



Uppinde Awards
2023

MEET THE LAUREATES & NOMINEES

The Awards



Chanzo Award – Award recognising and appreciating the Human Rights work of young and Upcoming Human Rights Defenders and initiatives who are unafraid to stand up and speak for Human Rights



Utumishi Award – Award honours innovative partnerships in service delivery and engagement within the LGBTIQ+ Rights movement



Shujaa Award – Award presented to individual who has demonstrated immense acts of courage in their protection of the Human Rights of LGBTIQ+ persons



Ubunifu Award – Award presented to a person, organisation, or platform that uses creativity as a site of activism, whether through visual arts, storytelling, podcasting, blogging or other forms of media arts or communication



Nguzo Award – Award recognises funding partners, government agencies/departments, allies, family members, media, LGBTIQ+ individuals, and institutions whose financial, technical, and in-kind support has helped make significant contributions to the health, rights, and well-being of LGBTIQ+ individuals in Kenya



Uwiano Award – Award honours East Africans (either individuals or groups) that have shown extraordinary fortitude and bravery in fighting for and advancing LGBTIQ+ rights at home and across the region.



THE ROAD TO UPINDE AWARDS

ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPINDE AWARDS & OPENING NOMINATIONS

NGLHRC announces the opening of the nomination process on its social media pages with a link to the nomination form.

A person may nominate as many people as they wish as many times as they want. However, this is not a voting process and the number of nominations has no bearing on whether a person is shortlisted or not.

NOMINATIONS CLOSE

The nominations platform is closed after a month of being open

SHORTLISTING & SELECTION OF NOMINEES

NGLHRC staff look through the nominations and carry out a rigorous verification process to produce a shortlist of nominees for each category

NOTIFICATION OF NOMINEES

Emails are sent out to nominees notifying them of their nomination and requesting their presence at the awards

SELECTION OF WINNERS

The Gala Awards Committee made up of five people drawn from past winners, allies, & partners meets on the morning of the awards and selects the winners in each category

UPINDE AWARDS!

The Awards are held and the winners in each category are announced and awarded



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**Laureates
&
Nominees**

Chanzo Award



Tanaka Muren – Award Winner

Tanaka Muren is a dedicated activist for gender diverse rights, focusing on intersex, transgender, and gender non-conforming individuals. As the mental health coordinator at Jinsiangu, Tanaka champions awareness and access to mental health services for gender minorities, providing crucial psychiatric and psychological support. Additionally, as a community paralegal and transgender program-focal person at Jinsiangu, Tanaka is a key liaison between the law, law enforcement, and the gender diverse community.



Maxie Daniel

Maxie Daniel, a Gender Non-Conforming Artist from Kisumu, Kenya, uses diverse mediums to champion marginalized voices. Working at Talanta Africa, Maxie is a paralegal, conversation moderator, filmmaker, and poet, engaging in activism through various art forms. Their work includes the comic book "Kiki," addressing community issues, and award-winning films like "Justice," highlighting LGBTQIA narratives. An advocate for LGBTQIA rights, Maxie intervenes in cases of injustice, fosters community dialogues, and champions protection against threats, embodying a commitment to human rights and social change.

Utumishi Award



The Nature Network Group – Award Winner

The Nature Network Group (TNN) is a pioneering LGBTIQ+ refugee and asylum seeker-led organization in Kenya, established in 2015. TNN focuses on empowering TGNC refugees through transformative activities, innovative family-based therapy, and providing safe spaces. They offer crucial support services and advocate for refugees' rights and dignity, emphasizing resilience and self-determination.



Wacha Health CBO

Watu Center for Health and Advocacy (WACHA CBO) is a leader in human rights advocacy for the LGBTIQ community, dedicated to promoting inclusivity, equality, and understanding. Focused on empowering Gender & Sexual Minorities and youth, WACHA aims to transform societal norms that limit sexual and reproductive health and rights. Their strategy includes education, impactful campaigns, and partnerships to advance gender parity, prevent violence, and uphold informed choices in sexual and reproductive well-being. WACHA's vision emphasizes universal respect, dignity, and the freedom to live authentically.



Moh & Iddah

Maureen and Iddah are a dynamic duo profoundly dedicated to LGBTIQ+ rights movements. Their work transcends documentation, capturing the essence of the LGBTIQ+ struggle through photographs and documentaries. They meticulously chronicle the evolution and triumphs of LGBTIQ+ rights, serving as a cornerstone for preserving LGBTIQ+ history and advocating for equality and human rights. Beyond their art, they foster stakeholder cooperation, positioning themselves as key contributors to broader social justice initiatives.

Ubunifu Award



HeART Out Kenya – Award Winner

HeART Out Kenya, an Eldoret-based mental health organisation, focuses on healing justice for Queer activists and feminists. Founded in 2021 by Billy Hani and Matana Sambai, it employs art therapy to foster individual and collective healing, emphasising joy and rest for community resilience. The organisation advocates for self-care and collective wellness through its art therapy programs, with a commitment to kindness, joy, and a feminist approach, while also exploring the impact of climate change on mental health.



Ngamani

Ngamani, embodying grandeur and splendor, is a collective that crafts wearable art using natural materials and traditional craftsmanship. With a focus on sustainable sourcing and intentional design, their creations exude flamboyance and regality. Challenging societal norms of conformity, Ngamani encourages individual freedom and expression, aiming to inspire others to shine brightly in their own unique ways. It's a space where magnificence is celebrated and personal radiance is embraced.



Wanjiku Talks Queer

Wanjiku Talks Queer is a youth-led organisation that advocates for the rights of Kenya's LGBTQ+ people by raising awareness, addressing challenges faced by the community and educating the community on the importance of diversity. In Kenya, the name Wanjiku symbolises a citizen in the context of national politics. The name represents the ordinary person, "Mwananchi", from which they draw inspiration.

Nguzo Award

Kamanda Muceke – Award Winner



Kamanda Muceke, Head of Complaints and Investigations at the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, boasts over 20 years in human rights, social justice, and governance. A key figure in Kenya's pro-democracy movement in the 1990s, he contributed to the 2010 Constitution. Kamanda has exposed human rights violations, including enforced disappearances and torture, and defended marginalised groups like LGBTIQ+ individuals. Known for his advocacy and commitment to accountability, he also serves on the Annual Human Rights Defenders Awards Jury.



Coast Sex Workers Alliance

Coast Sex Workers Alliance (COSWA-Kenya) is a unique organisation advocating for sex workers' rights on the Kenyan Coast. For over a decade, led by female sex workers, COSWA-Kenya has been empowering women through peer support, legal aid, and advocacy, focusing on human rights, health access, and dignity. They work towards decriminalising sex work, reducing stigma, discrimination, and violence, and have notably increased access to HIV services and community acceptance, embodying their vision of a just and inclusive society.



Two Grapes & Friends

Two Grapes and Friends is a warm and relaxing space in Kilimani, where friends, families or colleagues can get together, relax and share good times over a glass of wine and good food. It is a vibrant spot reflecting conviviality and joie de vivre, with a passion for good products and top-end service. They toast to life. They are more than a wine bar. They are an experience.



Wallace Nderu

Wallace Nderu, a Queer Advocate of the High Court of Kenya and human rights lawyer, specialises in advancing the rights of queer minorities. With extensive experience in civil society, Wallace has contributed to various organisations, including ICJ Kenya and the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria. Currently, he serves as a Programme Officer at ICJ Kenya, focusing on SOGI/ESC issues, and was the 2019 LGBTQ+ Dutch Scholar at the University of Pretoria.

Uwiano Award



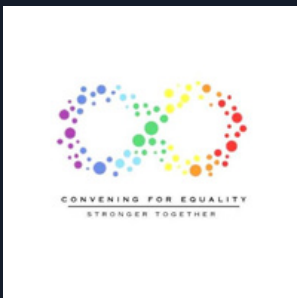
Feminist Republic – Award Winner

The Feminist Republik, launched by Urgent Action Fund-Africa in 2019, supports African women, transgender, and gender-nonconforming human rights defenders. It promotes mobilisation, healing, and well-being to ensure the sustainability of activism. The initiative responds to African feminists' needs by integrating healing justice into their collective struggles and emphasises holistic security and self-care in personal and organizational contexts.

HOLAAfrica!



HOLAAfrica! is a Pan-African digital platform enhancing understanding of sex and sexuality through storytelling, edutainment, and community building. It offers a fun approach to sexual education via podcasts, social media, books, and graphics, covering topics from gender and sexual identity to safe sex and pleasure. HOLAAfrica! aims to make learning about sex easy, unashamed, and comprehensive, addressing everything from lube and masturbation to kink and non-monogamy.



Convening For Equality

Established in February 2023, the Convening for Equality (CFE), led by Ugandan leaders Frank Mugisha, Clare Byarugaba, and Richard Lusimbo, unites civil society and individuals globally to combat laws and policies that harm marginalised groups, focusing on sexual and reproductive rights, LGBTIQ issues, and women's autonomy. The group's formation was spurred by Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2023. CFE's innovative strategies have mitigated the law's impact, countering the challenges in a shrinking civil society space under autocratic rule.

Shujaa Award



Edwin Chiloba

Kenyan fashion model and LGBTQ+ activist Edwin Chiloba championed LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya. Their impactful advocacy in fashion raised awareness about LGBTQ+ struggles in Africa. Chiloba's tragic murder in early 2023 sparked global outcry against LGBTQ+ discrimination and violence. Their enduring legacy inspires continued efforts for LGBTQ+ equality in Kenya and beyond.

Honourable Mention



Cleopatra Kambugu

Cleopatra Kambugu is the Director of Programs, at UHAI, an indigenous activist fund resourcing the rights of sex workers sexual and gender minorities in Eastern Africa; protagonist for the star of the Netflix feature documentary *The Pearl of Africa*; and the first trans woman in Uganda to obtain a gender-affirming national ID.



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