



# STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders of 1998 defines Human Rights Defenders as “any person or group who, personally or professionally, individually or with others, acts peacefully to protect and promote human rights”.

Consistent with its Human Rights commitments, it is EACOP’s policy to respect the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly, as well as access to information in its engagement with stakeholders affected by its activities.

EACOP recognizes the legitimacy and important role of Human Rights Defenders (as defined in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders of 1998) in the promotion and protection of human rights and further recognizes Article 38 and Article 13 of respectively the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania that provide for civic rights and activities. EACOP also recognizes the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Position adopted in 2018 on Retaliation Against Civil Society and Project Stakeholders.

**“Accordingly and consistent with international Human Rights standards, EACOP does not tolerate any threats, intimidation, harassment, or violence against those who peacefully promote Human Rights in relation to our activities.”**

EACOP seeks to promote dialogue and exchanges with Human Rights Defenders in the framework of its activities. EACOP values engagement with all stakeholders in relation to matters related to Human Rights Defenders and the civic space. It welcomes in particular input by stakeholders raising grievances or providing information on incidents related to Human Rights Defenders (while protecting their confidentiality). As part of its ongoing engagement on these matters, EACOP will continue to pay particular attention to women and vulnerable groups.

Where appropriate, as recommended by the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, EACOP seeks to exert leverage to influence others to respect these principles.

**Where it is alerted of allegations of threats, intimidation, harassment or violence against Human Rights Defenders in relation to its activities EACOP shall:**

- Take immediate steps to obtain further information in order to understand the nature of the risk/harm and whether it is connected to EACOP’s activities.
- Preserve the confidentiality of the persons concerned.
- Where appropriate, contact the relevant officials which may include local, district, national police Authorities, Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) in Uganda and the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) in Tanzania, Ministry of Internal Affairs in Uganda and Ministry of the Interior in Tanzania, Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) in Uganda, and the Tanzanian Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG).
- Insist on the need to respect the human rights of the Human Rights Defenders and in particular their safety, protection, right to fair trial and due process.
- Where appropriate, inform other entities which may include the UHRC, CHRAGG, and relevant Embassies, relevant non-governmental organisations in both countries.
- Where EACOP employees or contractors are the subject of such allegations ensure that appropriate investigation is carried out in accordance with EACOP procedures, including where appropriate taking swift action and applying appropriate sanctions.

## EXPRESSING CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS AS A HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER

**EACOP encourages the use of its Grievance Procedure for all forms of complaints and grievances related to its activities including by Human Rights Defenders:**

- EACOP has Community Liaison Officers and Community relationship Supervisors that regularly visit all areas of our operations and meet with communities, and they can be approached to air concerns, give feedback or raise grievances.
- EACOP also has a toll-free number (Uganda: 0800 113 205 and Tanzania: 0800 120 073) available and manned each day from 7am until 10pm.
- Email:  
Uganda: info.ug@eacop.com  
Tanzania: info.tz@eacop.com
- Traditional/district local authorities: issues can also be raised with local leaders for transmission to EACOP.

EACOP encourages any Human Rights Defender who prefers not to contact the project directly, for reasons of confidentiality or anonymity, to contact a third party of their choice (e.g, a Non-Government Organisation, Embassy, etc). These will forward your grievances to our teams through the above mechanism or through EACOP email addresses mentioned above.

**Martin TIFFEN**  
Managing Director, EACOP  
Date: 02/04/2024