1. Please provide information on past/ongoing initiatives focusing on enforced disappearance in Africa.

In the recent past, Tanzania has registered several cases of enforced disappearance. Known to the public include the following cases:

* 1. **Ben Rabiu Saanane** – a political activist an aide to the leader of the opposition. Saanane disappeared in 2016, whereas his disappearance is linked to his criticism to former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, the late John Pombe Magufuli. Saanane was questioning the academic integrity of the President who completed his PhD within three years while serving as a full-time Minister and MP. Saanane was, nevertheless, a dedicated critic of Magufuli’s government, a brutal ruler we have ever had in Tanzania. The discussion sparked nationwide conversations and reactions from academics. Saanane reported before the police to have been cautioned not to question the president’s academic integrity. It is widely believed that Saanane was persecuted owing to that.
  2. **Azory Gwanda** – a renowned investigative journalist was taken from his home in Pwani Region by men who identified themselves as law enforcement officers. His wife witnessed the incident. He is missing since November 2017. Azory was covering a story relating to killings in the coast region associated with the threat of terrorism. His workmates confirm that he had gathered investigative details of what transpired during such period of nationwide worries and threats of being killed associated to counterterrorism. Thousands of people were killed in such an operation.
  3. **Simon Kanguye** – former Kigoma Ward Councillor was also abduceted by men identified themselves to be law enforcement officers in 2017. He is missing since.
  4. **James William Sije** – missing since 2021, was taken by police officers in Mwanza.
  5. **Mdude Mpaluka Nyagali, Erick Kabendera, Abdul Nondo, Tito Magoti, Roma Mkatoliki, Mohamed Dewji** and more others– these have faced short-term enforced disappearance for the fact that their abduction caused them to miss for a couple of days. They have been held incommunicado until when there was substantive public outcry for their release.
  6. Counter-terrorism campaign in the Pwani (Mkuranga, Kibiti & Rufiji) Region in 2017/19 claimed lives of thousands of people, yet more are missing, especially children. The campaign saw deployment of soldiers to go and deal with terrorists. But the end victims were innocent civilians who were killed in numbers. In 2019/2020, the Police reported that about 300 children are missing from the areas affected by the operation pursued by the state. Yet no official information, up to date, of where the child could be held – though the public believes that they were killed by law enforcement agents, including the military which was heavily deployed for the campaign.
  7. In 2021 Legal and Human Rights Centre, Tanzania’s leading rights advocacy body, recorded 12 cases of enforced disappearance in Lindi and Dar es Salaam.
  8. January 2022, Five young were reported missing in Dar es Salaam since 26 December 2022. Their names are Tawfiq Mohamed, Seif Swala, Edwin Kunambi, Hemed Abass and Rajabu Mdoe.

1. Please elaborate on possible reasons for the low registration/reporting of cases of enforced disappearances in the region. Please provide information on whether families, human rights defenders, humanitarian workers, prosecution, judges and lawyers or persons in charge of investigations and search face reprisals, threats and harassment for their work and, if so, in which form (and how this could be prevented and mitigated).

Tanzania rights bodies have been reporting, quite often, on the incidents and trends. Missing are regional efforts an solidarity, especially from regional rights oversight mechanisms like the African Commission. Despite reporting or taking cognizance, they have been ineffective to offer appropriate redress to victims and their families.

Apparently, people working towards unfolding these atrocities ans seeking for truth have been from time to time harassed. They include members of the CSO networks, rights defenders and the media. For instance, the media house which Azory Gwanda worked for, been harassed ans told not to run the campaign asking for his whereabouts.

Global solidarity and call to action is needed to level the ground up. Tanzania should be remined of her obligation to protect and respect human rights.

Bringing to account perpetrators is paramount. Key perpetrators are in government and decision-making corridors. Much as this seems like a domestic obligation, there is yet more other ways of calling them out, especially by international rights watch agencies.

1. Could you please share experiences, good practices, lessons learned, emerging trends and specific features and potential solutions, in the context of the below themes and cross-cutting issues:
   * Enforced disappearance in the context of migration;
   * Enforced disappearance and women and children (covering also the issue of illegal intercountry adoptions and its intersections with enforced disappearance);
   * Enforced disappearance and economic, social and cultural rights;
   * Acts tantamount to enforced disappearances perpetrated by non-State actors exercising de facto control over a territory or population;
   * Enforced disappearance in the context of transnational transfers;
   * So called short-term enforced disappearances;

This has happened quite often whereas government critics would be abducted and held incommunicado for several days. At first the government denies holding them, because, ideally, they would be abducted with intent to have them eliminated. But the turning point is when the mission to eliminate them fails. The best way to sail them off is to mount enough pressure calling for their release. The internet has always been instrumental on mounting the pressure. It has worked for my case and several other short-term enforced disappearances.

* + New technologies and enforced disappearances;
  + Enforced disappearances and elections;

Tanzania has seen a number of enforced disappearances linked to politics and elections.

* + Enforced disappearances and land and environmental related issues;

Maasai community has seen some of their people in Ngorongoro area missing in what it was said to be an operation to evict them from their ancestral land. A section of elders and critics of the unlawful an illegal campaign to evict them from the land is missing – whereas some have been caused to flee to unknown places while others have been rendered held incommunicado and perhaps killed. Numbers are yet to be verified but it is approximately that more than one hundred people are missing.

* + Good practices and lessons learned in the investigation of enforced disappearance and in the search for disappeared persons;

Use of the internet to constantly campaign for release or call for accountability.

Use of judicial mechanisms – filing of *habes corpus* application has proved to work for some cases. The experience is that folks are usually released from where they are held and presented before the court to face charges, if any, as an alternative to illegally holding them.

* + Enforced disappearance in transitional justice contexts;
  + Other issues that you deem relevant for the African regional context.

Tanzania has not ratified the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance 2010 and the Convention Against Torture. It is perhaps the reason why there is low respect for the rights, duties and obligations enshrined therein.

I am in final talks with two families of victims. They are considering to file a complaint with the UNWGED.