

NEWSUPDATE

January - February 2025 Newsletter



Message from the Executive Director

We all appreciate uplifting news, and I firmly believe that this is the kind of energy we need during these challenging times, as many of our hard-earned achievements are being undone.

That said, I want to make clear our commitment to reclaiming rights and rebuilding lives. Our resolve is unwavering, and our vision has never been clearer. If ever there was a moment to stand firm in our mission, it is now!

This newsletter reflects that determination. As we step into 2025, we shall navigate the obstacles with hope, unity and focus.

Before you dive in, let's reflect on this ruling for a moment: Kisumu Petition E008 of 2023. [The High Court's dismissal of our case on access to essential HIV medicines](#), came as a big blow to the community of people living with HIV and indeed to humanity. This ruling underscores the persistent barriers to healthcare justice. It has enhanced mine and our collective resolution to hold duty bearers accountable and keep advocating for uninterrupted access to life-saving treatment.

Share your thoughts on this case and how we can advance a better present and future for the most vulnerable among us.

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Shattering Stigma, Dismantling Discrimination: Our commitment to the HIV, TB Response

Harmful narratives and persistent misinformation about HIV continue to fuel stigma and discrimination, affecting not only people living with HIV (PLHIV) but also the broader community. Stigma remains a significant barrier in healthcare, workplaces, educational institutions, and social settings, preventing PLHIV from accessing essential services and fully participating in society. Recognizing that HIV impacts both those infected and affected, there is an urgent need for collective action to dismantle stigma and uphold the dignity and rights of PLHIV.

KELIN continues to play a pivotal role in [eliminating HIV stigma by championing rights-based interventions, fostering inclusivity, and advocating for policy reforms.](#) As part of Kenya's broader commitment, a multi-sectoral approach is being implemented to ensure sustainable change.



Reflections on Access to Essential Medicines

The government and stakeholders need to act with integrity and prioritize public health. Millions of lives depend on sustained access to lifesaving treatment, and without accountability, gaps in funding, mismanagement, and weak policy responses could jeopardize progress made in combating HIV and TB.

Here are reflections from Duke Otieno on the [need to protect access to essential medicines.](#)



The Right to Food: A Legal Imperative Under Threat

Did you ever imagine a time when access to food would become a legal issue? That time is now. Kenya's Constitution firmly upholds every individual's right to be free from hunger and to access sufficient, high-quality food. However, emerging concerns and systemic challenges are putting this fundamental right at risk.

At KELIN, we are working with partners to uphold and advance the right to food. Our efforts on promoting healthy diets have led us to take part in the first litigation symposium on this issue, where we focused on the [intersection of corporate accountability, sustainability claims, and the right to safe and nutritious food](#).

Together with the African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC) and with support from the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), we convened civil society organizations (CSOs) in Nairobi to [advocate for stronger policies that ensure all Kenyans have access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food](#).

KELIN joined advocates & lawyers from across the globe at the [Shaping Policies for Healthy Diets and Physical forum](#) in Kampala, sharing how human rights-based advocacy drives

policy change on healthy diets & physical activity in Kenya.

In collaboration with key partners, KELIN is at the forefront of [advocating for stronger policies to protect children from the harmful effects of ultra-processed foods](#) (UPFs). We are driving conversations on stricter food regulations to combat the rising cases of non-communicable diseases among children.





No One Left Behind: Rights, Choice, Dignity

SRHR is not just about access to services, it is about dignity, choice, and the power to live without fear or shame. For many women and girls, the ability to make decisions about their own bodies remains a privilege rather than a right. Behind every statistic is a girl forced into motherhood, a woman denied care, or a young person navigating stigma alone. SRHR is about justice, it is about ensuring no one is left behind and every person regardless of age, gender, or circumstance lives a life of health, autonomy, and hope.

Yet, achieving this vision requires more than just commitment, it demands action. The reality on the ground reveals persistent barriers, limited health financing, restrictive policies, and systemic inequalities that continue to deny millions their fundamental rights. Recognizing this, [KELIN joined 23 other civil society organizations at Kenya's Universal Periodic Review \(UPR\) pre-session](#) in Geneva to amplify the call for stronger health rights. Together, they advocated for key reforms.

Protected, Preserved, Promoted: Rights need to be respected, protected and upheld

Respecting health rights is both a legal duty and a moral imperative. Courts play a vital role in protecting these rights, holding governments accountable for ensuring equitable healthcare access. However, duty bearers, policymakers, healthcare institutions, and governments must proactively uphold these rights through inclusive policies and actions. A just society is measured by its commitment to protect the most vulnerable and promote their human rights.

Efforts to safeguard reproductive rights are ongoing as KELIN and partners [provide expert opinions in Civil Appeal No. E030 of 2022](#) on access to safe and legal abortion. This reinforces that rights-based healthcare is essential for women's dignity and well-being.

We await the court's decision on the National Reproductive Health Policy case on 4th July

2025. The decision will be pivotal for SRHR and the future of reproductive healthcare in Kenya. Read more about the case [here](#).

Stay updated on key developments in strategic litigation, check out our latest [litigation blast](#) for insights and progress updates from our litigation desk.





Rooted in Justice: Advocating for women's right to own property

A woman's right to own land is more than just a legal principle, it is the foundation of her security, dignity, and future. True justice is not just about laws on paper but about ensuring that every woman, regardless of her status can stand on her own land with pride, knowing it is hers to cultivate, to build upon, and to pass down.

Recognizing the need for change, KELIN's training in Siaya is shifting these norms by empowering men to champion women's land ownership. When men become allies in the fight for equity, communities grow stronger, families thrive, and justice moves from theory to practice.

KELIN is fostering inclusion to ensure equitable access and ownership for all, ensuring that every woman has the opportunity to claim her rightful place in shaping her future because women's voices matter too.

The role of communication in shifting norms and driving justice can never be overstated. Stories shape perceptions, challenge biases, and inspire action. Recognizing this, KELIN is equipping community messengers in Siaya with the tools and knowledge to advocate for women's land and property rights.





“It is owed to us” - Accountability in Healthcare Governance

Good governance is essential to ensuring that health policies, resources, and services effectively meet the needs of all people, especially marginalized communities. When governments, policymakers, and institutions uphold transparency and responsiveness, they build public trust, prevent mismanagement, and safeguard the right to health.

Kenyan communities and civil society demand accountability in health governance, access to quality care, and protection of rights. A just healthcare system is non-negotiable.

**Thank you for your
continued support and
trust in our work.**

As we navigate the year ahead, we remain steadfast in our commitment to advancing #Justice2Health.

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