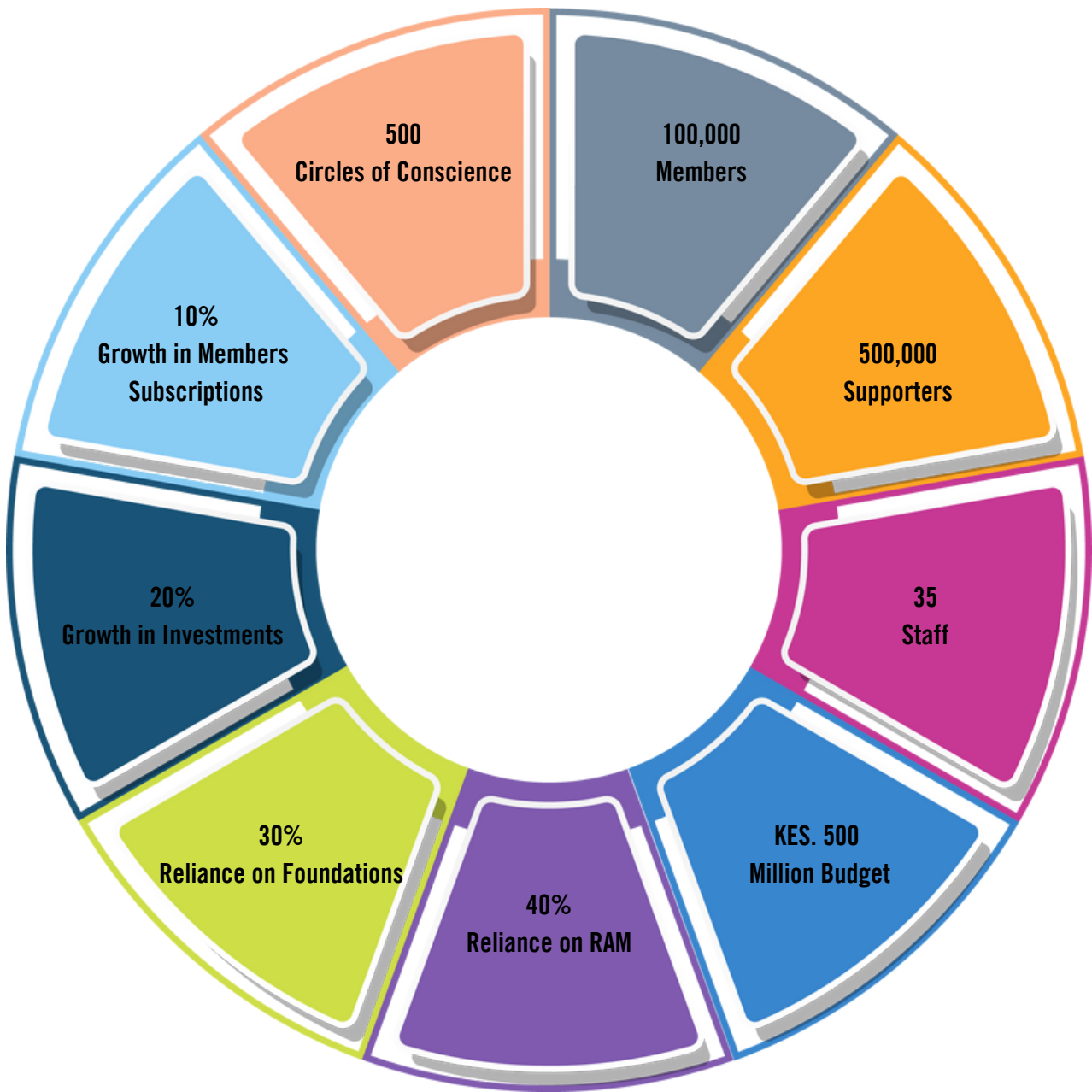
Our 60,000 supporters and tens of CSO alliances and partners catalysed and supported community-based human rights defenders and their movements nationally to advance full citizenship rights for all and an effective and accountable state. Our economic model has shifted also. We doubled our budget between 2020 and 2023 and diversified our funding base by 40%.

It has been noted that we successfully accomplished seven out of eight strategic objectives in the 2020–2023 Strategic Plan, as confirmed by external feedback from 400 stakeholders. These objectives included alignment with the Amnesty International global strategy (2021–2029) that prioritises civic freedoms, equality, and freedom from discrimination; increased membership and their greater engagement in our campaigns and governance; enhanced digital and face-to-face organising; more rigorous monitoring and evaluation; a Board that is activist and outward-facing, and a culture of leadership, team synergy, and staff well-being; section recognition and more effective engagement with the international movement. However, we were only able to partially achieve our financial diversification and organisational resilience through donations from Kenyans.

The independent reviews suggest our performance management culture needs a reboot. Greater outcome targeting, tighter workflow management and reporting and learning would increase the intentionality and consistency of our work, leading to greater impact. The consensus from the views gathered is that AI Kenya must continue to play a critical leadership role in protecting our democratic space and human rights defenders against national, regional, and international anti-rights movements. AI Kenya must ensure that our constitution's fundamental freedoms and rights are promoted, protected, and realised.

By 2028, AI Kenya will be a research and campaigning excellence lab inspiring movement building, advocating for equality and an end to impunity, and corruption. Working solidly within a tighter impact accountability framework and informed by stronger research, we will meet our six outcome challenges and milestones.

WHAT INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OUTCOMES DO WE SEEK BY 2028?



Our membership growth and movement-building model will accelerate online and offline member and supporter engagement through circles of conscience and strategic partners. Further localisation and resourcing of our CoCs across 47 counties will see them increasingly more adequately financially resourced and equipped with the tools to promote human rights education, recruit members and supporters and refer human rights violations to duty-bearers.

We will be consistently reaching and engaging Kenyans directly through public activities and millions of Kenyans indirectly through mass and social media. This will lead to over 1,000 letters, memoranda, petitions, and policy briefs generated on topical policy issues each year. Music, fine art, drama and comedy will be supported and harnessed to create activists and communities of activists working through culture and arts.

Our budget will triple to KES 500 million annually, with 20 per cent of AI Kenya revenue generated by individual giving, assets, and investments. We will introduce life membership and donation categories for members and supporters. Our board volunteers and management staff will be among the most influential and supportive sections of the Amnesty International Movement.

To remain leaderful, relevant, and resilient, AI Kenya must intentionally catalyse community and national-based associations and alliances led by volunteer citizens to provide evidence-based engagement of policymakers and the public informed by an international appreciation of human rights, democracy, and social justice. We will ensure that we safeguard Amnesty resources against theft and wastage in line with our status as a non-governmental organisation working for the vulnerable.

To do this, AI Kenya must realise the following five organisational shifts over the next five years;

- Movement-building campaigning model with more opportunities for online and offline supporter action.
- Integrated secretariat, circles of conscience and membership outcome planning and reporting model.
- Strategic people culture that is empowered, honest, diverse and feels a sense of belonging.
- New resource streams through individual giving and institutional assets.
- An externally facing section actively engaging the world through Amnesty International.



WHAT ARE OUR STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS WE MAY FACE?

STRENGTHS

- Strong and well-established reputation: The government, allies, and the public take AI Kenya's views seriously because of its reputation and the ability to call for sanctions and citizen action.
- An extensive network of members and supporters: Amplifies AI Kenya's voice in calls for action, making it easier for AI Kenya to mobilise and intervene when called upon to.
- Adequate funding base: Amnesty International and development agencies have supported impactful campaigns, attracted competent staff, facilitated branding, and earned public trust.
- Strong advocacy and Campaign teams: There are solid and sustained action campaigns with improvement in the campaign areas.

WEAKNESSES

- A lean team: Staff easily experience burnout as they are involved in numerous activities, making working only within the stipulated time impossible. The number of urgent matters sometimes leads to forfeiture of leave. AI Kenya is occasionally unable to respond to support requests across the country.
- AI Kenya's Nairobi-based location: Makes responding to most human rights violations outside of Nairobi challenging.
- Lack of clarity on core functions: Core AI Kenya's activities are affected as it focuses on issues outside its annual plan. The deflection affects financial planning and overall performance, gauged based on yearly work plans.
- Overreliance on RAM/low membership contributions: Could limit human rights work. There is a need to strengthen other sources of income, including members' contributions and external development agencies in all departments.
- Lack of proper communication and consistent engagement with CoCs: Has affected the implementation of their initiatives or the organisation's campaigns.
- Organisational sustainability: Requires building up the institutional presence and expanding the organisation's wider sphere of influence and overarching mission.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The emergence of the Digital Rights Space: The novel campaign area could expand AI Kenya's connections and funding sources.
- Prospective entry into climate change work: AI Kenya can become a thought leader.
- AI Kenya's membership base could financially sustain the organisation and wean from or support RAM funding.

THREATS

- Unlawful government interference: Human rights protection requires an effective judiciary, a free media and civil society and an executive at national and county levels who believes in our constitutional national values. A contraction in our democratic space will constrain capacities and lead to broader human rights violations.
- Introduction of discriminatory bills and amendments to the Constitution may reverse gains achieved by AI Kenya in its Human rights work in Kenya over the years.
- Funding agencies' priority shifts might constrain the organisation's work.

WHAT RISK MITIGATION MEASURES ARE WE PUTTING IN PLACE?

DESCRIPTION OF RISK	MITIGATION MEASURES
Over-ambitious expectations are not matched with adequate resources.	Achieve resource-efficient outcomes by aligning plans with attainable goals, focusing on impactful projects, transparently communicating limitations, seeking collaborations, fostering innovation, enhancing employee skills, evaluating projects, planning contingencies, and establishing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
Serious emerging problems that require AIK's urgent attention sidetrack us from this framework.	Effectively manage strategic issues by prioritising them, anticipating emergent concerns, allocating resources, delegating responsibilities, adapting to changes, planning for crises, communicating with stakeholders, learning from experiences, and fostering organisational agility.
Low-level collaboration from the key boundary and strategic partners.	Strengthened stakeholder engagement while upholding transparency and accountability to cultivate trust with funding agencies, partners, and the public.
High staff turnover due to cost-of-living challenges.	Enhance employee satisfaction and well-being through competitive compensation, growth opportunities, a positive environment, recognition, flexibility, transparent communication, addressing workload concerns, feedback mechanisms, alignment with mission and values, work-life balance promotion, managerial training, and regular engagement assessments.
Political and Government Interference.	Engage in strategic advocacy efforts to address political interference and create strong relationships with key stakeholders.
Funding uncertainty	Reduce reliance on a single funding source by diversifying funding streams.
Data Privacy and Cybersecurity	Implement robust data protection and cybersecurity measures to safeguard sensitive information and comply with relevant data privacy regulations.
Reputation Risks	Develop a crisis management plan to handle reputational risks and respond promptly to crises effectively.
Security Risks	Establish robust security measures encompassing risk evaluations, safety education, and vigilant monitoring to protect staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.





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Amnesty International Kenya Strategic Framework 2024-2028

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