



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

A NEW JOURNEY

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# ABBREVIATION & ACRONYMS

**CAJ**

Commission on Administration of Justice  
(The Ombudsman)

**CBO**

Community-Based Organization

**CFF**

Civic Freedoms Forum

**CFM**

Civic Freedom Monitor

**CIDP**

County Integrated Development Plan

**CoG**

Council of Governors

**CoRP**

Community-based Oversight Resource  
Person

**CSO**

Civil Society Organization

**CSPP**

Civic Space Protection Platform

**IPOA**

Independent Police Oversight Authority

**KLRC**

Kenya Law Reform Commission

**KNCHR**

Kenya National Commission on Human  
Rights

**LDO**

Local Development Organization

**MACSON**

Makueni Civil Society Organizations Network

**MCCN**

Machakos County CSO Network

**MoU**

Memorandum of Understanding

**NPO**

Not - for - Profit Organization

**NGO**

Non – Governmental Organization

**PBO**

Public Benefit Organization

**PEN**

Partnerships 4 Empowerment & Networking  
in Kenya

**PMDC**

PEN Management and Development  
Consultants

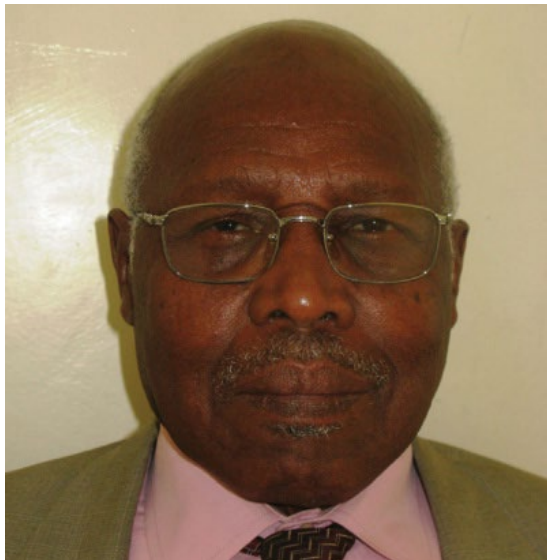
**SEKEB**

South Eastern Kenya Economic Block

**USAID**

United States Agency for International  
Development

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD CHAIR'S WORD



**Dr. Samson Muttai**  
Chairman, Board of Directors

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Sign



**Chris Mbiti,**  
Executive Director

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Sign

In the year 2022, Kenya recorded a political leadership transition, polarized politics, and hard economic times characterized by the high cost of living and unemployment. Kenya had its third general election under the 2010 Constitutional dispensation. The election saw a transition in presidential regimes with the then sitting president serving his final term in office. At the county level, several governors who were serving their second terms in office were also not eligible to contest for the same position as per constitutional limits. Conversations about the representation of women, youth, and persons with disability in Kenya's political landscape also continued to dominate conversations in 2022.

The general elections were plagued by very high levels of information disorder, instances of political intolerance, doubts about the impartiality and preparedness of the electoral management body and other actors, and various issues surrounding the candidates' integrity. The information disorder was a build-up of the previous electoral cycles and the Covid-19 pandemic. The increased access to social media platforms, the lack of capacity or interest of the platform owners to moderate the contents, and the government's incapacity to rein in those who spread misinformation and disinformation and those who spread hate messages online worsened the already grim situation. The abuse of human rights by the police during the electioneering period also put a plight on the progress made in Kenya regarding respect of human rights and policing reforms.

Failing rains, poor harvest, job losses, unfavorable business environment, famine and hunger in the Horn of Africa, and other global and regional economic factors continued to increase the burden of economic hardships on Kenyans. This continued to worsen inequality in Kenya, with those in urban informal settlements, the elderly, and

other vulnerable groups being most affected. The economic recovery in the post-covid period was unpredictable and slow.

The civil society in Kenya did not escape the happenings of the year. The sector continued to be affected by the reduced funding inflow that negatively impacted their programming. The sector's inability to proactively respond to emerging issues such as economic downturn, information disorder, and political intolerance among other societal resilience needs weakened the sector's impact and influence. Miscalculations, civil society leaders' involvement in partisan politics, and the religionization of politics in Kenya further pushed civil society toward the periphery of governance.

To sustain the push for an enabling civic and democratic space, the protection of the most vulnerable within our communities, and holding the government accountable at all levels, civil society must quickly reorganize and refocus attention on its core mandate. PEN, together with her partners, will continue to play the role of ensuring there exists an effective civil society, an increase in civic engagement and participation in public affairs, and the building of resilient communities.

To position PEN as a leader and strategic partner in governance in Kenya, we redefined our identity by refining our acronym – PEN – to mean “Partnerships 4 Empowerment & Networking”. Our strategic focus areas are on Effective and Sustainable Citizens Organizations and Public Institutions, Citizen Participation and Engagement in Public Affairs, and Building Resilient Communities.

Our brand and strategic focus areas will guide and position our interventions in the coming years as we seek “A Kenyan Society with Strong Sustainable Institutions that enhance equity and dignity of citizens”.

PEN will continue partnering with its 4 main constituents; communities/citizens, civil society players, the government, and the private sector.

Finally, we take this opportunity to thank all our partners who have walked with us during the year despite the many challenges. We look forward to your support in the coming years as we endeavor to reach out to more communities and their institutions in Kenya.



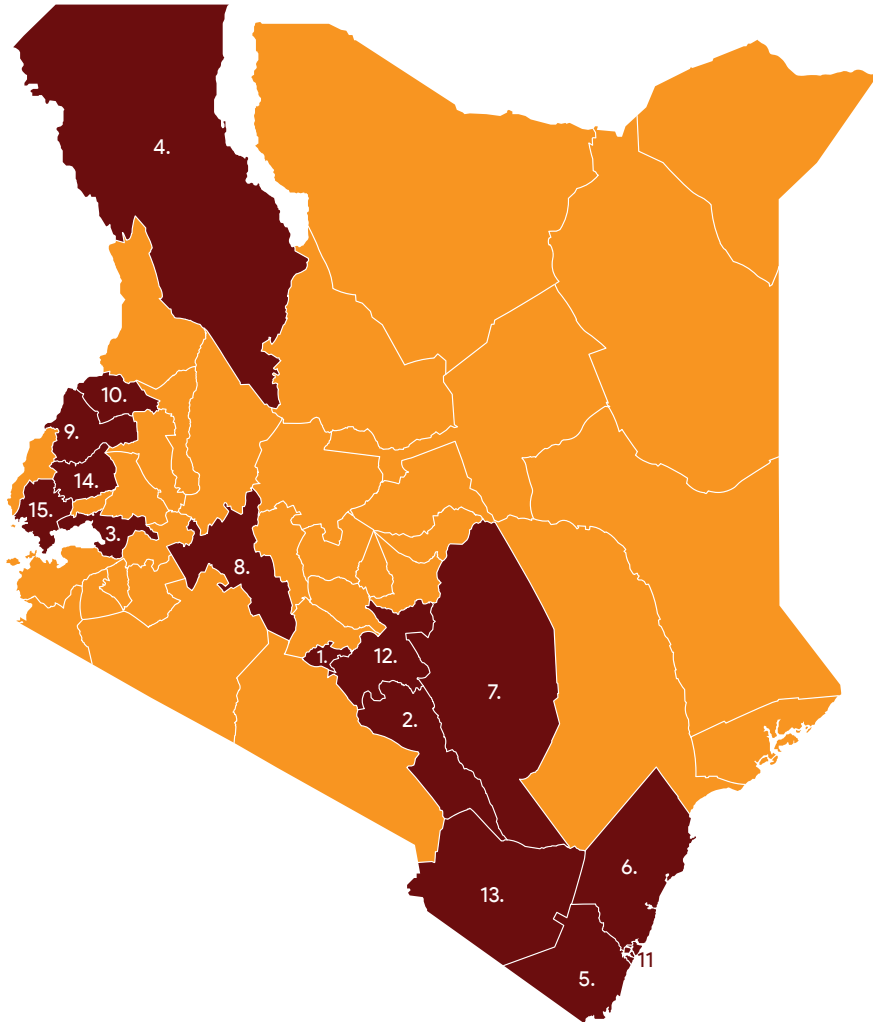
# ACTIVITIES OF 2022



# COUNTIES WHERE PEN INTERVENTION REACHED

**KEY:**

- 1. Nairobi
- 2. Makueni
- 3. Kisumu
- 4. Turkana
- 5. Kwale
- 6. Kilifi
- 7. Kitui
- 8. Nakuru
- 9. Bungoma
- 10. Trans Nzoia
- 11. Mombasa
- 12. Machakos
- 13. Taita Taveta
- 14. Kakamega
- 15. Siaya



## 2022 GENERAL ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE

Male	508	<div style="width: 56%;"></div> 56%
Female	399	<div style="width: 44%;"></div> 44%
Youth	416	<div style="width: 46%;"></div> 46%
PwD	22	<div style="width: 2%;"></div> 2%
Government Representatives	18	<div style="width: 2%;"></div> 2%
Private sector players	48	<div style="width: 5%;"></div> 5%

# INTRODUCTION TO PEN



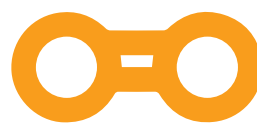
Partnerships 4 Empowerment & Networking (PEN) is a Kenyan Non – Governmental Organization (NGO) officially registered in December 2001 as Poverty Eradication Network. PEN believes that a strong civil society sector is fundamental to the development of any country and its ability to have a sustainable impact on poverty. PEN was established to contribute towards the eradication of absolute poverty in East Africa, through building and strengthening the institutional capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) and other not-for-profit organizations and public institutions.

PEN recognizes that to support communities to be responsible for their development, CSOs must deliver impact and ensure their long-term viability. Strong and sustainable civil society groups require not only highly motivated, committed, and competent leadership, but also good governance, strong management, clear strategy, successful fundraising, demonstrated results, public profile, and effective policies, procedures, and organizational systems. CSOs therefore need affordable, appropriate, competent,

and effective capacity-building inputs and technical assistance, if they are to build upon their capacity and strong commitment to their causes.

PEN works with four main stakeholders: citizens, citizens organizations (CBOs, CSOs, etc.), the public sector, and the private sector, to enhance coordination and networking with the key aim of making citizens be at the center of all development processes. PEN currently has built partnerships with several organizations and movements across the country (both at national and county levels) and continues to partner with county government departments in selected counties.

## Our Vision:



A Kenyan Society with Strong Sustainable Institutions that enhance equity and dignity of citizens.



## Our Mission:



To enhance institutional capacity and coordination for effective service delivery and citizen transformation through institutional capacity strengthening, technical assistance, and coordination of partnerships.

## Our Core Values:



1. Respect for human rights, and equity
2. Respect for the innate potential, and ability of all people to design their destiny
3. Active participation and engagement
4. Transparency and accountability

## Our Approaches:



1. Capacity building and technical assistance
2. Community sensitization and mobilization
3. Building linkages among stakeholders
4. Movements, networks, and coalitions building
5. Research and Policy Advocacy

## Our Implementing Partners:



- Communities
- Civil Society Organisations (CBOs, NGOs, FBOs)
- Government and Public institutions
- Private Sector



# PROGRAM FOCUS



## 1. Effective and Sustainable Citizens Organizations & Public Institutions



Citizen organizations and public institutions are at the core of facilitating development at all levels, their effectiveness and sustainability are directly related to their ability to offer services or to create the demand – side of service delivery, accountability, and transparency. PEN will develop and deliver programs that ensure these organizations and institutions are effective and sustainable.

**Strategic Goal:** To empower both citizens and public organizations for sustainability, effective partnerships, and networking.

Under this strategic goal, the key interventions will include;



Research and Analysis on the effectiveness and sustainability of citizen organizations and public institutions among others to be identified issues.



Strengthening Collaborations and Networks among CSOs, the private sector, and the government.



Capacity Building and Technical Assistance.

## 2. Citizen Participation and Engagement in Public Affairs



Citizens are at the core of development and their participation and engagement in public affairs accord them an opportunity to take charge of their development. PEN will develop and deliver programs that enable citizens to engage with the relevant civic bodies and carry out social justice work that enhances their dignity.

**Strategic Goal:** To promote effective citizen participation and policy influencing social justice and sustainable development of communities.

**Under this strategic goal, the key interventions will include;**



Citizen sensitization to build on their knowledge and skills to identify and respond to various issues that affect them.



Citizen mobilization to demand accountability from duty bearers and other institutions.



Civic and political education among the Kenyan citizenry to ensure that they can make informed decisions at the ballot and beyond.



Promote and ease access to information to enable citizens to make informed decisions and to effectively participate in public affairs.

Communities face threats and vulnerabilities occasioned by challenges of unpredictable climate and environmental degradation, food insecurity, political instability, lack of social cohesion, and poor community information flow. For these communities to stay resilient in the face of the above vulnerabilities, PEN will co-design interventions targeting the communities, their institutions, and the government's adaptive capacity to respond to the shocks.

**Strategic goal:** To promote innovative and sustainable technologies and interventions that ensure that communities become more resilient to threats and vulnerabilities.

**Under this strategic goal, the key interventions will include;**



Promoting the adoption of efficient technologies that can be used across various sectors such as agriculture and water among others.



Promoting value addition and market chains among producers in the agricultural sector and cottage industries.



Promoting and developing Disaster Preparedness and Early Warning Systems will ensure that communities can better prepare, mitigate and rebuild after disasters.



Enhancing mitigation measures on climate change and environmental degradation.



Promoting collective community actions that mitigate the effects of disasters that befall communities.

### 3. Building Resilient Communities





Promoting policies that strengthen benefit-sharing between communities, the private sector, and the government.



Strengthening Institutional Leadership through revamping the Board of Directors and succession planning for the management.



Adopting technology as a way of improving PEN's efficiency and effectiveness.



Building PEN's Research, Knowledge Management, and Communication capacity to ensure it becomes a learning organization.

## 4. Building Institutional Capacity of PEN



PEN will deliberately focus on its fundamental organizational building blocks like investing in people, systems, tools, and processes while leveraging strategic partnerships to enhance its effectiveness in strengthening community voices and agency in empowered communities.

**Strategic goal:** To strengthen and enhance PEN's sustainability and ability to deliver on its development mandate more effectively and efficiently.

**Under this strategic goal, the key interventions will include:**



Improving its staffing numbers, skills, and compensation to the current market rates.



Increasing its resourcing through expanded fundraising, collaboration, endowment, and other forms of income-generating activities.



# ACHIEVEMENTS



## 1. Effective and Sustainable Citizens Organizations and Public Institutions



PEN in collaboration with Civic Freedoms Forum (CFF) and Social Justice Centers Working Group held Public Awareness Forums on the Community Groups Registration Bill of 2021 in the counties of Taita Taveta, Mombasa, Nakuru, Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia, Bungoma, Kakamega and Kisumu. This included advocacy around the registration of CBOs. These sessions brought together 161 CBO leaders, 91 of whom were male, 70 female, 88 youth, and 4 Persons with Disabilities.

*“These sessions led to increased awareness*

*of the proposed Bill, now the Community Groups Registration Act, 2022, with the community-based organizations (CBOs) who are the main targets of this law. The sessions created an opportunity for CBOs to identify advocacy opportunities surrounding the Bill, which is now an Act of Parliament.”*  
Collins Kodhek, Convenor – Western Social Justice Centres Working Group.

Makueni County CSO Network (MACSON) participated in the 4th Medium term plan (2023-2027) of Kenya’s Vision 2030. The Network shared ideas on the Plan aimed at attaining Vision 2030 and inputted the South Eastern Kenya Economic Block (SEKEB) Blueprint (2022-2032) that highlights the investment plan that is building upon the Governments Big 4 Agenda and Vision 2030 within the lower Eastern Region. Key among their recommendations was the need for SEKEB to enhance collaborations and synergy among the member counties.

PEN signed a hosting Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Civic Freedoms Forum (CFF) and supported CFF’s

development of its Strategic Plan (2023 – 2028) and its resource mobilization plan. CFF in partnership with PEN convened an Advocacy Action Review and Planning meeting with the Civic Space Protection Platform (CSPP) members based on earlier identified advocacy priorities for 2022-2024 and identified key priority policy areas as well as strategies for engagement with key policy actors to guide advocacy actions in 2023.

PEN launched the Hype Vs Nuance: Civil Society and Technology report that explored how the civil society sector used technology to translate its impact in the wake of the Covid – 19 Pandemic. This report found that CSOs minimally used technology before the pandemic to translate its impact. However, the pandemic necessitated a widespread increase in the infusion of technology in impact translation and daily programmatic and administrative functions.

## 2. Citizen Participation and Engagement in Public Affairs



CFF in partnership with PEN trained 34 (16 female, 18 male, and 15 who were youth) civil society leaders on civic freedoms monitoring. The leaders were equipped with knowledge of civic space monitoring on violations against civic freedoms and were engaged as Civic Freedoms Monitors (CFMs) between April and November 2022 to monitor civic freedoms violations or enhancement before, during, and after the 2022 General Elections.

From the monitoring activities, it was noted that during the electioneering period, civic freedoms were heavily influenced by the political processes and all other electoral actors. These civic freedoms issues are domiciled on a dedicated platform - <https://cff.or.ke/monitor-platform/>

In partnership with the Institute of Public Finance Kenya (IPFK), 87 Machakos County CSOs Network (MCCN) and MACSON members were trained on the County Budgeting process to broaden the number and effectiveness of Community-based Oversight Resource Persons (CORPs) within the County, and to deepen civic education and advocacy towards effective service delivery. Under this same County process, MCCN and MACSON members and CORPs participated in the stakeholder consultative meetings, making inputs during the 2022 – 2023 financial year budgeting cycle.

MCCN and MACSON engaged County level political aspirants during the campaign period in debates that were aimed at holding them to account if elected and promoting credible and issue-based elections. The aspirants signed commitment charters which are to be used to hold them to account once they assume office to strive towards better service delivery.

Under the coordination of CFF, PEN, CFF members, and other partners convened the First Annual Civic Space Protection Summit in July 2022 to take stock of the state of civic freedoms in Kenya in the run-up to the General Elections. During the Summit, various government bodies including IPOA, CAJ, Council of Governors (CoG), NGO Coordination Board, and Kenya National Commission of Human Rights (KNCHR) committed to effectively play their part in promoting, protecting, and upholding civic freedoms in Kenya and encouraged the civil

society to partner with them in this endeavor.

96 leaders drawn from national and international NGOs, community-based organizations; representatives of presidential aspirants, various government agencies, and Diplomatic missions among other civic space actors, both from the national and county level participated.

County CSO Networks in Machakos and Makeni initiated strategies and positioning to engage in the development of the third-generation County Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) as well as to engage the newly installed County Governments. These strategies include engaging the County Budget and Economic Planning Departments on modalities of bringing in CSOs with a budget and other technical expertise in the various sectors to be involved in coming out with the document. Public participation in the entire process has also been a key aspect driven by the Networks in efforts of achieving citizen centered county plans and budgets.

MCCN successfully petitioned the County Government of Machakos who restored the Youth Centre premises to its original use and thus relocated the County Public Service Board Offices to a different site.

PEN in partnership with CFF held County Awareness Forums on Civic Space in Six counties of Turkana, Makeni, Mombasa, Isiolo, Nakuru, and Kisumu. These forums were aimed at sensitizing the local CSO Networks and identifying emerging civic space issues at the county level. The meeting also involved the leadership of various Local Development Organizations (LDOs), an initiative of USAID aimed at consolidating the voices of CSOs, the Private Sector, and the Government at the county level under a single umbrella body per county.

### 3. Building Resilient Communities



The Mutulani Community in Makeni County has continued to reap the benefits of the Integrated Community Water Project implemented by PEN in partnership with the Mutulani Administration Welfare Association (MAWE) CBO with support from the Global Giving funds. The water supply has been adequate and continuous despite the prolonged drought that has not been experienced for over a decade. Mutulani Secondary School, Mutulani Primary School children, and Mutulani Dispensary are the major beneficiaries of this water.

*“At the height of the drought experienced in 2022, the community members near the local market were also able to use the water after all the water sources in the area went dry. Parents/guardians of Mutulani primary school with dire need of water especially the old and Persons with Disabilities were also allowed to draw water from the school”, Joseph Mbithi – Mutulani Water Project Management Committee Chairperson.*

The dispensary recorded a decline in waterborne diseases among the students and other benefits that the slightly salty water from the borehole gives to the locals. However, there was a notable increase in gastrointestinal diseases due to the famine experienced thus the need for more interventions to guarantee food security.

*“Other than the general hospital use of water, it has also supported the survival of our trees and flowers in the Mutulani Dispensary compound that initially had almost zero survival rate. This is a boost to environmental conservation which was part of the project’s objective”, Faith Mutiso – the Nurse in Charge, Mutulani Dispensary.*

MCCN participated in the development of the Machakos County Drought Mitigation Plan after the County was classified among the 30 Counties worst hit by the current drought. The plan was presented to the National government for the distribution of relief food to Machakos people at Ward levels among other essentials like Sanitary towels to school-going girls.



#### 4. Building Institutional Capacity of PEN



As discussed on the front pages, PEN launched its Strategic Plan from 2022 to 2026. This Plan will guide our approaches, interventions, and relations with all development stakeholders, locally, nationally, regionally, and at the global levels.

KRA officials conducted verification of PEN projects in Makueni County, a process expected to lead to the renewal of PEN’s Tax Exemption Certificate.

In terms of internal capacity strengthening,

PEN staff attended various pieces of training and fellowships on Data Protection, Socio-economic Rights, Internet Governance, Digital Rights Advocacy, Monitoring and Evaluation, Tax Compliance, and the Effectiveness of Civil Society in Development.







## CHALLENGES

Organizational funding continued to be a challenge to the organization as the available resources do not meet the demand created by our target beneficiaries. PEN continues to fundraise both individually and within various consortia.

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## LESSONS LEARNT

An empowered CSO Network and CSOs are a catalyst to sustainable development through advocating for the effective delivery of services and through engaging the government towards safeguarding public resources. This has been evident in the reports of social accountability exercises done at the Ward level by various Network representatives which have brought about a shift from conducting County affairs against the Constitution of Kenya and the County

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Government Act, of 2012. County CSO consortia like the Makueni CSO Network can push for change by engaging the county government, especially on access to information and public participation to enhance improved service delivery. This was evident through the engagement of the County Government through dialogues on the gaps realized during the formation of the Local Development Organization which could threaten inclusion in the entire process. The aptness of the Network made the government realize the oversight role played by the PBOs within the County.

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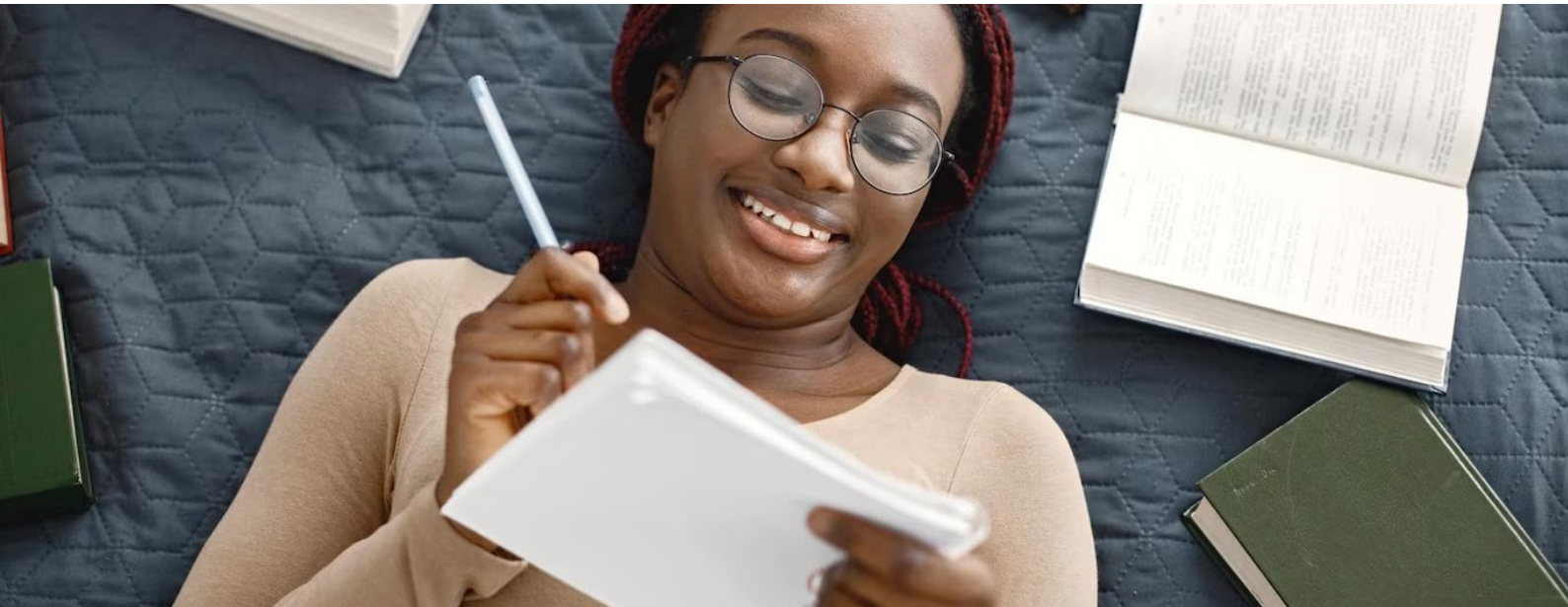
Community Resource Persons have played a critical role in advocating for the effective utilization of public resources and acting as a link in information provision between the government and other development actors to the citizens. This approach has worked beyond the project timelines.

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The best way to maximize impact is by working closely with not only local CSOs but with national-level CSOs and other development partners. In 2022, the International Budget Partnership (IBP) and the Institute of Public Finance Kenya (IPFK) have trained CORPs and CSO Network members in Machakos and Makueni counties as Budget Facilitators.

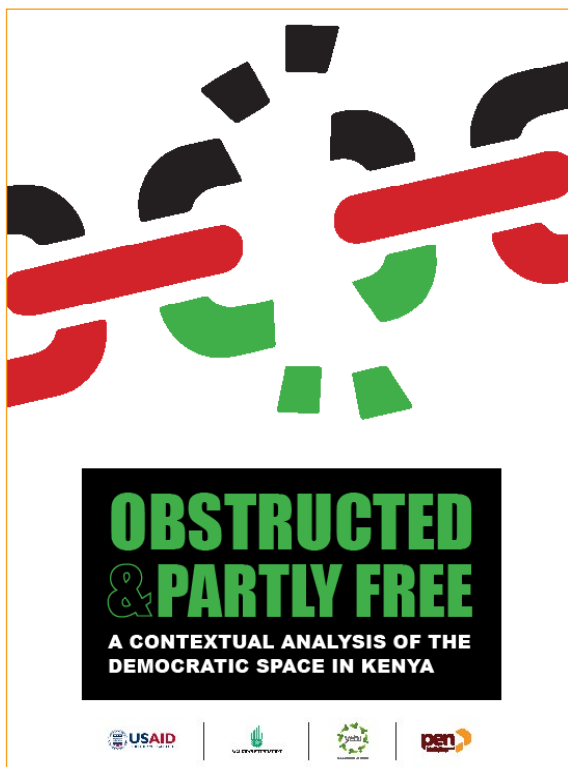
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# KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS FOR 2022

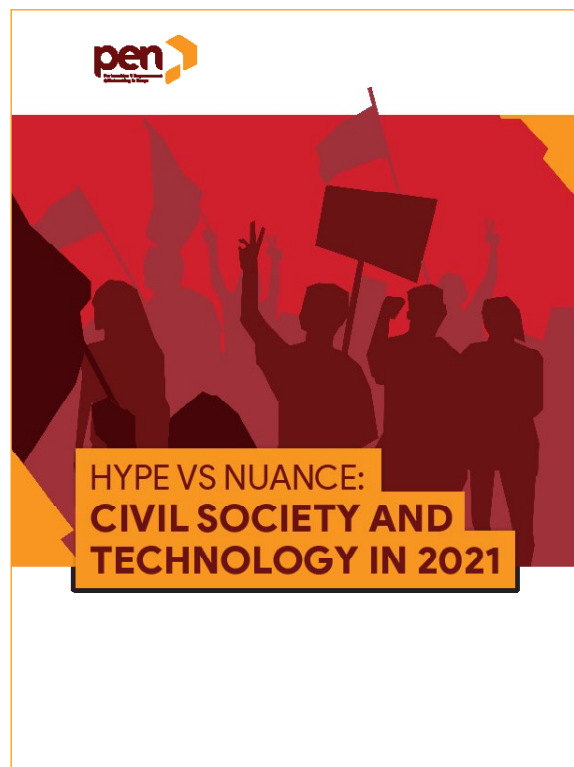


In 2022, PEN was able to develop the knowledge products below. These and other documents can be accessed on our website – <https://penkenya.org/knowledge-hub/>

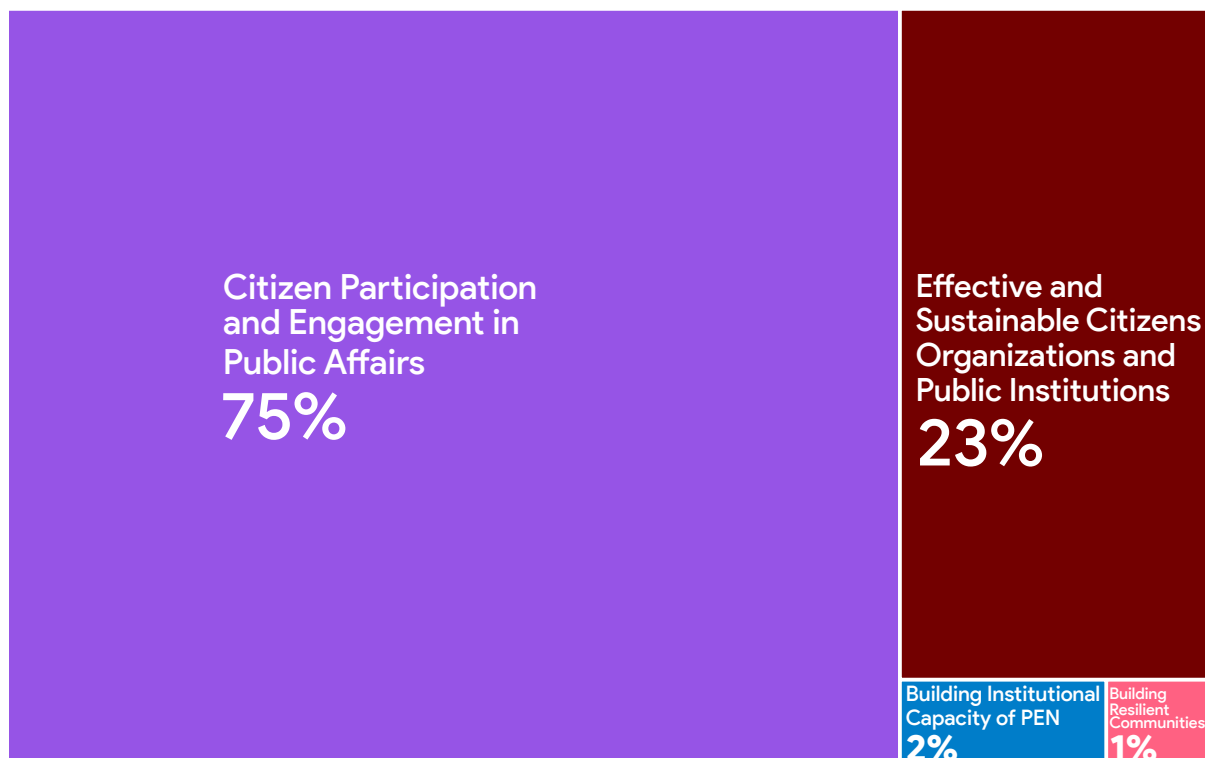
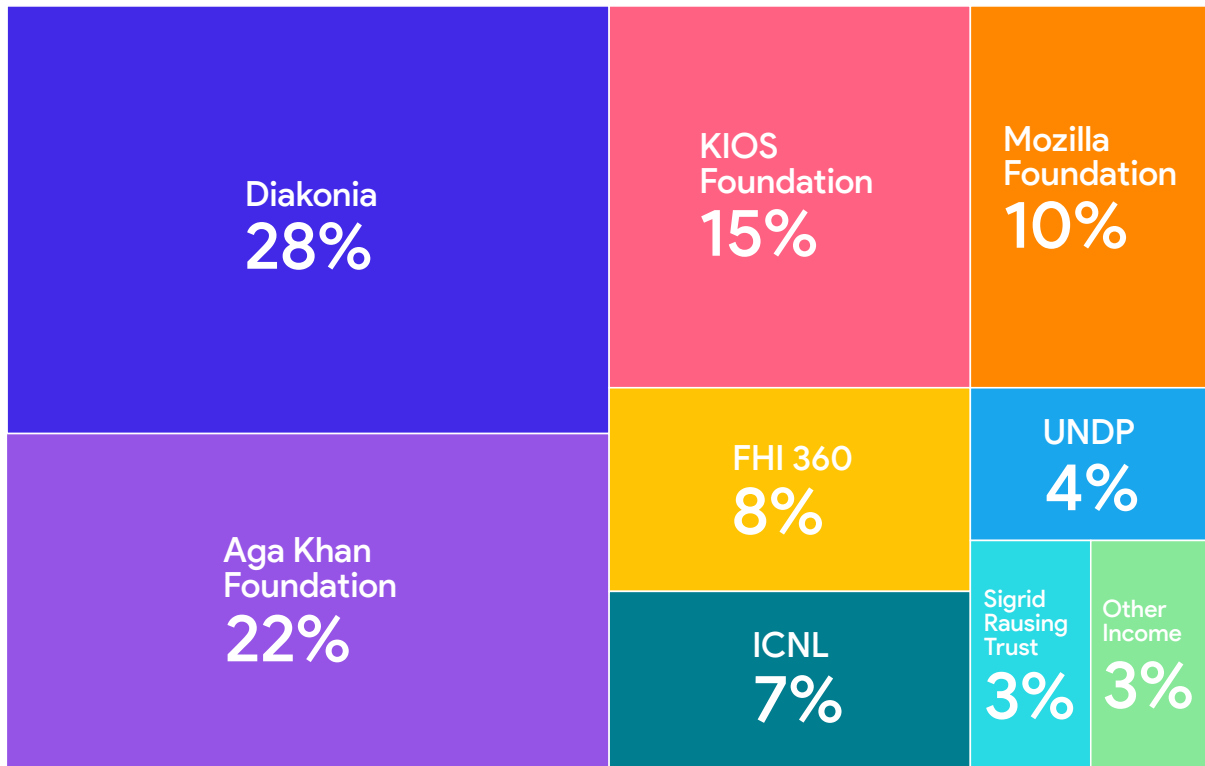
1. Obstructed and Partly Free: A Contextual Analysis of the Democratic Space in Kenya



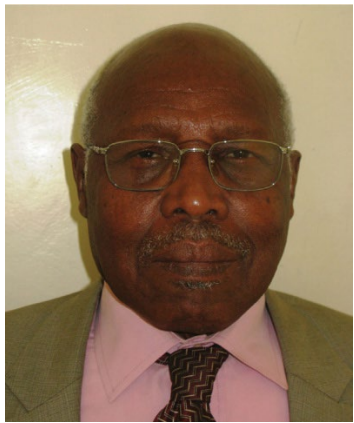
2. Hype Vs Nuance: Civil Society and Technology in 2021



# FINANCE



# PEN GOVERNANCE THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**DR. SAMSON MUTTAI**  
Board Chairman



**RESPER ANYANGO  
GOGO**  
Board Vice Chairperson



**CAROLINE MBINDYO  
KOROSO**  
Board Secretary



**JOHN MARK  
OKONDO**  
Board Treasurer



**GEORGE NYAKORA**  
Board Member



**PROF. ELIJAH K.  
BIAMAH (Ph.D., MBS, MEIK)**  
Board Member

# PEN MANAGEMENT & STAFF



**CHRIS MBITI**  
Executive Director



**JUDITH  
OCHIENG'  
GONDI**  
Finance &  
Administration  
Manager



**ANNE  
MACHARIA  
IRARA**  
Financial  
Compliance  
Officer



**MARY KANINI  
MUTUKU**  
Project Officer



**ALUKWE  
IMBAALI**  
Project Officer



**LUDIVICUS  
OMOLLO**  
Project Officer



**DANSON  
KIMEU**  
Office Assistant



**ODANGA  
MADUNG'**  
Technology &  
Society Fellow –  
Mozilla Foundation



**JOHN OWEGI**  
Coordinator –  
Civic Freedoms  
Forum (CFF)



**MICHELLE  
MWELESA**  
Communication &  
Advocacy Officer  
– Civic Freedoms  
Forum (CFF)

# PEN PARTNERS



## Building Alliances - Better Lives

pen is a trade name  
of Poverty Eradication Network

### CONTACTS

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