

# CEFROHT

## Quarterly Newsletter 2024

*At CEFROHT, we firmly believe in the transformative power of collective action. By leveraging legal tools for strategic litigation and offering pro bono legal services, we have championed justice and upheld the principles that guide us—participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment, and the rule of law*

*This year, we have made significant strides, fueled by a commitment to ensuring that everyone, irrespective of their background, can enjoy a life of dignity and opportunity. These achievements inspire us to continue fighting for sustainable and equitable food systems and ensuring that fundamental rights are protected for all.*



### **The public interest cases.**

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CEFROHT has continued to pursue public interest litigation on issues concerning food, environment and livelihoods including food safety by filing the following cases; EACOP case and the GMO case in the East African Court of Justice at regional level.

### **Pipeline justice: Advancing rights and accountability in the EACOP case.**

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CEFROHT together with other civil society organizations on November 6, 2020 filed a case against the governments of Uganda and Tanzania to halt the EACOP project and address the environmental issues thereunder.

### **A fight against GMOS: agroecology and the future of food and seed sovereignty.**

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CEFROHT held a workshop with lawyers and officials from the Uganda Human Rights Commission in Uganda on Constitutionalism and Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling.

# ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL: CEFROHT'S QUEST FIGHT FOR ADEQUATE LIVING RIGHTS IN EAST AFRICA

## Executive Director's Message

*Dear Esteemed Reader and Friend of CEFROHT,*  
I extend my heartfelt congratulations to you upon reaching the final quarter of 2024. This milestone offers a moment to reflect on our shared journey and achievements in advancing the right to adequate food, climate justice, and economic justice across East Africa.

At CEFROHT, we firmly believe in the transformative power of collective action. By leveraging legal tools for strategic litigation and offering pro bono legal services, we have championed justice and upheld the principles that guide us—participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment, and the rule of law.

This year, we have made significant strides, fueled by a commitment to ensuring that everyone, irrespective of their background, can enjoy a life of dignity and opportunity. These achievements inspire us to continue fighting for sustainable and equitable food systems and ensuring that fundamental rights are protected for all.

As we approach the year's end, I invite you to remain steadfast in supporting this critical mission. Together, we can drive impactful change and build a future rooted in justice, equity, and dignity for all.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AND STRATEGIC LITIGATION FOR ADEQUATE LIVING RIGHTS.

**I**n the spirit of advancing the right to adequate living, ending hunger, and all forms of malnutrition, CEFROHT has passionately continued to pursue social justice through strategic litigation, and offering pro-bono services to women, youths and children and other vulnerable persons. CEFROHT has successfully filed and continued to pursue cases in the East African Court of Justice, National court, Constitutional and Magisterial area courts.

## THE PUBLIC INTEREST CASES.

**C**EFROHT has continued to pursue public interest litigation on issues concerning food, environment and livelihoods including food safety by filing the following cases; EA-COP case and the GMO case in the East African Court of Justice at regional level. At national level, cefroht has filed the following cases; the school feeding case in the Constitutional Court, the Non-Communicable Disease case in the Court of Appeal, COVID19 appeal in the Court of Appeal, Mental illness case in the Court of Appeal Court, Glyphosate case in the High Court, and breast-feeding case in the Constitutional Court.

## PIPELINE JUSTICE: ADVANCING RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE EACOP CASE.



**C**EFROHT together with other civil society organizations on November 6, 2020 filed a case against the governments of Uganda and Tanzania to halt the EACOP project and address the environmental issues thereunder. The CSOs argue that the project violates numerous international conventions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Paris Climate Agreement and various regional environmental agreements.

The EACOP project is set to transport crude oil from Uganda to the Tanzania port of Tanga, passing through environmentally sensitive areas. This violates the legal frameworks on biodiversity, food and the Protocol on the Lake Victoria basin. The CSOs argue that the project's potential social, environmental and climate risks were not sufficiently assessed prior to its commencement.

### STRATEGIC RETREAT: BUILDING A STRONGER CASE

**O**n October 3rd and 4th, 2024, CEFROHT held a Strategic Retreat with legal practitioners and key partners, including Environment Governance Institute (EGI), Friends of the Environment, and Semuyaba and Co-Advocates.

The focus was on strengthening our appeal in the EACOP case before the East African Court of Justice. Together, we conducted an exhaustive review of legal submissions, court rulings, and respondent arguments, refining strategies to highlight the procedural

flaws and substantive issues in the case.

CEFROHT and other partners had a second session of a strategic meeting on 22nd and 23rd October 2024 that allowed further refinement, particularly focusing on countering preliminary objections raised by the respondents and developing targeted responses to key legal issues. This series of retreats all aimed to ensure a thorough legal approach as the case advanced to the hearing that was scheduled for 15th November 2024.



*On the 3rd of October, Counsel Kasirye Denis making a presentation on one of the issues in the case in order to put areas of discussion across*



*On the 4th day of October, we had further discussions on the merits of our case.*



*On 22nd October, the lawyers having a discussion on how to strength the appeal case that is before the EACJ.*

## PATH AHEAD: HEARING NOTICE FOR THE EACOP CASE.

On the 24th November 2024, the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) issued a hearing notice for our appeal case. This marked a critical phase in advancing our legal arguments in this appeal case as it marked a pivotal moment in our fight for accountability.



Given under my hand and Seal of the Court on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 2024.



### TO BE SERVED UPON:

1. M/S Semuyaba & Jga & Co Advocates  
Buganda Road Flats  
Plot 45-47 & 49-51 Block 662J,  
Ground Floor  
Email: justinsemuyaba@gmail.com  
P.O. Box 12387,  
Kampala, UGANDA.
2. The Attorney General of the Republic of Uganda,  
Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs,  
Plot 1, Parliament Avenue, Queens Chambers,  
P. O. Box 7183,  
Kampala, UGANDA.
3. The Attorney General of the United Republic of Tanzania,  
The Office of the Solicitor General,  
10 Kivukoni Road  
Email: info@osg.go.tz  
P. O. Box 71554,  
Dar es Salaam, TANZANIA.
4. The Secretary General of the East African Community,  
EAC Headquarters,  
Afrika Mashariki Road,  
P. O. Box 1096,  
Arusha, TANZANIA.
5. Center For Food & Adequate Living Rights Legal Aid Clinic  
Plot 65-67 Gecceta Estate Gayaza-Kalaji Road,  
Plot 1, Parliament Avenue, Queens Chambers,  
P. O. Box 16146,

*The hearing notice issued by the EACJ in relation to the EACOP Case.*

## COURT CASE HEARING AT THE EACJ.

Our litigation team with lawyers from the partner organizations travelled to Arusha in Tanzania to enter appearance for the appeal case that came up for hearing on 15th November 2024 at 9:00am at Arusha in Tanzania in the appellate division of the East African Court of Justice (EACJ).

The court overruled the 2nd Respondent's prayer to strike out the suit based on a procedural technicality citing that the case was a matter of public interest that raised critical legal issues and so could not be defeated on a technicality. Court rather ordered that the defects in the case be cured with a supplementary record of Appeal and the case be adjourned.

A follow up meeting was held by the litigation team on the 26th November 2024 and it was confirmed that, a supplementary record had been filed and served on the respondents electronically.

Our legal team is fully prepared to present a compelling case, advocating for the rights of communities and challenging the legality of the EACOP project's implementation.



*The EACOP Lawyers while in Arusha having final preparations ahead of the court hearing of the appeal case*



*Eacop lawyers entered appearance at the East African Court of Justice and ready to proceed with the court hearing*



*The EACOP legal team and the PAPs while in Court*



*The EACOP legal team after finalizing the discussions for the case in Arusha.*



## PURSUING JUSTICE FOR THE EACOP PROJECT AFFECTED PERSONS (PAPs)

The East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) PAPs were arrested by police along Nasser road in Kampala as they marched to petition the Ministry of Energy over delayed and unfair compensation, environmental pollution and unfair displacements by the EACOP project. The PAPs were presented before the Buganda Road Court and remanded to Luzira prison on charges of common nuisance.

CEFROHT legal team, together with legal partners from Environment shield represented the arrested PAPs before the magistrate and secured bail for them.

*Senior Counsel, Dr. Kabanda David representing the EACOP PAPs at Buganda Road court.*



## ENGAGING COMMUNITIES OF THE PROJECT AFFECTED PEOPLE: AMPLIFYING VOICES IN KIKUUBE

On 29th October 2024, CEFROHT litigation team travelled to Kikuube District to visit and engage with Project Affected Persons in order to hear firsthand about the hardships caused by inadequate compensation under the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project. In the meeting, Project-Affected Persons (PAPs) voiced critical issues they are encountering with the EACOP project, particularly in light of the recent case filing. They shared personal stories, and detailed struggles stemming from undervaluation of their land and properties, displacements, and the loss of ancestral lands severely disrupting their social and economic well-being that has left families in precarious financial situations, a deep sense of loss and insecurity about their future.

To address these pressing concerns, we are considering initiating a separate case to demand fair and adequate compensation that is recognized at an international level and ensure the protection of their fundamental rights. This potential legal action underscores our commitment to justice for the most vulnerable.



*A picture with the Project-Affected Persons (PAPs) as they share their stories and challenges amidst the EACOP project's impact on their land and livelihoods.*

## What's at Stake?

The EACOP case is not just about a pipeline, it's about protecting communities, safeguarding the environment, and upholding justice in resource governance.

We invite you to stand with us as we amplify the voices of those impacted and hold duty bearers accountable. Stay tuned for updates as we approach this critical hearing that we anticipate to be early next year!

## USING LEGAL TOOLS TO ADVOCATE FOR RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITIES.

In 2015, Validity, in partnership with Benon, the Center for Human Rights and Development (CEHURD), and Mental Health Uganda (MHU), filed a landmark case against the Attorney General of Uganda, highlighting the severe human rights violations Benon suffered during his detention at Butabika National Mental Referral Hospital from October 2005 to November 2010. These abuses included prolonged isolation in dark, unsanitary conditions, denial of sensory interaction, and inhumane treatment clear violations of his fundamental rights.

Despite the High Court's disappointing 2018 dismissal, where it ruled that seclusion was a necessary short-term recovery measure and did not constitute torture, Benon remained steadfast. With ongoing support from Validity, Center for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT) has relentlessly sought justice for Benon Kabale through Court representation at the Court of Appeal for seven years.

In September -November, we entered court appearances when the matter came up for conferencing, highlighting violations of his rights, including the use of seclusion, torture, and the denial of personal liberty, privacy, and a clean and healthy environment, the hearing was adjourned to 2025.

This case not only seeks justice for Benon but also has the potential to set critical legal precedents for protecting mental health and environmental rights in Uganda, aligning with Article 39 of the Constitution, which guarantees every citizen the right to a clean and healthy environment.



*Senior Counsel Dr. Kabanda David giving a narrative of our next steps of the case to Benon Kabale.*

## **A FIGHT AGAINST GMOs: AGROECOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF FOOD AND SEED SOVEREIGNTY.**

**C**EFROHT leads a collaborative that works for smallholder farmers' right to seed/food security and sovereignty using the law. In the fight against GMOs, CEFROHT filed a public interest case in the East Africa Court of Justice against the Kenyan Government following for lifting the ban in October 2022 on the cultivation within and importation into the Republic of Kenya of GMO food, feed and seeds.

This is in clear contravention of the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community and the African charter on Human and People's rights. Lifting the ban removed all regulatory barriers that had been established on GMOs in Kenya; yet all partner states share borders with wide unrestricted freedom of trade and movement.

CEFROHT presented scientific and expert evidence highlighting the risks associated with GMOs, including allergic reactions, weakened immune systems, and other health impacts. We demonstrated how GMOs contribute to the emergence of pesticide-resistant weeds, leading to increased pesticide use, reduced soil fertility, and environmental harm violating the Protocol on the Environment and Natural Resources Management.

Additionally, our arguments revealed how seed manufacturing companies exploit patents and plant variety rights to undermine farmers' rights to their seeds. These companies create seeds with inbuilt barriers to reproduction, forcing farmers to pay royalties or purchase new seeds each planting season, disrupting traditional practices and leading to food monopolization.

Our case is supported by expert affidavits from recognized authorities in GMOs and seed sovereignty. We remain committed to gathering more evidence and strengthening our case as we await its scheduling for hearing. We have hopes for a fair judgement in our favour to see that the seed sovereignty is upheld.



## UNCONSTITUTIONALITY OF GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE AND OMISSION TO PROVIDE FOOD TO SCHOOL CHILDREN.



*Pictures of some of the school children at St. Josephs about to have lunch of a mixture of maize and beans commonly referred by them as "empengere"*

In Uganda, while up to eight million children attend school, only 33% receive meals, leaving the majority hungry. This hunger affects cognitive development, academic performance, and overall achievement, as highlighted in reports by the National Planning Authority (2017) and the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2014). Particularly concerning is the fact that 66% of primary learners do not have access to meals at school.

To address this crisis, CEFROHT filed a constitutional petition challenging the government's reliance on a parent-led school feeding program. The petition argues that this approach neglects the realities of many vulnerable children, including orphans, those from child-headed households, and families grappling with acute malnutrition. Despite education being a constitutional right, the government claimed that children could not demand such rights constitutionally.

In response, CEFROHT presented evidence from St. Joseph's School in Kiboga, an orphan school grappling with severe food insecurity. The school relies on minimal community donations and guardian support to provide basic meals, often leaving children with just boiled beans, maize, or hot water. Food shortages have forced many to drop out, exacerbating child labor and depriving them of education. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2017) further underscores the plight of 228,563 orphans enrolled in schools, whose education and well-being are undermined by inadequate feeding.

CEFROHT advocates for shared responsibility between parents and the government, emphasizing the government's obligation to provide for vulnerable children. The organization calls on the court to hold the government accountable for ensuring school meals, safeguarding the rights of orphans and underprivileged children to adequate nutrition and equitable education. The case is set for joint conferencing on January 14, 2025.

## PRO BONO SERVICES MAKING A DIFFERENCE: CEFROHT LEGAL AID CLINIC PUTTING BACK A SMILE ON VICTIMS FACES.

The Pro bono legal services provided by CEFROHT include; free legal advice to vulnerable women, youths and children, legal representation in court, mediation, legal research and analysis to support client's cases, toll-free services, Legal education and awareness to inform clients about their rights and responsibilities.

CEFROHT's sustainable access to justice for adequate living rights' innovation: It isn't the conventional litigation. All causes are understood, claimed and pursued as human rights violations. For example, land ownership is a right.

### THE CEFROHT LEGAL AID CLINIC

**C**EFROHT's Legal Aid Clinic chambers were successfully inspected and a certificate of approval from the Law Council was granted. With already two satellite legal chambers, CEFROHT is working towards establishing Legal Aid Clinic offices across all districts in Uganda to ensure that all Ugandans have access to justice.

The Legal Aid Clinic has been a haven of hope for the people in rural communities and Uganda at large in ensuring access to Justice. CEFROHT works tirelessly by offering probono services through legal representation in the courts of law and the use of other alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms such as mediation, legal advice and drafting of court documents to support and empower vulnerable communities in asserting their rights to land, challenging unjust evictions, and promoting sustainable land use practices. Has also provided a toll-free number so as to bridge the gap in access to justice, making it easier for marginalized communities to seek legal assistance hence allowing clients to seek legal aid without incurring phone call costs and this has encouraged clients to seek legal assistance without hesitation, we have been able to give legal advice to many across the country using the toll-free line over 20000 clients.



CEFROHT Legal Officer with our CAG at Kiboga Chief Magistrate Court mediating parties after Court giving parties time to agree outside court.

## THE FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S LAND OWNERSHIP & USER RIGHTS IN UGANDA

**C**EFROHT is an adequate living rights and a food systems organization. Food is culture, social science, social norm, and not a commodity. CEFROHT looks at food in a food systems approach. CEFROHT recognizes the fundamental role of land rights in ensuring agroecology, food security and safety within Ugandan local communities. Therefore, CEFROHT uses the Human Rights Enforcement Act to ensure sustainable access to justice for the vulnerable women and children on land tenure and user rights.

We are thrilled to highlight that in this year we have been able to handle and complete in the shortest period of time, over 80 cases both in court and through mediation in Kyankwanzi, Kiboga and Buyende Districts.



*A team of CEFROHT staff and beneficiaries at our field office in Kiboga.*

## THE COMMUNITY ADVOCACY GROUP (CAG)

**C**EFROHT established 15 Community Advocacy Groups (CAGs) in each of the Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, and Buyende Districts. These groups were educated on human rights, their entitlements, and responsibilities under the Human Rights (Enforcement) Act 2019. They were trained to use a simplified protocol form to file cases at Magistrates Courts and have experiences on handling human rights violations.

The CAGs work with local governments and communities to provide legal support and make referrals, act as paralegals who identify, mediate, and, if necessary, represent parties in court. They participate in community barazas to engage with duty bearers, discuss issues like land rights, gender-based violence, children's rights, and the right to food, and learn about redress mechanisms under the Human Rights (Enforcement) Act 2019. **Continued.....**

## THE UNIQUE NEW LAW: WHY THE HUMAN RIGHTS (ENFORCEMENT) ACT.

**T**he Human Rights (Enforcement) Act 2019 in Uganda is a significant legal development aimed at strengthening justice in a country facing widespread human rights abuses. CEFROHT leverages this Act to resolve community land disputes swiftly. It provides a procedural framework for individuals to seek justice for human rights violations across various court jurisdictions, including high courts, magistrate courts, and local council courts. Notably, it allows individuals to apply for rights enforcement without legal representation, using any native language, either orally or in writing. This flexibility enhances access to justice by removing cultural, linguistic, and literacy barriers.

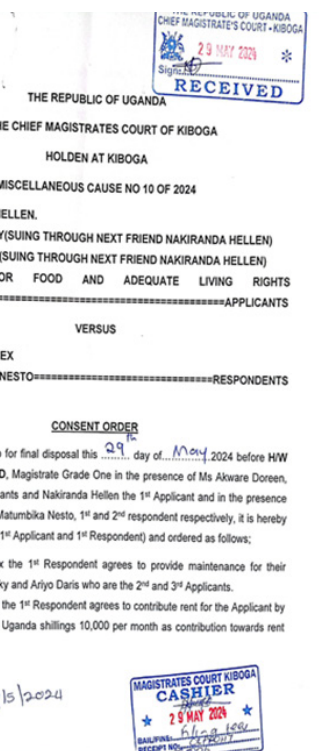
They handle cases at the community level through mediation and referrals to CEFROHT’s legal team. Over the current period, we have managed more than 50 cases, continually empowering communities to understand and demand their rights. The goal of these groups is to ensure that communities are well-informed about their legal rights and have access to justice through appropriate channels.



Some of the successful outcomes of the CAG’s representation of parties at the district from the office of the court accredited mediator at Kiboga.

## KEREN OBTAINS JUSTICE THROUGH CEFROHT

A vulnerable mother of 3, Keren Katushabe’s life and that of her 3 children was in shambles when she was neglected without any support from her husband, with the legal support from Center for Food and Adequate Living Rights the vulnerable mother of three had a smile in her life once more with a court decree in her favour in which keren’s right to land and other properties was guaranteed. We are currently working on the execution of decree, which will ensure that keren has food security and can also provide for her children



CEFROHT’s lawyer with the beneficiaries after court victory

## MARY OBTAINS JUSTICE THROUGH CEFROHT

**N**anyunja Mary Sylvia, a distressed mother of seven, approached the Center for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT) in Kiboga, reporting that her husband had neglected his parental duties, failing to provide school fees, food, clothing, and other basic needs for their children. CEFROHT intervened by filing the case at the Kiboga Chief Magistrate Court and offering legal representation. We are pleased to report that the parties reached a consensus, with the husband agreeing to fulfil his duties, including paying school fees and granting his wife and children access to their garden for food. The case was transferred to Kyankwanzi magistrate court, where a consent judgment was entered in favour of Mary Sylvia.

*On top CEFROHT ED and at the bottom, CEFROHT's lawyer with the court judgement and mediation beneficiaries pose for group photo*



## HELLEN OBTAINS JUSTICE THROUGH CEFROHT

**N**akiranda Hellen, a vulnerable mother of two, was forcefully evicted from her home, leaving her and her children homeless, without food, and without any source of income. They were also prevented from accessing the food they had cultivated, which was their livelihood.

With the intervention of the Center for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT) through legal representation, a consent judgment was issued in her favour by the Kiboga Chief Magistrate Court on May 29, 2024. This judgment provided Hellen with support for her children's basic needs, granted access to her cultivated food, allowed her to continue farming on her father-in-law's land, and provided funds for adequate housing

## PROSCOVIA OBTAINS JUSTICE THROUGH CEFROHT

**C**EFROHT has continued to follow up on its clients who obtained legal interventions to ensure that the beneficiaries of our services are effectively utilizing the fruits of their judgements for source of livelihood for adequate living rights. One of our legal officers visited another Beneficiary, Nassuna Proscovia of Nt-wetwe Sub-County in Kiboga who had sought for divorce from the husband and the father of children who had refused to take care of the children, providing maintenance and paying of school fees but with the intervention of CEFROHT, the man is now paying school fees for the children, the mother of the children who is the beneficiary in this case was also given the rentals for her source of income and land as well



*Proscovia showing CEFROHT lawyer the land and the two rooms she obtained after the intervention of CEFROHT*

## LEGAL EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

CEFROHT has provided training for magistrates, court clerks, local government officers, and Community Advocacy Group (CAG) members, focusing on the Human Rights Enforcement Act. This training equipped magistrates with the necessary knowledge to handle and determine cases using this Act, addressing a previous lack of awareness among judicial officers. As a result, they are now able to implement the Act efficiently, resolving cases more quickly.

Court clerks are also applying their training to assist communities in filing cases under the Human Rights Enforcement Act. Additionally, local government officers are utilizing their training to identify and frame cases as human rights issues and refer them to our CAG officers for further action. This comprehensive training initiative has significantly improved the handling and resolution of human rights cases at various levels of the justice system.



CEFROHT conducting capacity building of magistrates and other court officials

## CEFROHT LAUNCHES THE AGROECOLOGY LEGAL NETWORK FOR AFRICA.

CEFROHT as the secretariat is delighted to launch the Agroecology Legal Network for Africa at the Agroecology Fund Tripartite event convening in Harare, Zimbabwe. The African continent faces a severe food security crisis, with millions of people severely food-insecure. This is worsened by climate shocks, inflation, and conflict, particularly affecting vulnerable populations. To address this, agroecology is a promising solution, but its adoption is hindered by inadequate policies and laws.

To unlock agroecology's potential, the African Union secretariat needs to understand and apply existing legal obligations for sustainable agri-food systems to agroecology. Additionally, CSOs need to collaborate and advocate for agroecology at the continental level.

The proposed network aims to enhance understanding and usage of agroecology and relevant legal standards and policies among development partners, CSOs, governments, and the continent as a whole. This will promote agroecology and help prevent climate change, malnutrition, and hunger in Africa.



The E.D CEFROHT and the CEFROHT legal officer launching the Agroecology Legal Network for Africa at the Tripartite event in Harare, Zimbabwe.

## AGROECOLOGY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ANALYSIS OF THE EAST AFRICAN LAWS AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

CEFROHT, with a consultant's help, drafted a CSO position paper regarding the use of the legal framework to promote Agroecology in East Africa through a human rights-based approach. The paper highlights gaps and opportunities within the East African Community's legal framework and common market protocol. Professor Durojaye peer-reviewed the paper, providing valuable insights. This paper will be used as a tool to engage stakeholders and promote agroecology, aiming to improve food security, sovereignty, biodiversity, and climate resilience in the region.

And this will ultimately improve the legal, policy and institutional frameworks to integrate agroecology, preserve ecological and natural resources through use of rights-based initiatives that are actively led by a variety of grassroot actors, and CSOs in the region.

## DIALOGUE WITH THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA) AGRICULTURE TOURISM AND NATURAL RESOURCES (ATNR) COMMITTEE (EALA-ATNR)

CEFROHT engaged the chairperson of the East African Legislative Assembly Agriculture, Tourism, and Natural Resources (EALA-ATNR) committee in dialogues aimed at advancing laws and policies supporting agroecology within the East African Community (EAC). These discussions included partnering with the EALA clerk's office to establish a collaborative relationship among CEFROHT, the EALA-ATNR committee, and other agroecology stakeholders.

CEFROHT raised concerns about existing East African laws, highlighting their potential to support agroecology, and shared a position paper and policy brief prepared in collaboration with consultants. The EALA leaders encouraged a partnership with the ATNR committee to advance agroecology, the right to food, and adequate living standards. Discussions focused on joint implementation of dialogues to promote agroecology within the EAC's legal and policy framework.

Recognizing the need for capacity building, the EALA-ATNR chairperson emphasized strengthening parliamentarians' understanding of agroecology and its institutional framework. With CEFROHT's limited resources, the FAO provided support, leading to a capacity development workshop held from November 13–15, 2024, in Kampala. The workshop aimed to enhance parliamentarians' knowledge and capacity to promote sustainable ecological agri-food systems across the EAC.

### Resolutions

During the dialogue resolutions were made whereby the EALA-ATNR committed to work with CEFROHT, CSOs and academia on the capacity development and promotion of the agroecology law and policy enabling environment in Uganda.

CEFROHT to conduct and host the members of the committee to a field visit at one of the CEFROHT agroecology learning centers to have exposure and practical appreciation of agroecology at one of CEFROHT's model farm in Mukono district. **Continued on the next page**

Make sure that there is a meeting and discussion on the need to have smallholder farmers' understanding of Agroecology to show case tangible experiences to the parliamentarians of how Agroecology is implemented to inform policy decisions to facilitate their engagement and commitment to the promotion of Agroecology by streamlining policies at the East African level that protect the rural small holder farmers.

Hold at the Uganda parliament dialogue on agroecology with the East African legislative assembly members. This was followed by an official invitation from EALA. CEFROHT had to mobilize the academia and other stakeholders to meet with the leaders at Uganda Parliament in a dialogue and using the position paper and policy briefs that were developed to appear and make a presentation before the EALA-ATNR committee on 24th October 2024.

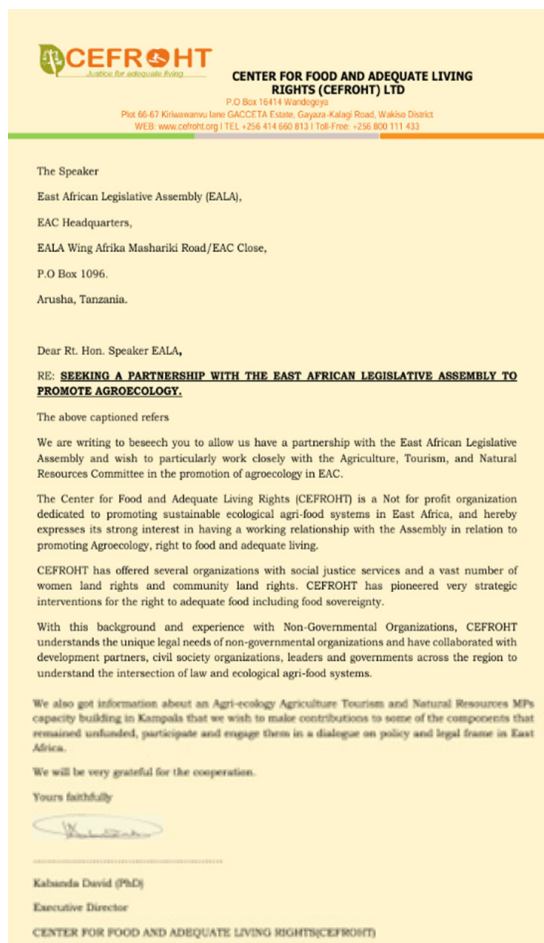


From left-right Dr. Kabanda David ED CEFROHT, Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza Chairperson of the EALA-ATNR committee and other officials.

## LETTER TO THE SPEAKER OF THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

CEFROHT wrote a letter of expression of interest to the speaker of the EALA to allow CEFROHT have a partnership with the East African Legislative Assembly with particular interest of working closely with the Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources committee to promote Agroecology in realization of the right to food and adequate living in the East African Community.

*Letter to the speaker of the EALA speaking for a partnership and with the ATNR committee on promoting AE using the legal and policy framework.*





# OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIP CREATED BETWEEN EALA COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, TOURISM, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**C**EFROHT, academia and CSOs working to promote agroecology are now in a formal relationship and agreed to work on promoting the law and policy in East Africa. This was achieved through several dialogues and coalition building with several stakeholders through presentations, information sharing of CEFROHT work in relation to the right to food and adequate living rights particularly, in promotion of Agroecology before the EALA-ATNR committee members.

*A picture of an invitation letter to the CEFROHT officers to make a presentation before the EALA ATNR committee.*



# OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIP CREATED BETWEEN EALA COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, TOURISM, AND NATURAL RESOURCES



*Dr. Kabanda David, E.D CEFROHT together with the officials from the CEFROHT making a presentation before the EALA ATNR committee members at the Parliament of Uganda (Photo on the left) and after posed for a group photo. (Photo on the right).*

**O**n 24th October, the CSOs' agroecology coalition led by CEFROHT had another dialogue led by the Executive Director with East African Legislative Assembly (EALA). Several presentations and discussions were made entailing the importance of Agroecology in East Africa towards promotion of healthy diets and the need for legal and policy frameworks to promote and protect Agroecology in East Africa.

There was a deep discussion on the law in East Africa and how this can be utilized to enhance the promotion of agroecology and protection of rural smallholder farmers. There is need to use the law to protect the seed for small holder farmers and rural economies from the dangers posed by the big seed and agro synthetic multinationals. The EAC secretariate and the leaders agreed in the dialogue that the ecology and the communities in East Africa need protection and this can only be done with an enabling policy and legal framework.

The dialogue session was interactive, with participants actively engaging in a question-and-answer. Several key concerns were raised on the GMOs and Seed Sovereignty, agribusiness and agroecology, knowledge sharing and best practices, policy and legal framework. Overall, the dialogue highlighted a knowledge gap among EALA-ATNR committee members regarding agroecology. It also underscored the urgent need for a regional policy and legal framework to support the transition to agroecology in East Africa.

CEFROHT called upon the committee to advocate for and adopt a comprehensive regional policy that promotes Agroecology, protect the environment, improve food and nutrition security, seed and food sovereignty, and promote adequate living of the people in the region.

## CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING OF THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY-AGRICULTURE TOURISM AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE FROM 13TH -15TH NOVEMBER 2024 IN KAMPALA

On the 13th November, 2024, CEFROHT in partnership with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations held a capacity building training on agroecology for the EALA-ATNR committee in Kampala, Uganda which aimed at highlighting the need to establish appropriate institutional frameworks for Agroecology promotion within the EAC, towards an Agroecology enabling policy and legal frame work at the East African Community Level in ensuring wins for Agroecology for food security, circular economy, income security for small agri-preneurs, adaptation to climate change and environmental and human health.



Mr. Pierre Ferrand the Agricultural Officer from FAO making a presentation to the EALA ATNR committee members and other stakeholders during the capacity building (Photo on the left) and Hon. Françoise Uwumukiza, chairperson of the EALA ATNR giving opening remarks (Photo on the Right).

The hybrid training brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including smallholder farmer organizations, academia, researchers, private sector representatives, government officials, and agroecology move-

ments. The FAO Africa region deputy director emphasized the importance of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder engagement in advancing agroecology.

Experts and government officials presented on these topics, followed by a roundtable discussion where participants shared experiences and insights on agroecology promotion. Additionally, the coordinator of parliamentary networks team partnerships and UN collaboration division who is the same as the Chairperson of the Global Parliamentary Pact discussed on the global movement for agroecology and the role of parliamentarians in driving policy change.



*The Director Quality Assurance of CEFROHT, Mr. Kiddu Gonzaga making a presentation before the Officials from FAO, EALA and other stakeholders participate during the capacity building of the EALA-ATNR members (Photo on the right) and after took a group picture (Photo on the left) at Imperial Royale in Kampala.*

## ENGAGING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS: FIELD VISIT TO THE CEFROHT AGROECOLOGY LEARNING CENTER IN MUKONO DISTRICT

In order to help political and other duty bearers in East Africa appreciate the urgent need for agroecology and its economic and social prowess in the entire agri-food systems, CEFROHT led EAC secretariat, a delegation of the EALA committee members and the representatives from the FAO on the 14th November 2024 to a field visit to one of CEFROHT agroecology Learning Centers to enable the members understand the practical knowledge and application of the Agroecology principles and practices that are environmentally friendly and highly productive.

During the visit, participants explored the farm, learnt about soil health, water management, post-harvest techniques, and market access and interaction with the farmer to understand the challenges, successes and opportunities the Agroecology avails.

The activity show-cased tangible experiences among parliamentarians as they witnessed firsthand the practical application of existing Agroecological principles, processes and practices that enabled the participants to bridge the gap between theory and reality. This experience enhanced their understanding of how Agroecology is implemented to inform policy decisions to facilitate their engagement and commitment to the promotion of Agroecology.



Photo on both on the left and Right showing the officials from FAO and the EALA-ATNR committee members on transit, while going to the field at CEFROHT's model farm for a site visit in Mukono District-Uganda.



EALA-ATNR committee members and officials from FAO arrive at the CEFROHT's Agroecology learning center for the site visit in Mukono.



EALA-ATNR committee members, FAO officials and the CEFROHT officials posed for a group photo during the site visit at CEFROHT's model farm.

By engaging in these activities, the participants gained a deeper understanding of the potential of agroecology to address food security, climate change, and rural development challenges in the East African region at the community level. Show casing the positive impacts of Agroecology, that inspired the parliamentarians to champion Agroecological policies and allocate resources to support its implementation in the partner states.

## THE MULTI-SECTOR AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER EAST AFRICA REGIONAL COALITION FOR AGROECOLOGY AND THE EALA MEMBERS VISIT TO CEFROHT OFFICES.

The multi-stakeholder East Africa regional coalition for agroecology [EARCA] and the CEFROHT board members welcomed the EAC delegation to CEFROHT offices for another dialogue to an agro-ecological session joined by members from the CEFROHT-led collaborative to scale-up agroecology and resilient agri-food systems:

such as Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), PELUM Uganda, Slow Food Uganda and the Global Consumer Center, representatives from Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) and FAO-Uganda representatives and members engaged into meaningful discussions through presentations and plenary sessions.

The dialogue concluded with a shared commitment to promoting agroecology within the East African Community. The EALA-ATNR committee members expressed their support for agroecological initiatives and pledged to advocate for policies that prioritize sustainable and equitable food system.



*EALA -ATNR committee members, FAO representatives, Board Members and other members from the Collaborative at CEFROHT offices.*



*The EALA-ATNR committee, FAO officials, CEFROHT board members and staff, members from other Civil Society Organizations hosted at CEFROHT offices for a dialogue on promoting Agroecology in East Africa using the legal and policy frameworks.*

## RESOLUTION FROM THE CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING AND ON THE WAY FORWARD



*The members pose for a group after signing the resolution and giving of the closing remarks.*

**T**he Committee on Agriculture, Tourism, and Natural Resources (ATNR) of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in partnership with the Centre for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT) signed a resolution officially recognizing agroecology as a strategic priority for formulating and recommending sustainable policies in agriculture, tourism, and natural resource management across the East African region.

This resolution was adopted during the Capacity Building activity on Agroecology activity held from in Kampala, Uganda, with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO-ROME) of the United Nations.

The resolution acknowledges the urgent challenges facing agri-food systems in the region and recognizes the importance of uniting collective efforts and parliamentary actions to promote agroecology as a holistic strategy for the sustainable transformation of agri-food systems.

This resolution marked a significant step towards sustainable agricultural practices in East Africa. By embracing agroecology, EALA ATNR members committed to creating a future that values ecological integrity and the welfare

<https://www.eala.org/media/view/east-african-legislative-assembly-signs-a-resolution-with-food-agriculture-organization-fao-recognizing-agro-ecology-as-a-strategic-priority-in-the-eac?s=09>

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# Publications



At CEFROHT, we are proud and delighted to share our achievements and we remain committed to promoting justice, equity, and sustainable food systems in East Africa. Your unwavering support has been instrumental in driving impactful change, enabling us to amplify the voices of the most vulnerable and hold duty bearers accountable. Together, we are building a future where every individual can enjoy their right to adequate living.

**Thank you for standing with us. Let's continue this journey of transformation together.**

**In solidarity for justice and dignity,  
Center for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT)**