

Gacheke Gachihi - Bunge la Mwananchi ('People's Parliament')

Gacheke Gachihi is a social justice activist who has been active in the human rights movement in Kenya for over a decade. He is a founding member of Bunge la Mwananchi ('People's Parliament'), an organic **pro-poor social movement** in Kenya historically related to popular social struggles for empowerment and participatory democracy. Since the early 1990s Bunge la Mwananchi has remained focused on this core value of organising to demand **social equality and participatory democracy** as a prerequisite for **sustainable development, the rule of law and respect for human rights**. The movement focuses on engaging citizens in public discussions in order to increase participation in democratic processes.

Gacheke is also a **community organiser** and is involved in establishing community-based resource centres. These centres aim at locating a social movement in the diverse communities in Kenya in order to forge a nationwide collective identity and bring about social transformation. Gacheke is currently the coordinator of the Mathare Social Justice Centre, a community-based registered organisation in Mathare, an informal settlement in Nairobi. The Mathare Social Justice Centre conducts campaigns on **political accountability and social justice**. It also documents cases of **extra-judicial killings and police brutality** in low-income areas of Eastleigh in Nairobi.

Among other human rights work, Gacheke previously spent five years as a field officer at the Independent Medico-Legal Unit in Nairobi where he focused on documenting cases of extra-judicial killings and youth torture. In 2008 he was part of a network of Kenyans providing information to assist with Special Rapporteur Prof. Philip Alston's reporting on extra-judicial killings in the wake of post-election violence. He also co-founded with other human rights defenders the Unga Revolution, a grassroots movement addressing the right to food and social inequality in Kenya as well as organising the Unga Tax protest, a tax justice campaign demanding a reduction in the cost of living in order to assist the poorest of Kenyan society.

PBI Kenya has been working with Gacheke on different occasions and projects since 2013 as part of his work with Bunge la Mwananchi and Mathare Social Justice Centre. Among other things, PBI Kenya has been closely monitoring court cases involving Gacheke's activism.