

## MEDIA STATEMENT

7 July 2019

**There can be no sustainable development without respect for human rights**

- Global civil society call on governments to put human rights at centre of development
- States fail to make connections between sustainable development and legislation to restrict civil society
- Governments need to redefine relations with civil society groups to make them an equitable partner in the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

Civil society groups across the globe make significant contributions to development and the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be fully realised if the onslaught on civil society and human rights defenders continues.

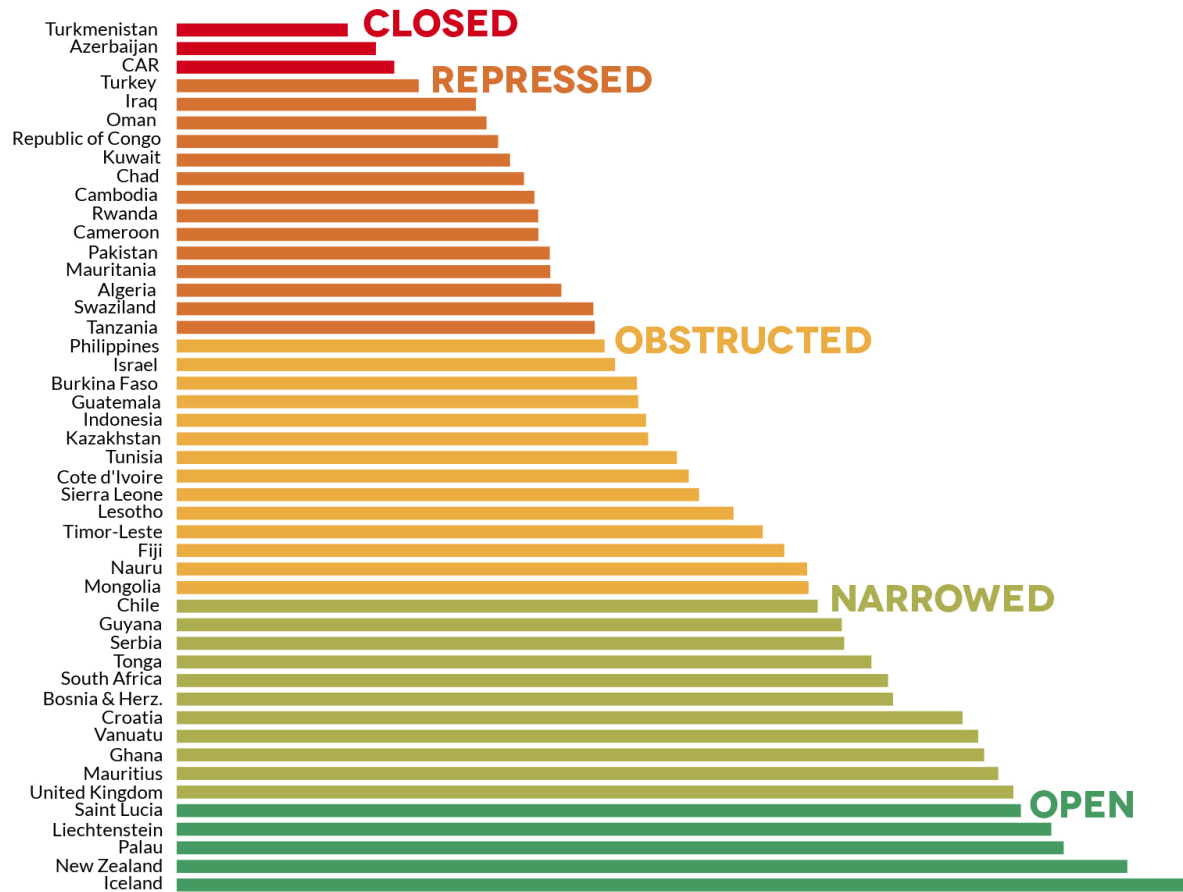
This is the resounding message from representatives of civil society organisations from 25 countries who met in Johannesburg, South Africa in late May to discuss the impact of restrictions on freedom of assembly and association on sustainable development.

Ahead of the [High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#) – the United Nations’ central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals – taking place from July 9-18 in New York, the undersigned civil society representatives call on governments to place human rights at the centre of development.

The group met in Johannesburg at a time when restrictions on civic space – the space for civil society – have reached alarming proportions. [Reports](#) reveal that civil society is under serious attack in 111 countries, with a [spike](#) in the killing of human rights defenders who exercise their right to assemble and associate peacefully.



# NATIONAL CIVIC SPACE RATINGS UN HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM 2019



47 COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

DATA FOR ALL UN MEMBER STATES AVAILABLE AT [WWW.MONITOR.CIVICUS.ORG](http://WWW.MONITOR.CIVICUS.ORG)

Exploring the relationship between freedom of assembly and association, socio-economic development and human rights, Johannesburg meeting participants expressed serious concerns over the attacks they face from state and non-state actors on a regular basis and the high levels of impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of these actions.

The group noted that from their experience, their respective governments make a distinction between human rights and development – often treating campaigners and community leaders

who engage in human rights activities as being far removed from developmental issues. Indeed, authorities even accusing them of having anti-development tendencies.

This disconnect often means that governments exercise control over the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), collude with non-state actors including private corporations and often exclude civil society views when launching development projects. While most human rights defenders are targeted for their campaigning, those advocating for land, environmental and indigenous rights are the most targeted.

Shortly after the Johannesburg meeting, two human rights defenders – Ryan Hubilla and Nelly Bagasala from the Filipino human rights advocacy group Karapatan – were brutally [killed](#) for their work. Before the murders, Karapatan staff had been surveilled by the military and police operatives.

The HLPF will [review](#) six of the SDGs, including those promoting inequality reduction within and among countries, action on climate change, inclusive and equitable quality education and access to justice for inclusive and accountable institutions. Sadly, the issues that are up for review are at the heart of ongoing restrictions and reprisals by state and non-state actors.

In 2019 alone, peaceful protests against increases in costs of living and rising inequalities have been violently repressed in Sudan, Zimbabwe, Nicaragua and Venezuela; student protests prevented in Liberia; and demonstrations against flawed judicial processes violently repressed in Cameroon.

States often have a narrow view of development when they regard it as the construction of infrastructure and the exploitation of natural resources. So they target those who express concerns over the lack of community consultation on infrastructural projects or over environmental impact when corporations placed profits over the interests of communities when exploiting natural resources. Governments also fail to make connections between sustainable development and the use of restrictive legislation to undermine the work of civil society in various undemocratic ways.

Ahead of the HLPF, we need to emphasize that there can be no development without human rights. Civil society groups working on different thematic areas make significant contributions to development and the SDGs cannot be fully realised if the onslaught on civil society and human rights defenders continue. Law makers must realize that human rights defenders are not anti-government but rather exist to support and uphold laws that do not violate human rights.

Seven human rights defenders working on issues ranging from economic development, community development, anti-corruption initiatives and the rights of women and girls are currently living under strict bail conditions in Zimbabwe after they were arrested by participating in a capacity building workshop in the Maldives.

Freedom of assembly and association is crucial to the work of all civil society groups including formal and informal associations and enables people from different backgrounds to collaborate.

In light of these restrictions we call on states to;

- Amend, repeal and modify restrictive laws and regulations that target civil society and the freedoms of association and assembly and ensure that these laws are in line with international human rights standards.
- Stop the practice of targeting human rights defenders, community activists and other representatives of civil society, desist from ascribing false labels to them and ensure that like every other citizen, their rights are respected and protected.
- Re-define relations between the state and civil society in relation to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure that civil society is considered an equal partner in the delivery of the Goals and treated as such.
- Ensure that at all levels, human rights is at the center of all development initiatives and outcomes and guarantee peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice and accountable institutions and reduced inequality.

#### **Signatories:**

1. A Common Future
2. Action Foundation Common Initiative Group
3. Action pour le Developpement
4. AgriBiz Home
5. ASSAUVET/NGO
6. Action for Improvement of Food child and Mother (AFICM)
7. Alliance for Community Action
8. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
9. AfriYAN
10. Association of citizens PLANT
11. AL-Shafaa Organisation
12. ANSA-EAP
13. Agency for Peoples Empowerment, Sierra Leone, Limited (APEM SL LTD)
14. Act Mara Diocese – Mugumu Safe House
15. Adolescents Initiatives Support Organization (AISO)
16. ADD International
17. Action Aid
18. Action for Rural Aid Empowerment
19. Actions for Democracy and Local Governance (ADLG)
20. Active Women Foundation
21. Agape Aids Control Program
22. Ahadi Forum Tanzania (AFTA)

23. Arusha Non-Governmental Organisation Network (ANGONET)
24. ARUWE
25. Association for Non-Governmental Organisation Zanzibar (ANGOZA)
26. Association of Rare Blood Donor (ARBD)
27. Balkan Civil Society Development Network
28. Business and Human Rights Tanzania (BHRT)
29. Biharamulo Community FM Radio (BCFM)
30. Biharamulo NGOs Network Forum
31. Biharamulo Originating Social Economic Development Association (BOSEDA)
32. Biharamulo Social Economic Development Association (BISEDEA)
33. BINGOS FORUM
34. Civic Initiatives
35. Centre for Peace and Justice
36. Civil Society Development Foundation
37. COSADER- Collectif des ONG pour la Sécurité Alimentaire et le Développement Rural
38. Community Centre for Integrated Development
39. Consortium of Ethiopian Rights Organizations (CERO)
40. CIVICUS, World Alliance for Citizen Participation
41. Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR)
42. Centre for Community Regeneration and Development (CCREAD-Cameroon)
43. Centre for Financial Inclusion and Sustainable Development (CenFISD)
44. Children's Assurance Program Sierra Leone (CAP-SL)
45. Centre for Social Policy Development
46. Caricuaopropone
47. Center for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
48. Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government, Inc.(CCAGG)
49. CODE-NGO
50. Centre of Youth Dialogue (CYD)
51. Civic and Legal Aid Organization (CILAO)
52. CSYM HUDUMA\*the Christian Spiritual Youth Ministry
53. Collaboration for Development and Humanitarian Action Inc
54. CESOPE
55. CHIFU KIMWELI FOOTBALL CLUB
56. Child Watch
57. Children Dignity Forum
58. Christian Education and Development Organisation (CEDO)
59. Civic and Legal Aid Organisations
60. Community Development Initiatives Support Organisation (COSIDO)
61. Community Focus Tanzania
62. Community for Educators and Legal Assistance
63. Community Support Initiatives-Tanzania
64. Crisis Resolving Centre
65. C-SEMA
66. CWCA

67. Discourage Youths from Encourages Poverty
68. Derecho, Ambiente, y Recursos Naturales
69. David Chanyeghea-New Age Foundation
70. Dawning Hope
71. Dignity Kwanza Community Solutions
72. Door of Hope to Women and Youth in Tanzania
73. DUNGONET (NGO'S NETWORK FOR DODOMA)
74. Economic Empowerment and Human Rights Sierra Leone (EEHRSL)
75. Education and English for You
76. Empower Society, Transform Lives (ESTL)
77. Equality for Growth
78. Fundamental human Rights & Rural Development Association FHRRDA
79. Faidika Aidika Wote Pamoja (FAWOPA)
80. FAWETZ
81. FICOFAWE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT
82. FIDELIS Yunde-Youth Movement for Change
83. Free Mind Foundation
84. Fondation Lucienne SALLA
85. Global Vision
86. GEARS Initiative
87. Gidion Kaino Mandesi Dolased
88. Girls Education Support Initiatives
89. GIYEDO
90. Gospel Communication Network of Tanzania
91. Growth Dimensions Africa
92. Global youth clan Sierra Leone chapter
93. GLOBAL MEDIA FOUNDATION
94. Glow Movement, South Africa
95. Global Vision
96. HURISA
97. HuMENA for Human Rights and Sustainable Development
98. Human rights Center Memorial and OVD-Info
99. HakaConnect.org
100. HAKI CATALYST
101. HAKI ELIMU
102. HAKI MADINI
103. HAKI RASILIMALI
104. HAKI ARDHI
105. Happy Children Tanzania Organisation
106. HILDA S. DADU-PHLI
107. HIMS ARUSHA
108. Human Rights National Association of Educators for World Peace
109. Humanity Aid for Development Organisation
110. HURUMA Organisation

111. Initiative for Good Governance and Transparence in Tanzania (IGT)
112. IHAN (International Humanitarian Activists Network) / JAKI (Jaringan Aktivis Kemanusiaan Internasional)
113. Initiative Africaine Pour le Developpement Durable
114. International Center for Environmental Education and Community Development (ICENECDEV)
115. INTRAC
116. ISDO RWANDA
117. ISRAEL ILUNDE –YPC
118. Just Fair
119. JAMII Media Limited
120. John Seka-Seka and Associates Advocates
121. JUKWAA LA KATIBA TANZANIA
122. JUMA KAPIPI
123. Jumuiya Ya Kuelimisha Athari Za Madawa Ya Kulevya Ukimwi Na Mimba Katika Mdogo (JUKAMKUM)
124. JUMUIYA YA KUELIMISHA ATHARI ZA MADAWA YA KULEVYA UKIMWI NA MIMBA KATIKA UMRI MDOGO (JUKAMKUM)
125. JUMUIYA YA KUENDELEZA UFUGAJI NYUKI NA UHIFADHI MAZINGIRA (JUKUNUM)
126. JUMUIYA YA KULINDA NA KUTETEA HAKI ZA WANAWAKE NA WATOTO MKOANI (JUKUWAM)
127. JUMUIYA YA KUTETEA HAKI ZA WANAWAKE NA WATOTO SHRHIYA YA OLE (JUKUHAWA),
128. JUMUIYA YA MAENDELEO YA ELIMU KWA WATOTO PEMBA (JUMAEWAPE)
129. JUMUIYA YA MAENDELEO YA ELIMU KWA WATOTO PEMBA (JUMAEWAPE),
130. JUMUIYA YA MAENDELEO YA WAVUVI WA KOJANI (KOFDO)
131. JUMUIYA YA MAENDELEO ZIWANI (JUMAJZI)
132. JUMUIYA YA OWEDE
133. JUMUIYA YA TUMAINI JIPYA PEMBA(TUJIPE)
134. JUMUIYA YA TUSISHINDWE DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION PEMBA (TUDOPE)
135. JUMUIYA YA WASAIDIZI WA SHERIA PEMBA (JUWASPE)
136. KARAPATAN
137. Kagera Human Rights Defenders and Legal Aid Support Organisation
138. Kabataang Gabay sa Positibong Pamumuhay (KGPP) Inc.,
139. Kadesh International
140. Khpal Kore Organization
141. KUTAFITI-The Social Science Centre for African Development
142. KARENY MASASI
143. Kigoma Paralegal Aid Centre (KIPACE)
144. Kigoma Ujiji Non-Governmental Organisation Network (KIUNGONET)
145. Kigoma Women Development
146. KIKUNDI CHA USHINDI
147. KIWOHEDE
148. KOK Foundation

149. Lawyers for Human Rights
150. LARETOK-LE-SHERIA NA HAKI ZA BINADAMU NGORONGORO (LASHEHABINGO)
151. Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)
152. Lindi Regional Press Club (LRPC)
153. Lindi Women Paralegal Aid Centre (LIWOPAC)
154. Liwale FARMERS Association (LIFA)
155. Migrant workers Association of Lesotho (MWA-Ls)
156. Monna ka Khomo (Lesotho Herd boys Ass.)
157. My Future Matters
158. Manyara Early Childhood Development Network
159. Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)
160. Media Education Centre
161. Magata Primary Cooperative Society
162. Manyara Regional Civil Society Network (MACSNET)
163. Mapambano Centre for Children
164. MAWAZO DANIEL-NYDT
165. Mbeya Hope for Orphans
166. Mbeya Paralegal Aid Centre (MBEPACE)
167. MBEYA WOMEN
168. MCHOMORO AIDS COMBAT GROUP
169. Media Association for Indigenous and Pastoralist Communities
170. Media Support Tanzania
171. MICHAEL REUBEN NTIBIKEMA-ELIMU MWANGAZA TANZANIA
172. MICHEWENI ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND AIDS CONTROL(MIDECAC)
173. MIKONO YETU CENTRE FOR CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION (MIKONO YETU)
174. Morogoro Paralegal Centre (MPLC)
175. MSICHANA INITIATIVES
176. Mtwara NGOs Network (MTWANGONET)
177. Mtwara Paralegal Centre
178. MTWARA YOUTH ANTI AIDS GROUP
179. MUKEMBA GROUP MAENDELEO
180. MUSSA JUMA-MISA TANZANIA
181. MWANAMKE NA UONGOZI
182. National Council of NGOS (NACONGO)
183. NNATIONAL Union of Mine and Energy Workers of Tanzania (NUMET)
184. NEEMA KITUNDU-FAWETZ
185. NETWO
186. New Family Organisation
187. New Hope Winners Foundation (NHNWF)
188. NGUVUMALI Community Development of Environment
189. NICAS NIBENGO- BASE FOR EDUCATION DISSEMINATION
190. NOMADIC PASTORALIST DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION(NOPADEO)
191. NTABYMA



192. NYAKITONTO YOUTH FOR DEVELOPMENT TANZANIA
193. Nelson Nohashi Ministry
194. New Horizon Global
195. NGO World and Danube
196. ONG Les BA TISSEURS
197. Outreach Social Care Project, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
198. Open Mind Tanzania
199. Organisation for Rural Self-Help Initiatives (ORSHI)
200. Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate
201. Population and Development Society
202. PEN Kenya
203. PAMOJA DAIMA (PADA)
204. Paralegal Primary Justice (PPJ)
205. Peace Relief Organisation (PRO)
206. PEMBA Association for Civil Society Organisation (PASCO)
207. PEMBA EAST ZONE ENVIROMENT ASSOCIATION (PEZEA)
208. PEMBA ISLAND RELIEF ORGANIZATION (PIRO)
209. PEMCO
210. Peoples Development Forum (PDF)
211. Peoples Health Movement Tanzania (PHM)
212. PINGOS FORUM
213. Policy Curiosity Society
214. Poverty Alleviation in Tanga (POVATA)
215. Promotion and Women Development Association (POWDA)
216. PROSPERUS HEALTH LIFE INITIATIVES
217. PWAAT
218. RAFIKI Social Development Organisation
219. REHEMA JOSPHEPH-CENTA
220. Resource Advocacy Initiative (RAI)
221. RIEFP
222. ROWODO
223. RUANGWA Organisation for Poverty Alleviation (ROPA)
224. Rural Woman Development Initiative (RUWODI)
225. Rainbow Pride Foundation
226. Recycle Up!
227. RESEAU DES JEUNES POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT ET LE LEADERSHIP AU TCHAD, Chad
228. RESPECT CAMEROON
229. Salum Mbaruok
230. Sikhula Sonke Early Childhood Development
231. SPEDYA-Africa
232. Street Youth Connection Sierra Leone (SYC-SL)
233. Sujag sansar orgnaition
234. Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO)
235. SADELIN HEALTH CARE TRUST

236. Safe Space for Children and Youth Women Tanzania (SSCYWT)
237. SAHRiNGON
238. SAKALE Development Foundation
239. SAUTI YA HAKI TANZANIA
240. SAUTI YA WANAWAKE UKELEWE
241. Save the Mother and Children of Central Tanzania (SMCCT)
242. SAWABI BIHARAMULO
243. Service Health and Development for People
244. SHALOM OPHARNAGE CARE CENTER
245. SHAMILA MSHANGAMA
246. SHIMAWAMI
247. SHIRIKA LA BINADAMU NANDANGALA
248. SHIVYAWATA
249. SHUKURU PAUL-HRC
250. SOPHIA KOMBA-CAGBV
251. SORF DODOMA
252. Sports Development Aid Lindi
253. Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA)
254. The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy
255. The Maldivian Democracy Network
256. Tai Tanzania
257. Tanzania Agricultural Modernization Association (TAMA)
258. Tanzania Development Trust
259. TEACH
260. The Need Today
261. The Youth Voice Of SA
262. Tim Africa Aid Ghana
263. Transparence\_RD Congo
264. Trio Uganda, United Kingdom
265. TUKELAKANG ENTETE FOUNDATION / YAYASAN TUKELAKANG ENTETE
266. Trag Foundation
267. TAMHA Paralegal Aid
268. TANDAHIMBA Women Association
269. TANGA Paralegal Aid
270. TANGIABLE INITIATIVES FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT TANZANIA
271. Tanzania Association of NGOs (TANGO)
272. Tanzania Centre for Research for Research and Information on Pastoralism (TCRIP)
273. Tanzania Citizen Information Bureau
274. Tanzania Hone Economic Association (TAHEA) BIHARAMULO
275. Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC)
276. Tanzania Legal Knowledge and Aid Centre
277. Tanzania media Woman's Association (TAMWA)
278. Tanzania Media Women's Association
279. Tanzania Network for Legal Providers (TANLAP)

280. Tanzania Network of Women Living with HIV and AIDS (TNW+)
281. TANZANIA Pastoralist Community Forum (TPCF)
282. Tanzania Peace Legal Aid and Justice
283. Tanzania Tobacco Control Forum
284. Tanzania Widows Association (TAWIA)
285. Tanzania Women Empowerment in Action (TAWEA)
286. Tanzania Women Teachers Association
287. Tanzania Youth Potential Association
288. TAWASANET
289. TAWEDO
290. TAWLA
291. TECDEN
292. TEN/MET
293. TGNP MTANDAO
294. The African for Civil Society (TACS)
295. The African Institute for Comparative and International Law (AICIL)
296. The Development for Accountability in Tanzania
297. The Foundation of Human Health and Social Development (HUHESO)
298. The Life Hood Children and Development Society (LICHIDE)
299. The Organisation of Journalists Against Drug Abuse and Crimes in Tanzania (OJADACT)
300. The Voice of the Marginalised Community
301. TNRF
302. Tree of Hope
303. TUNDURU PARALEGAL CENTRE (TUPACE)
304. TUPACE
305. TUSHIRIKI
306. TUWAANDAE WATOTO
307. TYVA
308. Union for Promotion / Protection, Human Rights Defense and the Environment UPDDHE/GL Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
309. UNODC, Canada
310. UMMY NDERIANANGAB-SHIVYAWATA
311. UMOJA WA VIKUNDI VYA UZALISHAJI MALI NA UELIMISHAJI RIKA MAGU (UVUUMA)
312. UMOJA WA WAWEZESHAI KIOO
313. Under the Same Sun (UTSS)
314. UTPC
315. UTTI MWANGA'MBA-CWCA
316. UVINZA NGOS NETWORK (UNON)
317. Volunteer Activists
318. VIJANA ASSEMBLY
319. Vital Projection Limited
320. Voice of the Voiceless

321. Volunteer for Youth in Health and Development (VOYOHEDDE)
322. Victoria Quade, New Zealand
323. Women for Social Progress, Mongolia
324. WAHAMAZA
325. WAJIBU Institute of Accountability
326. WALIO KATIKA MAPAMBANO NA AIDS TANZANIA(WAMATA)
327. WASOMI VOICE FOUNDATION
328. WGNRR AFRICA
329. Widows and Orphaned Development Organisation
330. WILDAF
331. WOFATA
332. WOMEN ACTION TOWARDS ENTRP.DEVELOPMENT
333. WOMEN DIGNITY
334. Women Legal Aid Centre (WLAC)
335. Women Life Foundation
336. Women Wake-Up (WOWAP)
337. Women's Promotion Centre (WPC)
338. Women's Empowerment in Action
339. WOTE INITIATIVES
340. WOTE SAWA YOUTH DOMESTIC WORKERS
341. WOVUCTA
342. Youth Against Aids Poverty
343. Young League Pakistan, Pakistan
344. Youth Africa and Peace Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
345. YOUTH ASSOCIATION OF SIERRA LEONE, Sierra Leone
346. Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana
347. Youth Partnership for Peace and Development, Sierra Leone
348. YUNA
349. ZAFELA
350. ZAHRA SALEHE-ICCAO
351. ZAITUNI NJIVU- ZAINA FOUNDATION
352. Zanzibar Aids Association and Support for Orphans (ZASO)
353. Zanzibar Association for Children Advancement (ZACA)
354. Zanzibar Children Rights Forum
355. Zanzibar Fighting Against Youth Challenges Organisation (ZAFAYCO)
356. Zanzibar Legal Service Centre