

Transgender Movement Planting Roots in Kenya

A transgender person who has sued the government to be recognized as a woman is fighting a group of **Christian** lawyers who are opposed to her name change petition.

The Kenya Christian Lawyers Fellowship is challenging Audrey Mbugua's petition, warning it would set a precedent contrary to the **Christian** view of creation and encourage gay unions.

But the 29-year-old biomedical scientist says her case is not about sexual orientation, but a medical condition.

"I am concerned they will create more confusion with these kind of arguments," Mbugua said. "This is a respectful and vigorous discussion about a rare condition."

Mbugua, who said she is an **atheist**, grew up as Andrew while struggling with her gender.

She went to court in May seeking a name change, identity documents and reissued academic certificates with her new name. She has found it difficult to find work since employers assume she is a man and then find out she is a woman.

But the **Christian** lawyers' group has argued that there is no third gender in Kenya's constitution apart from male and female, and a simple name change cannot alter one's gender.

"The applicant alleges to have planned corrective medical surgery, yet there is no proof that he was subjected to any," wrote the group's lead lawyer, Harrison Kinyanjui, in a submission to the Nairobi law courts.

The group recommends psychological treatment for Audrey's case.