



**URGENT RESPONSES for WOMEN  
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS at RISK:  
MAPPING and  
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT**

By Inmaculada Barcia, AWID Consultant  
*Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition*  
June 2011

**awid** women's  
rights  
Association For Women's Rights in Development

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The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) is an international feminist, membership organization committed to achieving gender equality, sustainable development and women's human rights. AWID's mission is to strengthen the voice, impact and influence of women's rights advocates, organizations and movements internationally to effectively advance the rights of women.

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The members of the working group on urgent responses are:

- Women Living Under Muslim Laws
- Amnesty International
- MADRE
- International Federation of Human Rights
- World Organisation against Torture
- Front Line
- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development
- Baobab for Women's Human Rights
- Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

### Individual Members:

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[www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org](http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org)

## List of Acronyms

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- AI** Amnesty International
- AWID** Association for Women's Rights In Development
- CAL** Coalition of African Lesbians
- CRER** Regulatory and Risk Evaluation Committee
- DAS** Department of National Security
- EHAHRDP** East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project
- EU** European Union
- FIDH** International Federation for Human Rights
- FL** Front Line
- IACHR** Inter-American Commission of Human Rights
- IWP** International Women's Partnership for Peace and Justice
- LGBTI** Lesbian, gay, transdiverse and intersex persons
- Komnas Perempuan** Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan (The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia)
- NGOs** Non-Governmental Organizations
- OMCT** World Organisation Against Torture
- Observatory** The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders run jointly between OMCT and FIDH
- PBI** Peace Brigades International
- UAF** Urgent Action Fund
- UDEFEGUA** Guatemalan Unit for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
- UNHRC** United Nations Human Rights Council
- UN SR** United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders
- WHRDs** Women human rights defenders
- WHRD IC** Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition
- WOREC** Women's Rehabilitation Centre

## Introduction

Around the world, women human rights defenders (WHRDs) face a variety of threats as a direct result of their human rights-related work and because of changes in the context in which they do their work. As human rights defenders, they face the same types of risks faced by all human rights defenders; as women they are also exposed to or targeted for gender-based violence and gender-specific risks. The pressures on, and threats to WHRDs are widely recognized and many rights groups have developed strategies and plans of action to provide support and solidarity as a result. However, the lack of systemized knowledge about the array of urgent responses used to support WHRDs may have a significant impact on the effectiveness and viability of response efforts.

One participant in this study stressed that this mapping “really needs to be done because we know so little about what is out there and there is such a great need.” Other interviewees stressed that often, WHRDs don’t know where to look for support—such as financial support to leave home countries in times of crises—because there is no central place where a person can look to get comprehensive information about the range of urgent responses and support programs available in different languages.

To help address this situation, the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) in collaboration with the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRD IC) and its working group on Urgent Appeals Monitoring Mechanism for Women Human Rights Defenders at Risk sponsored this research.

This report is based on a review of available documentation as well as information provided during interviews with representatives from organizations that provide assistance to WHRDs, including members of the WHRD IC, among others. Reflecting the diversity of responses available for WHRDs, the research focused on a broad range of human rights organizations operating at different levels—international, regional and national—as well as groups with differing thematic priorities, including those working on women’s rights, human rights and sexual orientation.

The purpose of the mapping is to help WHRDs identify the resources and tools available. Second, this study aims to review the characteristics of each organization’s contributions,

and how different responses can feed into a broader strategy to protect WHRDs. Therefore, this study focuses mainly on urgent measures and not necessarily on preventive ones. While recognizing the important role that preventive measures—including training, network building and advocacy strategies—play in the protection of WHRDs, these measures are not the main focus of this report. Nevertheless, some of the measures covered in this study play a dual role as protective and preventive.

After an overview, the report describes the variety of responses (programs and resources) developed by organizations to assist WHRDs. It reviews available mechanisms, highlights key issues with respect to WHRDs, and presents examples of the organizations providing those services. The table at the back of this book (Annex 1) maps the responses provided by the organizations participating in this project.

This report adopts the same definition for Women Human Rights Defender as the WHRD IC. Thus the term “Women Human Rights Defender” encompasses “women active in human rights defense who are targeted for **who they are** as well as all those active in the defense of women’s rights who are targeted for **what they do**. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender activists participate in many human rights struggles, including the advocacy for sexual rights. They become vulnerable to violence because of who they are and the work they do, especially when that work is directly related to sexuality. We refer to them as women human rights defenders, too.”<sup>1</sup>

The work to protect WHRDs is relatively new, and many existing resources were not designed specifically for WHRDs. This is one of the motivations of the report – to outline the diversity of responses to the risks faced by human rights defenders in general and, where available, those that are specific for WHRDs. Throughout the report, the term “defenders” is used when referring to human rights defenders in general (men and women involved in the defense of human rights) and the term “WHRD” is used when referring specifically to Women Human Rights Defenders.

<sup>1</sup> Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), (2007), *Claiming Rights, Claiming Justice: A Guidebook to Women Human Rights Defenders*, page 15, available at [www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/pdf2007/book3Neo.pdf](http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/pdf2007/book3Neo.pdf)

# 1. Overview

As stated in the 2010 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (UN SR), “women defenders are more at risk of suffering certain forms of violence and other violations, prejudice, exclusion, and repudiation than their male counterparts.”<sup>2</sup> As such, WHRDs require particular attention in order to address the numerous risks that they face in conducting their work. This report outlines a diversity of responses to the risks faced by defenders in general and, where available, those that are specific for WHRDs.

A broad range of human rights organizations provide assistance to defenders at risk, only some of which have a gender-specific mandate. The sources interviewed for this report reflect this diversity. Many interviewees described urgent responses that are not designed exclusively for WHRDs or have not been tailored to women’s needs but are able to serve a multiplicity of purposes. Ensuring gender-specific responses is an area that remains to be strengthened.

To safeguard a balance in the gender of defenders being supported, some organizations have included gender as part of their criteria in, for example, fellowship programs. Others do not include gender as part of their selection criteria but try to achieve a gender balance (for example, when providing legal assistance and relocation) by encouraging partner organizations and members to refer WHRD cases when they see that they have been giving priority to cases of male defenders. However, during the interviews many organizations such as Amnesty International (AI), Front Line (FL), the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP) related that fewer cases of WHRDs reach their organizations compared to those of male defenders. Similarly, staff working with the UN SR report receiving fewer communications related to WHRDs compared to their male counterparts. Indeed, the UN SR 2011 Annual Report establishes that “between 2004 and 2009, the Special Rapporteur sent an average of 350 communications to Governments per year, including allegation letters and urgent appeals. Of these, about one third of the

communications concerned women defenders and those working on women’s rights or gender issues.”<sup>3</sup>

One possible reason for the fact that women make up so few cases of defenders may be that they do not define themselves as WHRDs and do not consider their security a priority, meaning that they are less likely to reach out for help. These complexities underscore the need to reach out to WHRD groups and to women’s groups and organizations more generally. As mentioned by some of the interviewees, though women’s groups receive more communications about WHRDs than male defenders and are mandated to focus upon women’s rights and gender issues, they are generally less well-funded than human rights organizations, which may limit their scope to provide effective responses.

Although the assistance that they provide is not gender specific, interviewees discussed trying to ensure that urgent measures granted to WHRDs are gender sensitive. For example, in cases that require medical assistance, some interviewees spoke of selecting a medical doctor or rehabilitation center with expertise working on related cases. Similarly, when selecting lawyers, organizations try to ensure that legal personnel are familiar with the context in which WHRDs operate in a particular country and that they are sensitive to gender concerns.

An additional consideration raised by some interviewees is the need to ensure that responses are designed around a concept of security as defined by WHRDs themselves. As some participants described, “security” for many WHRDs does not mean a police or security presence at their home or place of work, but that the environment in which they live and carry out their work is one that does not generate fear for their own safety and well-being and that of their children and family members.

<sup>2</sup> Sekaggya, Margaret, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, A/HRC/16/44, “Report, to the 16th session of the Human Rights Council,” 20 December 2010, para. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Sekaggya, Margaret, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, A/HRC/16/44, “Report, to the 16th session of the Human Rights Council,” 20 December 2010, para. 35. See also, Sekaggya, Margaret, A/HRC/10/12, “Report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders”, 10th session of the Human Rights Council, 12 February 2009, para. 3, and Jilani, Hina, A/HRC/7/28 “Report submitted by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders,” 7th session of the Human Rights Council, 31 January 2008, para. 22.



## 2. International Pressure and Visibility

### 2.1 Urgent appeals.<sup>4</sup>

Urgent appeals are public statements concerning reports of actual or impending human rights violations or abuses that aim to generate a rapid and broad-based response. Generally, these appeals contain information on the facts and particular circumstances of a case such as when WHRDs are threatened, persecuted, or detained because of their human rights work. Urgent appeals can also be issued concerning legislation that has the potential to lead to violations of defenders' rights. A case in point is the anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda, which, if enacted, could further endanger the safety of WHRDs working on sexual orientation or gender identity issues. Additionally, urgent appeals are also meant to prevent human rights violations from taking place and are generated where there have been threats directed at defenders. In other cases, appeals are intended to urge states to investigate and prosecute perpetrators. Many groups issue urgent appeals, which are disseminated widely among networks of individuals and organizations, national authorities, and regional and international mechanisms (see the table in Annex 1 for more details).

To produce urgent appeals, international and regional organizations often rely on information received from local organizations, although in some cases, they rely on information received directly from the defenders concerned. Verification procedures to ensure the reliability of information vary by organization. Membership-based organizations tend to act on information received from their members, previously selected based on criteria to ensure the independence and reliability of the information that they produce. Non-membership based organizations also rely on local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and partners working in the region or country to verify the information they receive from other sources. In some cases, when an organization receives information directly from a defender or an organization not known to them, they may ask for a recommendation from a national or an international organization to verify that information. Increasingly, verification involves consulting reputable online sources. This can be both an advantage (easy and

rapid access to information) and a challenge (confirming the veracity of reports from online sources).

Appeals specifically addressing WHRDs typically highlight the gender dimension of a violation. However, some appeals tend to focus on the facts of the case and accountability of the perpetrators while others emphasize contextual considerations that appear to have enabled a violation to occur—such as the legal or political context, or cultural, social, and religious norms. Some interviewees highlighted the tension between focusing on accountability and the need to look more deeply at the root causes of violations, especially as they affect WHRDs.

Sources interviewed at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights who work with the UN SR highlighted the need to strengthen the contextual analysis of urgent appeals on WHRDs. In particular, interviewees emphasized the need for information concerning: the specificities of the local context; the social norms and taboos that WHRDs confront and whether their work is perceived as violating those norms; discriminatory legislation against women in the country; and the connection between the violation and the type of work being carried out by a WHRD. According to staff working with the UN SR, such contextually specific information can help make violations discussed in an appeal relevant to other Special Procedures, such as the Special Rapporteur on violence against women. This type of information could also be included in communications to states and also in thematic reports.

Urgent appeals can protect WHRDs by mobilizing networks of individuals and organizations to put pressure on governments and other actors. Usually, urgent appeals include a call to take specific actions that are detailed in the appeal. In most cases, appeals include a request to contact national authorities and their representatives through e-mail, fax or phone, and to demand that national authorities take specific action on a case. Most appeals

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<sup>4</sup> Other terms used to describe urgent appeals include: urgent actions, action alerts, statements, and calls for action. Terms may vary by organization.

## 2. International Pressure and Visibility

provide a sample letter that can be sent to government authorities; some organizations use an automated system that allows letters to be sent electronically to a government official with the click of a button. Some appeals ask the public to also copy their communications to relevant UN bodies, such as the Special Procedures mandate-holders, in an effort to raise international visibility of an issue or to hold states accountable for human rights violations against WHRDs in their constituencies.

The strength of this mechanism lies in its ability to garner public attention and awareness, to mobilize thousands of people (members or subscribers), to give visibility to the case and to generate support within a very short period of time (for the most part, appeals are sent between 24 and 72 hours of the violation taking place or of learning of the violation). Some organizations have well-established networks with thousands of subscribers who are able to quickly send letters or sign petitions aimed at putting pressure on authorities. Some organizations also draw on their media contacts and may decide to issue a press release in connection with urgent appeals.

The urgent appeal or public approach to human rights violations is seen to be most effective in countries that are receptive to the opinions of the international community, and should ideally be a strategy undertaken only in consultation with the WHRDs and their supporters at the local/national level. In other cases, a more targeted, discrete approach may be more effective in preventing or redressing human rights violations. Depending on the particular circumstances of the case, organizations may decide to utilize diplomatic channels through their embassies based in the country concerned or choose to communicate to specific state institutions with the capacity to take action. This approach may be more effective than issuing an urgent appeal or otherwise widely disseminating information on a case. For example, Komnas Perempuan, the National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia, sends letters to local authorities to support WHRDs facing urgent situations. It also sends letters to judiciary institutions when WHRDs face threats of being criminalized by the law. WHRDs find that letters from

these kinds of organizations can be very helpful. They feel that these letters can be an effective protection tool because authorities understand that there is a national eye on the case.

What happens to urgent appeals after they are circulated to membership networks or to national, regional or international authorities? Indeed, following up urgent interventions may represent highly challenging and resource intensive activities. For this reason, organizations that regularly produce urgent appeals have systems to track developments and these systems may differ depending on the resources and capacity of the organization. In some cases, organizations receive information from their members or through organizations working directly with WHRDs, but for the most part organizations undertaking urgent appeals need periodic and direct contact with WHRDs themselves. At times, a new urgent action may be issued detailing developments on the case and the information is circulated to the original mailing list. In other cases, no new appeal is issued, but the information is sent to the national authorities or to the relevant regional or international mechanisms, such as the UN SR where the urgent action was directed. Some interviewees have highlighted the need for international and regional NGOs to strengthen the follow up to urgent actions both at the national level and with regional and international mechanisms.

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### 2.2 Working with the UN SR and other international and regional mechanisms

As the case of urgent appeals demonstrates, regional and international mechanisms play an important role in wider response mechanisms and thirteen of the seventeen organizations interviewed for this project regularly submit urgent appeals to various UN mechanisms. For the most part, organizations systematically submit urgent appeals to the UN SR and, depending on the nature of the violation, they may involve different mechanisms, such as: the Special Rapporteur on Torture; the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women; the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression; the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions and; Special Rapporteurs working on specific countries. In some instances, the information is only submitted to the UN SR, which will seek to collaborate with other Special Procedures in issuing a joint communication to a member state. Such joint interventions can bring increased pressure to bear on responsible authorities.

Organizations working with the UN SR endeavour to keep in close contact with the mandate and to update the UN SR frequently on developments in the case. However, one of the difficulties identified by some of the organization interviewed, is the confidential nature of the Special Procedures. According to the *Manual of Operations of the Special Procedures*,<sup>5</sup> communications sent to states and responses received concerning cases remain confidential until they are published every year in the reports that the Special Procedures present to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Once an NGO submits information to the UN SR, the UN SR is not allowed to provide NGOs with information concerning any actions taken on that case. The victims do not even know whether their cases have been taken up by these mechanisms. In this context, some NGOs interviewed have highlighted that it is difficult for them to maintain contact with the UN SR concerning developments in cases.

In terms of regional mechanisms, organizations also send urgent appeals to the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa, a separate mandate established by the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights. Although the African Rapporteur has a similar mandate to the UN SR, its capacity to act on specific cases is more limited. Some interviewees have highlighted the need to strengthen work with this mechanism and improve coordination between the UN SR and the Africa Rapporteur. Increased and strengthened cooperation between the UN mandate-holder and other regional human rights mechanisms should also be considered (such as the European and Inter-American systems<sup>6</sup>, for example).

In addition to the Special Rapporteurs, some of the organizations interviewed also submit cases to UN treaty bodies. For example, both OMCT and MADRE, respectively, have worked with national partners to submit alternative reports to the Human Rights Committee and the Committee Against Torture during the UNHRC review of Nicaragua's human rights situation. The alternative reports highlighted how the ban on therapeutic abortion in Nicaragua constitutes a serious violation of women's rights and described the escalating campaign of harassment and persecution against groups who oppose the abortion ban. Although not necessarily an urgent measure, working with the treaty bodies can provide legitimacy to the work of WHRDs and contribute to their protection. In the case of Nicaragua, for example, the Human Rights Committee recommended that Nicaragua "take the necessary action to put a stop to alleged instances of systematic persecution and death threats, particularly against the defenders of women's rights mentioned above, and ensure that those responsible are duly punished. The State party should guarantee organizations of human rights defenders the right to freedom of expression and association in the conduct of their activities."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commission Human Rights, "Manual of Operations of the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council," August 2008, para. 37, [www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/docs/Manual\\_August\\_2008.doc](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/docs/Manual_August_2008.doc)

<sup>6</sup> At the time of publishing this report, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights announced the establishment of a Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders. <http://www.cidh.oas.org/Comunicados/English/2011/28-11eng.htm>

## 2. International Pressure and Visibility

Twelve organizations interviewed for this project also work with European Union (EU) institutions on the basis of the *Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders*, adopted by the EU in June 2004. The Guidelines suggest practical means for EU institutions and embassies to support and assist defenders. Among the measures suggested by the Guidelines are providing visible recognition to defenders through the use of appropriate publicity, visits or invitations, attending and observing trials of defenders, making public statements when defenders are at immediate or serious risk, and making diplomatic demarches. Some organizations work with the EU presidency as well as representation of different EU member states in Brussels, sending them urgent appeals and lobbying for particular cases. Other organizations work directly with embassies at the national level, sending them urgent appeals, requesting their presence at the trial of a defender or asking them to visit a defender's office in situations of risk.

Defenders in Latin America can also benefit from precautionary measures from the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR).<sup>8</sup> The IACHR has the power to request that a state adopt protective measures to prevent irreparable harm to persons in urgent cases. Once precautionary measures are adopted, the state must contact the beneficiaries (defenders or other people whose human rights have been violated and considered in need of the measures) and agree upon the kind of protective actions to be put in place. These measures can benefit individuals or groups and can range from providing bullet-proof vests to political measures, such as public statements from authorities recognizing the work of defenders in the country. Some interviewees were of the view that the IACHR is becoming increasingly reluctant to adopting this type of measure, and that even when adopted, there are challenges in states' compliance. It is also worth noting that the IACHR may also request that the Inter-American Human Rights Court order "provisional measures" in urgent cases which involve danger to persons, even where a case has not yet been submitted to the Court. There are no comparable mechanisms for defenders in Asia-Pacific or the Middle East.

### 2.3 Sponsorship programs

Sponsorship programs connect defenders with prominent public figures to provide them with protection and to raise awareness about the conditions in which defenders work. For example, OMCT seeks out public figures willing to use their public profiles in the service of defenders. As part of this sponsorship program, prominent figures in Swiss sports, politics, business and culture are each linked with a human rights defender. Maintaining close links with the defenders in the program, OMCT may request that sponsors take concrete actions if the physical or psychological integrity of the defender is endangered. Sponsors may be asked to speak publicly and to attract media coverage about the human rights situation of their defender and their context, to write letters to relevant authorities when the defender's situation requires an urgent reaction or take part in a solidarity field mission. In the OMCT example, two missions were carried out, the first in Mexico in 2009, and the second in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2010, both of which resulted in two short documentary films.

### 2.4 Awards

Awards can bring public recognition and legitimacy to the work of WHRDs and also provide protection by raising their profiles in the media. Monetary and in-kind prizes associated with these awards can also help the WHRD to access other temporary support, such as support for relocation or legal fees. Currently, there are several awards that are given to defenders who have made a contribution to the protection and promotion of human rights and who face risks as a consequence of their work. Although not specific to WHRDs, many of these awards have been given to women.

<sup>7</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commission Human Rights, CCPR/C/NIC/CO/3, "Concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee, Nicaragua," 12 December 2008, para. 19.

<sup>8</sup> Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, "Article 25," *the Rule of Procedure of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights*, [www.oas.org/xxivgal/english/reference\\_docs/Reglamento\\_CIDH.pdf](http://www.oas.org/xxivgal/english/reference_docs/Reglamento_CIDH.pdf)

## 2. International Pressure and Visibility

### Current initiatives include:

- The Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders, created in 1993, provides roughly CHF 20,000 to be used toward work in the field of human rights. The Award is a unique collaboration by several NGOs: Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Federation for Human Rights, the World Organisation Against Torture, Front Line, the International Commission of Jurists, Human Rights First, International Service for Human Rights, Diakonie Germany, and Huridocs.<sup>9</sup>
- The annual Front Line Award established in 2004 includes a EUR 10,000 donation to the work of a human rights defender as well as a EUR 5,000 personal honorarium.<sup>10</sup>
- The Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty was established in 1989 in honour of the principal founder of the American Civil Liberties Union and the International League for Human Rights. It is presented by Human Rights First every other year and includes USD 25,000 and a trip to the United States to engage in advocacy.<sup>11</sup> Since 1986, Human Rights First also presents the Human Rights Award at its annual Human Rights Dinner to an individual actively engaged in defending human rights, protecting refugees or working to stop discrimination and crimes against humanity.<sup>12</sup>
- The Tulip Award was established by the Dutch Government in 2008 and provides individuals with EUR 10,000. In addition, the winner can submit a project proposal for up to EUR 100,000 in funding for his or her work as a human rights defender. The winner also has the opportunity to meet with relevant stakeholders in Europe.<sup>13</sup>
- The John Humphrey Award is presented by Rights & Democracy (International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development) each year to an organization or individual for outstanding achievement in the promotion of human rights and democratic development. The Award consists of a grant of CAD 30,000 and a speaking tour of Canadian cities to help increase awareness of the recipient's human rights work.<sup>14</sup>

- The Yayori Award focuses on women activists, journalists, and artists who work at the grassroots level with socially marginalized peoples to promote a world free from war and discrimination against women. The award consists of JPY 500,000.<sup>15</sup>
- The International Service for Human Rights Awards focuses on the achievements of organizations and individuals working at a grassroots level to promote human rights and to eliminate poverty. The award includes a category for those who work in the defense of the human rights of women.<sup>16</sup>

### 2.5 Solidarity and monitoring visits

Similar in some ways to fact-finding missions carried out by international delegations, monitoring and solidarity visits to defenders are carried out by other defenders from the same region, country or from other regions. The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, run jointly between OMCT and FIDH (the Observatory), for example, carries out solidarity missions, the objectives of which include:

- to bring support to defenders in difficult situations;
- to help defenders carrying out their activities;
- to enable defenders to meet representatives of international and regional intergovernmental organizations as well as foreign authorities, in order to promote their lobbying actions;
- to alert the media to the situation of defenders and to the human rights situation in the country/region.

<sup>9</sup> For more information see: <http://www.martinennalsaward.org/en/index.html>

<sup>10</sup> For more information see: <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/front-line-award-human-rights-defenders-risk>

<sup>11</sup> For more information see: <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/front-line-award-human-rights-defenders-risk>

<sup>12</sup> For more information see: [http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/about\\_us/events/events.aspx](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/about_us/events/events.aspx)

<sup>13</sup> For more information see: <http://www.humanrightstulip.org/simplepage/home/>

<sup>14</sup> For more information see: [http://www.dd-rd.ca/site/humphrey\\_award/index.php](http://www.dd-rd.ca/site/humphrey_award/index.php)

<sup>15</sup> For more information see: <http://www.wfphr.org/yayori/English/top.html>

<sup>16</sup> For more information see: [http://www.international-service.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/development\\_awareness/default.aspx](http://www.international-service.org.uk/what_we_do/development_awareness/default.aspx)

## 2. International Pressure and Visibility

These solidarity missions respond to local needs and are undertaken at the request, or following a discussion on their usefulness with local members and partners. Missions can be aimed at addressing an individual case or at exposing the broader situation of repression or criminalization. FIDH also carries out these types of solidarity, advocacy and fact-finding missions within the framework of their programs on international justice, migration, women's rights or economic and social rights.

Komnas Perempuan in Indonesia also carries out monitoring visits. For example, if a WHRD contacts them to report a violation, a commissioner or someone from the staff can carry out a monitoring visit to verify the information received and to discuss the best course of action with the WHRD concerned.

The Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL) has been developing an approach to these solidarity visits that involves outside defenders with expertise in liaising with local lesbian, gay, transdiverse, and intersex (LGBTI) communities. These visits are aimed at affirming and strengthening local community organizing during and after crises. This approach was successfully implemented in Rwanda in November 2009 to support LGBTI rights defenders' resistance to the Anti-Homosexuality Bill and again in 2011 after the brutal murder of David Kato, an LGBTI defender in Uganda. CAL also makes small emergency grants available during solidarity visits where in person presence and knowledge of the situation by visiting experts mean that the small cash advances can be made immediately. These funds, which are overseen by simple accountability systems, assist LGBTI community organizing during and after crises.

*Las Petateras*—a feminist network comprised of women and organizations from Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Guatemala, Costa Rica and the United States—has also developed a model to carry out solidarity visits in the region: *El Observatorio de la Transgresión Feminista* (Feminist Transformation Watches). This observatory is not a permanent initiative, but rather is activated in cases in which women's or feminist groups require urgent solidarity and international support for their protection. For example, in August 2009, *Las Petateras*

carried out a visit to Honduras. The delegation was made up of feminists, journalists and human rights experts who met to meet with representatives from women's and feminists groups in the country and international organizations. The objective of this visit was to raise the visibility of the human rights violations being perpetrated against women in the context of the June 2009 coup d'état.

### 2.6 Trial observation.

Trial observation is a monitoring tool aimed at ensuring the respect of due process and fair trial standards and providing protection to defenders subjected to judicial harassment and persecution. Trial observation involves sending an observer or a delegation comprised of regional or international experts to attend legal proceedings. An observer might be a staff member or an independent expert outside the organization that is involved in the legal action, usually a legal expert. Following the trial observation, the observers or delegation prepare a report that usually includes a description of the proceedings, an assessment of the extent to which human rights standards were upheld and a number of recommendations to national authorities and other relevant actors. Organizations carrying out trial monitoring missions may issue press releases at different stages of the process to increase visibility and attract international attention.

Trial monitoring is useful for different reasons: the physical presence of external observers is useful as a form of protection to the defender and demonstrates to judges and prosecutors that there is international scrutiny of a case. Also, in countries where judges and lawyers do not feel well protected, it provides them with a potential layer of protection. In terms of due process, trial observation can contribute to better respect for human rights standards; at the same time, monitoring a trial is labour intensive and expensive. An additional challenge can be short notice alterations in trial dates or procedures that can be used as a strategy by courts to make it difficult to arrange a court observer's visit. For example, in the case of WHRD Imrana Jalal in Fiji in 2010, her trial dates were repeatedly changed at short notice, which challenged and delayed the efforts of members of the WHRD IC to send trial observers.



## 2. International Pressure and Visibility

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Finally, in some countries, court access and visas may be limited for external observers.

There are a number of organizations that provide this type of support to defenders in general, and for WHRDs in particular, including FORUM ASIA, Human Rights First, FIDH, OMCT and FL. For example, when defenders face court proceedings, FL lobbies for international observers, and in select cases, may send independent trial observers. FORUM ASIA is currently working to create a dedicated pool of trial monitors from the region.

In terms of resources and expertise, trial observation can also serve as an area of cooperation between NGOs working with WHRDs. For example, in December 2009, FORUM ASIA and FL participated in a joint observation mission to observe the trial of Dr. Chee Soon Juan and Ms. Chee Siok Chin in Singapore. OMCT and FIDH in the context of the Observatory, also carry out judicial observation missions. In 2008, for instance, the Observatory sent an international observer to attend the hearings in the case against Irene Fernandez, co-founder and executive director of Tenaganita, an NGO working with migrant women in Malaysia.

## 3. Resources for Local Action

### 3.1 Legal assistance

In addition to trial monitoring, some organizations provide legal assistance, either directly by providing a lawyer or by offering financial support to cover legal fees or related expenses at the national, regional or international level. For example, under its grant program, FL has provided financial assistance to defenders to cover attorney fees, bail, prison visits, medication and clothes in prison. Similarly, FORUM ASIA also provides financial assistance to cover legal fees (up to USD 2,000). Another example is the case of the Guatemalan Unit for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (UDEFEFUGA). They provide support to cover legal fees, identify lawyers willing to work pro bono and assist with the development of strategies for the litigation of the cases.

Another example of an organization providing legal assistance to defenders is OMCT under their Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture fund, as well as through the framework of the Observatory. FIDH also provides legal assistance through its legal action group or other programs where assistance includes covering legal fees and support for processing requests for political asylum (when there is fear of refoulement) as well as covering legal fees of counsels or lawyers of defenders who are subjected to judicial proceedings because of their human rights activities.

In other cases, legal support may involve working with national groups to develop a legal strategy. For example, in 2008 MADRE's staff, with support from the Urgent Action Fund (UAF), convened a meeting with one lawyer from New York, seven lawyers from Nicaragua, one law student/researcher, and seven representatives from the Autonomous Women's Movement in Nicaragua to develop a legal strategy concerning Nicaragua's ban on therapeutic abortion. Other organizations, such as Women Living Under Muslims Laws, often refer WHRDs at risk to organizations in their own country where they can receive legal and other forms of support.

### 3.2 Medical assistance and psychosocial counselling

Some organizations work with partners and network members to provide medical assistance. The EHAHRDP works with its network members, the Independent Medico-Legal Unit in Kenya and the Center for the Victims of Torture in Uganda, to ensure that defenders in need of trauma counselling access support. In some cases, private counsellors are retained to support defenders.

Similarly, OMCT, working in the context of its program to assist victims of torture, cooperates with its network members and centers for the rehabilitation of torture victims at the national level to provide medical support. OMCT's support can cover medical fees required for physical and psychological treatment, the cost of transfer to specialized centers and the fees to cover essential needs for cases in which hospitalization is not required.

FIDH also funds medical assistance and psychosocial counselling for defenders and victims of human rights violations, either within the framework of the Observatory or within the framework of other programs, such as its program on international justice.

UDEFEFUGA has developed a program to provide psychosocial support to defenders in general and WHRDs in particular. Once the organization verifies the violation against the defender, a staff member works with the defender on a protection plan and decides whether other types of support, such as psychosocial assistance, are needed. A psychologist working with UDEFEFUGA provides support to individuals, to organizations or in some cases, to whole communities. In some other cases, defenders may be referred to a specialized psychologist. UDEFEFUGA is working on developing a national support network to provide this type of assistance.

Other groups provide financial support to defenders in need of medical assistance and counselling through their grant or relief programs. For example, FL has provided support for counselling under their grants program and stress management program. MADRE has also provided small contributions in several cases to support medical assistance for WHRDs.



### 3. Resources for Local Action

When designing a program to address mental health issues, it is important to take into account the possibility of inappropriate “medicalization.” Work-related stress, depression, and post-traumatic stress syndrome can be intrinsic to WHRDs’ lives and when a woman’s distress is conceptualized and diagnosed as a medical problem, her problems become medicalized. Medicalization is seen as solely relying on medical professionals to define the nature of a woman’s mental health problems. To avoid inappropriate medicalization, gender-sensitive interventions have been developed that place concepts of empowerment and agency at the center of therapy. These interventions are designed to validate a woman’s experiences and acknowledge her right to make informed decisions affecting her own life, including what treatment she wishes to receive. The goal of these gender-sensitive approaches is to focus on the woman’s ability to take control of her own life and to make changes that will have positive consequences for her well-being and circumstances. In most cases, however, the options available to women suffering depression are restricted to those provided through publicly-funded mental health programs that rarely employ gender-sensitive therapies.

#### 3.3 Stress management programs

Though there is little information available about these programs, stress management support is a relatively recent response concerned with helping defenders cope with the psychological duress that can result from their human rights work.

FL is developing a program that offers this type of support to defenders well known to the organization where assistance is decided on a case-by-case basis and is guided by the individual needs of WHRDs. In some cases, measures have included supporting the staff of an NGO to take a few days retreat to receive counselling or relaxation techniques, individual counselling, medical treatment or to simply have time off. An important consideration in designing these programs is the need to support families as well as individuals.

Other initiatives cited by interviewees included the International Women’s Partnership for Peace and Justice (IWP) and Capacitar. IWP is a local, spiritual-based feminist organization that supports grassroots women’s activism in Thailand and Asia. IWP organizes workshops, retreats and training courses with women’s groups in Asia that integrate feminism, social action and spirituality. Their retreat center is also available for local and international groups to use to organize private retreats.<sup>17</sup> Capacitar, an organization based in the United States, teaches wellness practices, team building and self-development through healing and a popular education methodology. Capacitar has implemented programs for victims of earthquakes and political violence in Central America and for victims in conflict zones, such as Colombia, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Israel and Palestine.<sup>18</sup>

#### 3.4 Safe houses

Safe houses or temporary shelters can provide WHRDs with a safe space away from perpetrators of violence and give defenders an opportunity to rest physically, mentally and emotionally from the violence that they face in their work.<sup>19</sup> However, it is difficult to access information about safe places or houses where WHRDs can go for a short period of time to rest or to be safe.

Among interviewees, only two provided specific examples of this type of response for WHRDs, CAL and the Women’s Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC). CAL’s Human Rights Defenders Project is establishing a safe house for WHRDs, which includes lesbian, gay, transdiverse and intersex persons in Africa, linking this with a few short annual fellowships. This will link WHRDs with local organizations and institutions in order to foster mutual learning and the creation of feminist knowledge by WHRD who seldom have time to write or otherwise document their ideas, experiences and analysis.

<sup>17</sup> For more information see: <http://womenforpeaceandjustice.org/>

<sup>18</sup> For more information see: <http://www.capacitar.org/>

<sup>19</sup> Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), (2007), *Claiming Rights, Claiming Justice: A Guidebook to Women Human Rights Defenders*, available at <http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/pdf2007/book3Neo.pdf>

### 3. Resources for Local Action

For its part, the WOREC office has a built-in facility for WHRDs to stay for short periods of time when facing threats and harassment. Other organizations, like Women Living Under Muslims Laws, contact allies in the WHRD's country to help refer them to a non-governmental shelter or safe house, where available.

However, not all organizations covered in this report support the idea of safe houses for activists. For example, the EHAHRDP is concerned that bringing a number of defenders to a single location can increase their risk. The group also finds that managing the security of safe houses can become overly burdensome and instead favours renting apartments in secure places with 24-hour security services.

#### 3.5 Protective accompaniment

Protective accompaniment is a strategy pioneered by Peace Brigades International (PBI) for protecting defenders and communities whose lives and work are threatened by violence. Inspired by Gandhi and other non-violent traditions, PBI uses protective accompaniment and international presence to deter politically motivated violence in areas of civil conflict and repression.

International teams of volunteers backed by international support networks help expand the space within which local defenders and communities can carry out their work without fear of political violence. Protective accompaniment is based on the principles of non-partisanship and non-interference in the internal affairs of the organizations being accompanied, in the belief that lasting transformation of conflict cannot be imposed from outside but must be based on the capacity of local people to build genuine peace.

PBI works by volunteers standing side by side with highly threatened human rights defenders. They accompany defenders as they go about their work, both in cities and rural areas. When the level of threat is high, accompaniment can take place round the clock. In some situations volunteers stay with threatened communities or remain in the offices of organizations, and accompany threatened activists when they travel. Another form of

accompaniment is regular phone calls to organizations to check on their safety. The premise of accompaniment is that there will be an international response to whatever violence or potential violence the volunteer witnesses or receives reliable information about. When an attack or a serious threat is made against a defender, PBI can activate an extensive, high-level network of parliamentarians, lawyers' associations, development agencies, academics, and the public around the world to put pressure on the government of the country in question and call for action from the international community.

A key aspect of PBI's protective accompaniment strategy is ongoing engagement with civil and military authorities at the national and local levels. The aim of this engagement is to communicate PBI's aims and objectives and its concerns about accompanied defenders, and to remind the authorities of their obligations to protect defenders. For this accompaniment model to be effective, it is necessary to have an in-depth knowledge of the dynamics of the particular political conflict and the complex local security situation and to become well known to the key actors. To do this, PBI maintains a presence in the country over a long period of time.

Protective accompaniment has three simultaneous and mutually reinforcing effects. The presence of international volunteers protects threatened defenders by raising the stakes for potential attackers. It provides moral support and international solidarity for civil society activism, inspiring the confidence of defenders to carry out their work. In addition, accompaniment strengthens the international movement for peace and human rights by giving accompanying volunteers a powerful first-hand experience that they can draw upon and publicize in their home countries. For protective accompaniment to be effective, the country in question must be sensitive to international pressure.

Countries in which PBI offers protective accompaniment to WHRDs include:

**Colombia:** PBI works with the Grassroots Women's Organization, a feminist women's group that has suffered a high level of threat over the years for its work running

### 3. Resources for Local Action

human rights workshops, carrying out awareness-raising activities, and providing medical and psychological treatment and legal aid to women. PBI also accompanies the Association of Family Members of the Detained and Disappeared that has a high percentage of activists who are widowed or single parents who continue to be targeted because of their struggle to find justice for their loved ones.

**Guatemala:** PBI accompanies the National Coordination of Widows of Guatemala, which has been active in the struggle to exhume the victims of Guatemala's civil war and to combat impunity. In July 2009 the project began accompaniment of the Association of Indigenous Women of Santa María Xalapán, following threats against one of its members by a community member. The project also accompanies the Organisation to Support an Integrated Sexuality to Confront AIDS, which works with HIV and AIDS education and prevention, as well as promoting and protecting the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

**Nepal:** In May 2009 PBI started a partnership with the Dalit Feminist Uplift Organization, which was established by Dalit women in 1997 as an independent Nepali NGO in Gulariya, in the Bardiya district. The organization works on the human rights of marginalized communities, particularly focusing on women's rights and is run by and for Dalit women with the goal of tackling discrimination, improving their social and economic status and increasing access to constitutional rights.

**Mexico:** PBI has accompanied numerous WHRDs in Mexico, including Obtilia Eugenio Manuel, Andrea Eugenio Manuel, Cuauhtémoc Ramirez Rodriguez, Ines Ortega and Valentina Cantu, members of the Organization of the Indigenous Me'Phaa People. The accompaniment began in 2005, following a series of death threats to Obtilia Eugenio Manuel shortly after she denounced the militarization of the region where they live. Aggressions against members of this organization include the rape in 2002 of Valentina Rosendo Cantu and Ines Ortega Fernandez, two Me'phaa indigenous women. In August 2010, the IACHR found the Mexican state responsible for the rape of Valentina Rosendo Cantu and Ines Ortega

Fernandez and ordered measures to ensure truth, justice and reparation, including the abandonment of the use of the military justice system. The project has also accompanied individual WHRDs such as Tita Radilla, vice-president of the Association of Relatives of the Detained, Disappeared, and Victims of Human Rights Abuses in Mexico since 2003, and Alba Cruz of the 25 November Committee in Oaxaca.

**Indonesia:** The main WHRD organization accompanied by PBI in Indonesia was Humi Inane, which received accompaniment starting in December 2009. Humi Inane works for women's rights in the Central Highlands of Papua. The project provided protective accompaniment for victims and witnesses in cases of violence against women and for individuals in women's collectives. The Indonesia Project closed its field presence in January 2011 although there is the possibility that the project will return at a later date.

### 3.6 Emergency hotline<sup>20</sup>

FL has established an international emergency telephone hotline aimed at supporting defenders at immediate risk. The emergency service, which is provided in several languages (Arabic, English, French, Russian, and Spanish), is intended to mobilize rapid international support and action. Urgent actions can include faxed or phoned appeals to relevant authorities, raising the case through EU or individual government representatives, practical help with temporary relocation, or assistance with medical or legal expenses.

<sup>20</sup> Defenders can contact Front Line at any hour on the emergency hotline at +353 1 21 00 489 or via Skype (user name: front-line-emergency). Defenders can also email Front Line through a secure and encrypted channel, which can be found on their web site.

## 4. Support for Relocation and Other Grants

### 4.1 Temporary relocation

The objective of this type of measure is to relocate defenders who are facing immediate risk as a result of their human rights work and interviewees described a range of variations in how temporary relocation takes place. Some organizations have set up specific relocation or placement programs and work with defenders on various aspects of the relocation process. Other organizations provide financial assistance, but are not necessarily involved in the process of relocating the defender. Additionally, some groups work on an ad hoc basis, finding ways to relocate individuals on a case-by-case basis, which may involve seeking external funds and temporarily hosting WHRDs at risk within the organization or with allies, or referring them to organizations with relocation programs.

An example of where organizations have set up specific relocation or placement programs is FORUM ASIA, which has a protection plan for defenders that provides support of up to USD 4,000 for three to six months' relocation with a member or partner organization in its network. Defenders applying for this grant must demonstrate that other remedies and protection measures are inadequate. The program also requires that the defender applying for relocation assistance is a member of FORUM ASIA's network or has worked with their members or partners.<sup>21</sup> The EHAHRDP also provides this type of relocation assistance to defenders from its sub-region.

Both FORUM ASIA and EHAHRDP work in cooperation with member and partner organizations from their regions to relocate defenders with other partner NGOs. This allows WHRDs to move temporarily to a neighbouring country and continue their human rights work in a safer environment. For example, FORUM ASIA's placement plan takes into account the feasibility of obtaining a visa or otherwise entering a neighbouring country, as well as the type of work carried out by the host organization and the skills and knowledge of the WHRD to be relocated. FORUM ASIA then liaises with the host organization to secure accommodations and to arrange the regular transfer of funds to cover living expenses.

In the past, AI has also run a small placement program through which they have helped defenders escape dangerous situations, for example by supporting travel to a safe place within their country or by helping to organize short- to mid-term placements in another country. Though this work is now limited, AI Spain continues to run a small placement program that allows a limited number of defenders (four to five per year) to live in Spain temporarily. Under this program, defenders are granted a residency permit for exceptional circumstances, which is provided for in Spanish immigration law. The residency permit can be granted for one year and renewed for a second but the AI protection program itself only lasts from three months to one year. Defenders cannot apply directly to AI Spain, but rather are selected through the International Secretariat in London. AI Spain provides logistics and material support, including for visa applications (which can take from two to three months), receiving defenders at the airport and finding accommodation for them and their families. The program also provides for the physical and psychological well-being of defenders who have access to medical care and psychological support from a group specializing in working with victims of violence. AI Spain helps ensure that defenders can continue with their human rights work while in Spain by placing them with local chapters of AI and by putting them in contact with other human rights organizations. In some cases, AI Spain will also support defenders' enrolment in courses. Although a global program available to defenders from any country, the AI Spain section has worked primarily with human rights defenders from Latin America and most participants in this program come from Colombia. This is likely due to language and cultural connections, however the program is not exclusively available to Latin American defenders.

Similarly, FL has been able to negotiate the granting of humanitarian visas for defenders in Ireland. The procedure was established in 2005 and includes two main scenarios: emergency situations in which defenders

<sup>21</sup> For more information concerning criteria and selection process see: [http://www.forum-asia.org/news/in\\_the\\_news/pdfs/Protection](http://www.forum-asia.org/news/in_the_news/pdfs/Protection)

## 4. Support for Relocation and Other Grants

face significant, immediate risks, and situations in which defenders have been working in the face of significant risks for an extended period of time and would benefit from a period of respite. Visas are awarded for a short-stay of three months in Ireland.

FL also accepts applications for relocation to third countries under its grant program. In this case, NGOs or defenders themselves coordinate the logistics of the relocation on their own. In 2009, FL awarded sixty-seven relocation grants, which supported the relocation of 112 people, including defenders and family members. In one case, FL supported the relocation of a WHRD from a rural area in eastern DRC to Uvira, a city in the northeast part of the country. The grant covered transport, medical fees, and living expenses for the WHRD and her family for three months, the maximum amount of time for which FL awards support.<sup>22</sup>

Several human rights organizations provide financial support for relocation and placement but are not involved in the logistics. For instance, UAF provides financial support for relocation of WHRDs under its Rapid Response Grants program. In one case in 2006, UAF provided a grant of USD 2,000 for the relocation from Venezuela to Argentina of a transgender activist who was receiving death threats from the police.<sup>23</sup> MADRE has provided similar financial assistance under the Afghan Women's Survival Fund: in 2009 MADRE received a request through its partner organization in Afghanistan and provided financial assistance to relocate a WHRD and her three children to Pakistan. MADRE provided USD 5,000 to cover the costs of temporary emergency housing, transportation and passport fees for the individual and her children.

Some of the relocation assistance is not part of a formal program but rather takes place in the context of on-going collaboration with defenders. For example, OMCT has provided relocation assistance under the fund for Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture, as well as through the Observatory. Additionally, FIDH, in partnership with its member organizations, provides ad hoc logistical and financial assistance to defenders at risk, including WHRDs. Assistance can lead to temporary or permanent

relocation within the defender's country, in a neighbouring country or in Europe. CAL also has a small budget for travel and subsistence for temporary relocation in special circumstances and links activists that need to be relocated and organizations that provide this support.

In terms of the process of relocation, it is paramount that WHRDs are involved in discussions about possibilities for relocation either internally or abroad. Some organizations give preference to internal relocation because it is less expensive, does not require a visa, allows the defender to continue to work at the national level, and reduces the experience of being uprooted. For example, WOREC facilitates the temporary relocation of WHRDs facing threats and intimidation from the districts to Kathmandu, offering legal and psychosocial support. WOREC provides financial assistance for the WHRDs' travel and stay in Kathmandu during which the organization lobbies and advocates for her security. Once the situation becomes stable, the WHRD returns back to her district. This relocation program is undertaken by WOREC's Nepal office in coordination with the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal and the National Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

How to address the situation of WHRDs' family members is of particular concern for relocation programs. This is particularly relevant for WHRDs since, in many cases, they act as primary caregivers. The situation of caring for family can increase psychological pressure on WHRDs and impact the well-being of their families if they leave their residence. Some interviewees voiced the need to review these programs to ensure that in cases of WHRDs relocation assistance can be extended to the family and not only the individual. Another concern for relocation programs is whether this measure is temporary or involves longer-term support. Once relocation has taken place (nationally or internationally), how far does

<sup>22</sup> For more information on the Front Line grants program and application form, visit <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/guidelines-grant-applications>. Front Line endeavours to make decisions on an emergency grant within 48 hours.

<sup>23</sup> For more information on the Urgent Action Fund see <http://urgentactionfund.org/index.php?id=76>

## 4. Support for Relocation and Other Grants

an organization's responsibility go in providing for the individual or her/his family?

Moreover, interviewees highlighted some concerns related to the type of support that it is appropriate during relocation. For example, it was questioned whether psychosocial support is always necessary. If it is applicable, should there be automatic elements of language training for defenders whose home language is different to that of the country to which they have been relocated? In cases where the WHRD is no longer able to continue her human rights work, should there be automatic vocational training or support for the development of a small business? Are there any provisions that should never be included in relocation programs, such as providing things that could create a situation of dependency (i.e. cars, computers)? Another consideration is to what extent the organization supporting the relocation is legally and financially liable for the actions of that individual if, for instance, the individual goes in hiding. Finally, organizations must consider how to support one another in the event that the initial individual budgets for relocation are not sufficient.

### 4.2 Emergency grants and relief programs

As we have seen in earlier sections of this report, in particular with respect to relocation initiatives, grant programs are an important element of many organizations' response efforts. Some organizations offer grants to WHRDs with the objective of strengthening their security and supporting protection measures. Some grants are offered to defenders in general, while others specifically concern WHRDs and they may be worldwide or country-specific. Application requirements vary by organization, but generally applicants must establish how the grant will make a difference to the WHRD's security and how it will reduce the risks that she or her organization are facing. For the most part, grants are not prescriptive and are open to the needs of defenders in general and some more specifically to the needs of WHRDs. Rather than offering a pre-established set of measures, these grants allow defenders to tailor financial assistance to their needs.

Grants have been used to: improve security (through the provision of surveillance cameras, bars on windows, security guards etc.); to purchase equipment (radios, computers, mobile phones); to provide safe transport to meetings or court hearings; to pay for legal and medical fees; to support evacuations to safe houses or; to support temporary relocation for a WHRD and her family to another city or another country.

Key to the success of emergency grant programs are their ability to allow WHRDs to avoid burdensome procedures and to access grants quickly. In terms of time, the application cycles for this type of emergency grant are very short compared to the cycles of regular grant applications, which can take from six months to one year for approval, whereas emergency grants can be approved in a matter of hours or days. For example, UAF<sup>24</sup> has a rapid response grant-making team of three people who review applications and have a mandate to respond within 72 hours.<sup>25</sup> In cases of imminent risks, grants can be approved very quickly and once approved, funds may be disbursed within one week. At FL, the Board of Trustees considers non-urgent applications on a quarterly basis. However, in cases of imminent risk, grants can be approved at the discretion of the Director in a matter of hours or days.

Language accessibility as well as simplified proposal requirements (forms) are important to ensure that WHRDs can access these grants. For example UAF accepts grant proposals in any language. However, they may require additional time for translation if proposals are received in languages other than English, Spanish, Russian, Arabic or Urdu. FL accepts applications in Arabic, Russian, English, French or Spanish. Application forms for this type of grant are also simplified compared to the information required for a regular funding proposal. Typically, information required for this type of grant includes information about the organization or individual requesting the grant, the situation and security risks, the proposed measures of protection and the amount requested.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The UAF reports that in 2009 it approved 97 rapid response grants. Fifty percent of all the grants that they approved were for protection and security.

<sup>25</sup> This does not necessarily mean that they will approve the grant in 72 hours but that the applicant will receive notification they are in the process of reviewing the application.

## 4. Support for Relocation and Other Grants

Other organizations are also able to provide this type of assistance to WHRDs through relief programs. For example, the Afghan Women's Survival Fund, created by MADRE, "supports an underground rescue network of women committed to providing shelter and secret transport to women who have been targeted because they dare to speak out for human rights. The Fund provides cell phones to link partners in the rescue network, and covers costs of emergency medical care, food, shelter, local and international transportation, and clothing and other personal effects for women who are forced to escape quickly."<sup>27</sup> In 2006, MADRE also created the Emergency and Disaster Relief Fund for women and families to ensure that community-based women groups participated in designing and carrying out disaster relief efforts and to protect women's rights in times of crisis.<sup>28</sup>

Under the Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture fund, as well as in the framework of the Observatory, OMCT provides social assistance to victims of torture, including defenders. This type of assistance is temporary and is intended to allow the victim or her/his family to cope with difficult situations, for example, by leaving the country or by covering living costs in their home or other country. As mentioned in the sections above, this fund also provides for legal and medical assistance. FIDH also has several relief headlines that provide funds to individuals and their families in emergency situations, whether within the framework of the Observatory or through other programs.

In addition, AI has a relief program that provides funds to individuals in emergency situations. Funds can cover a wide range of assistance, including legal aid, emergency flights, basic living expenses, food and shelter, trial observation or security equipment, among other forms of support. The relief program can also support non-emergency relief applications in the form of limited project and capacity building support to small human rights organizations when such projects align with AI's strategic goals.

At the national level, UDEFEGUA has developed an emergency relief project for defenders in Guatemala facing imminent risk. The program is geared towards

defenders working in rural or semi-urban areas, where they are more vulnerable and have less access to the support provided by regional or international organizations. Under this program, support is offered for temporary family relocation, living expenses, transportation, school fees for children, medical expenses and expenses related to making offices secure. The project includes covering funeral expenses in cases where defenders and social leaders come from low-income families.

### 4.3 Fellowships

Fellowship programs provide defenders with the possibility of taking leave from their regular work to pursue projects that will contribute to their protection and enhance their capacity to continue their work in defense of human rights. Fellowships can take place inside or outside a defender's country. When WHRDs are placed outside their home countries, the organizations providing fellowships facilitate the application of visas, but may need other organizations in receiving countries to assist with the logistics of accommodation, setting up meetings, arranging courses, etc.

Fellowship programs can include scholarships to study towards a formal degree, or cover non-degrees schemes, such as taking a course or conducting research. They also support internships with other organizations, participation in conferences, or trauma counselling. In order for this type of support measure to be effective, fellowship programs should be tailored to the specific needs of WHRDs in each case and the WHRD should have the option to propose a project relevant to the development of her work.

Because WHRDs may not be able to leave their work or their country for prolonged periods of time, these programs require flexibility. FL has implemented changes to make such programs more flexible: compared to a previous fellowship program of six months in Dublin,

<sup>26</sup> Grants offered by Front Line are for amounts up to a maximum of EUR 6,000.

<sup>27</sup> For more information see: <http://www.madre.org/index/meet-madre-1/our-projects-20/afghanistan-the-afghan-womens-survival-fund-133.html>

<sup>28</sup> "How We Work" <http://www.madre.org/index/meet-madre-1/how-we-work-4.html>

## 4. Support for Relocation and Other Grants

fellowships can now take place from one to six months and can be to Dublin, Brussels, Geneva or another location if justified. To ensure WHRDs' access to this type of assistance, the application process and information required should not be too burdensome.

FL offers three to four general fellowships per year as well as a digital security fellowship for defenders to travel to Dublin and work with and learn from the FL Information Systems Coordinator. Participation in both types of fellowship is on an invitational basis.<sup>29</sup> The EHAHRDP also works in partnership with universities in Uganda, Kenya, the U.S. and England to place defenders in academic programs. On the other hand, Komnas Perempuan plans to create a fellowship program for WHRDs. In preparation for the program, they have interviewed over ninety women about the type of support they need. Based on their comments, the fellowships would also cover non-degrees schemes such as internships, research and short courses. Scholarships could be awarded to study in Indonesia or abroad.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> For more information on the fellowship program see: <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/front-line-fellowships>

<sup>30</sup> For the first trial of this program on November 2010, the Commission supported several WHRDs to participate in a national conference on "Law and Punishment" organized by the Graduate Program on Women Studies, University of Indonesia.

## 5. State Measures

NGOs are not the only institutions that provide protection measures for WHRDs at risk. In particular, interviewees highlighted programs offered by state agencies in Colombia and Guatemala. While these state-sponsored measures offer important protections in some cases, they have also been heavily criticized. It is important for organizations to be aware of these measures, both in order to know the pitfalls and challenges inherent in state measures, and because NGOs can learn from these programs how to better tailor their own efforts.

**Colombia.** Colombia's National Protection Program for Human Rights Defenders is meant to serve a number of civil society groups, including human rights organizations, social and community groups, peasant organizations, journalists, and organizations representing different ethnic groups. Protective measures adopted under this program can range from preventive (self-protection trainings and police patrols), to more sophisticated protection schemes, such as temporary relocation, the provision of mobile phones to allow defenders to communicate directly with authorities, providing defenders with safe transportation, bullet proof vests, armoured cars and the installation of security systems in offices (surveillance cameras, bars on windows) and body guards.

The Colombia program, established under the Minister of Interior and Justice, has a Regulatory and Risk Evaluation Committee (CRER) that decides the protective measures to be adopted according to levels of risk determined by studies conducted by the national police and the Department of National Security (DAS).

Civil society organizations as well as United Nations mechanisms have pointed to a series of flaws in this program.<sup>31</sup> In the UN SR report on the situation of defenders following her official mission to Colombia, the Rapporteur highlighted how in several cases, the protective measures adopted by the CRER were inadequate for the

<sup>31</sup> Sekaggya, Margaret, A/HRC/13/22/Add.3, "See Report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders," 13th session of the Human Rights Council, 4 March 2010, paras. 110-115. See also The Swedish Foundation for Human Rights, (2004), *Libertad de Expresión en Colombia, Violencia, Impunidad, y Autocensura*, [www.cidh.oas.org/relatoria/ShowDocument.asp?DocumentID=152](http://www.cidh.oas.org/relatoria/ShowDocument.asp?DocumentID=152)



## 5. State Measures

specific situation of vulnerability faced by the person requesting protection. In other cases, the measures “failed to address the specificities of the profile of defenders pertaining to gender, ethnic affiliation, leadership position and place of residence, for example.”<sup>32</sup> In addition, the UN SR noted that defenders have complained that the process of granting protective measures is slow (up to three months between the request and the granting).

Defenders have also voiced a lack of trust in the program’s protection schemes. For example, defenders have mentioned that they do not feel safe with the bodyguards provided by the DAS. In some instances, defenders have suspected that the threats came from the very same entity in charge of providing protection. According to the UN SR, “bodyguards assigned by DAS for the protection of defenders have reportedly spied on them and transmitted information to the intelligence agency.”<sup>33</sup> In connection with this, defenders have also raised concerns about the privatization of protection measures, which will transfer the responsibility to protect defenders from the state to private security companies. Defenders have expressed concerns that “former paramilitaries could be employed, and could similarly spy on them and transmit information to intelligence services, in pursuit of economic benefits.”<sup>34</sup>

**Guatemala.** Guatemala has not developed a defenders protection program per se, but the state has set up several initiatives for their protection.<sup>35</sup> For example, the Human Rights Procurator General’s Office, a judge, or the Attorney General’s Office can request the Ministry of Interior to adopt protective measures in favour of defenders who are victims of human rights violations. Once the Ministry of Interior decides to adopt protective measures, the entity in charge of implementing these measures—the National Civil Police—must carry out a risk assessment to determine the type of protection measures that are needed. Protection measures can include the provision of police patrols or security guards to accompany defenders or guard homes and offices.

If the defender is also a witness or is taking part in a criminal case, she/he can also benefit from protective measures under the Witness Protection Office of the

Attorney General’s Office. The police department has also established investigative units for crimes committed against justice officials, human rights activists, unionists and journalists. These investigative units work in coordination with the Attorney General’s Office.

Defenders have highlighted a number of concerns with respect to these state measures. Firstly, the granting of protection measures is perceived as arbitrary, the police do not always carry out risk assessments and the range of protection measures that they can provide is very limited. Often the police will agree to carry out police patrols, but defenders are not aware of when or if these police patrols take place. In some cases, defenders must cover part of the cost of these protection measures. For example, when police officers are sent to communities to provide security, defenders are often required to provide the officer’s food and accommodation. Many defenders cannot afford to do this. In addition, because many police officers are themselves accused of perpetrating human rights violations, defenders’ lack of trust in the police is also a major challenge.

Another challenge is that there are not established criteria, meaning the granting of protection measures is perceived as arbitrary.

In many cases, WHRDs have refused to accept measures offered by the Guatemalan authorities because they are not specifically designed for women. A WHRD cannot, for instance, have a male police officer accompanying her 24 hours a day. WHRDs assist other women during their daily work and need to be protected by someone who can be

<sup>32</sup> Sekaggya, Margaret, A/HRC/13/22/Add.3, “Report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders,” 13th session of the Human Rights Council, 4 March 2010, para. 111. See also *Plan integral de protección a víctimas y testigos de graves violaciones a derechos humanos e infracciones a derecho internacional humanitario, con enfoque diferencial de género. Propuesta para el cumplimiento de la sentencia T-496 de 2008*, November 25, 2008, <http://www.protectionline.org/Plan-integral-de-proteccion-a.html>

<sup>33</sup> Sekaggya, Margaret, A/HRC/13/22/Add.3, “Report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders,” 13th session of the Human Rights Council, 4 March 2010, para. 112.

<sup>34</sup> Sekaggya, Margaret, A/HRC/13/22/Add.3, “Report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders,” 13th session of the Human Rights Council, 4 March 2010, para. 112.

<sup>35</sup> Sekaggya, Margaret, A/HRC/13/22/Add.3, “See Report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders,” 13th session of the Human Rights Council, 30 December 2009, paras. 77-78.

## 5. State Measures

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trusted by her and by the people with whom she works. It is also important to take into account that WHRDs often take care of children and manage households, and therefore measures should be designed to minimize intrusion.

A final important limitation in such protective measure is the lack of coordination among the different entities providing these services. Since 2008, there have been a number of initiatives to create a protection program that would consolidate the protection measures of different state entities in Guatemala. In 2009, both civil society organizations and state entities, including representatives from the executive and the judiciary, reached an agreement on the establishment of a combined protection program for defenders in the country. However, this agreement was later rejected by the government.

**Other countries.** Spain and Ireland have also established some measures to provide protection for defenders at risk. Under the Spanish program, defenders are granted a residency permit to live in Spain for a limited period of time. Similarly, the Irish government has established a fast-track procedure to allow defenders at risk to travel to Ireland and obtain a short-stay visa of three months. These measures are discussed in detail in the section discussing temporary relocation.

## 6. Conclusion

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This study maps out the existing responses to WHRDs being provided by seventeen women's rights and human rights organizations, most of which are members of the WHRD IC. The purpose of the mapping is twofold: to serve as a guide for WHRDs in their search for particular measures of support and to offer a survey of different organizations and their approaches and contributions to supporting WHRDs.

In spite of efforts to support WHRDs, participants in this project have highlighted that the lack of recognition of WHRDs as such continues to pose a major challenge in providing protection. Research participants further underscored the need to reach out to WHRDs and to grassroots women's groups in order to publicize the resources currently available for their work as well as to help find long-term solutions to specific cases.

It is hoped that this overview will contribute toward increased collaboration and collective strategizing on protecting women human rights defenders.

## Annex 1 Table of Existing Responses

Organization	Urgent appeals	Work with regional and international mechanisms	Awards	Solidarity and monitoring visits	Trial observation	Legal assistance	Medical assistance and psychosocial counselling	Stress management program	Safe houses	Protective accompaniment	Emergency hotline	Temporary relocation	Grants and relief programs	Fellowships
<b>Amnesty International (AI)</b> w: www.amnesty.org e: amnestyis@amnesty.org	p. 25	p. 27	p. 30		p. 31							p. 37	p. 40	
<b>Front Line (FL)</b> w: www.frontlinedefenders.org e: info@frontlinedefenders.org	p. 25	p. 27	p. 30		p. 31	p. 33	p. 34	p. 36			p. 37	p. 38	p. 40	p. 42
<b>Human Rights First (HRF)</b> w: www.humanrightsfirst.org e: DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org	p. 25	p. 27	p. 30		p. 31									
<b>The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)</b> w: www.fidh.org e: fidh@fidh.org	p. 25	p. 28	p. 30	p. 30	p. 31	p. 33	p. 34					p. 38	p. 40	
<b>MADRE</b> w: www.madre.org e: madre@madre.org		p. 28				p. 33	p. 34					p. 38	p. 40	
<b>Peace Brigades International (PBI)</b> w: www.peacebrigades.org e: admin@peacebrigades.org										p. 37				
<b>The Urgent Action Fund (UAF)</b> w: www.urgentactionfund.org e: urgentact@urgentactionfund.org												p. 38	p. 41	
<b>The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)</b> w: www.omct.org e: omct@omct.org	p. 25	p. 28	p. 30	p. 30	p. 32	p. 33	p. 34					p. 38	p. 41	
<b>Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)</b> w: www.wluml.org e: wluml@wluml.org	p. 26	p. 28	p. 30		p. 32	p. 33			p. 36			p. 38		
<b>ASIA</b>														
<b>Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)</b> w: www.forum-asia.org e: hrd@forum-asia.org	p. 26	p. 28			p. 32	p. 33						p. 39		
<b>Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)</b> w: www.worecnepal.org e: worec.whrd@gmail.com	p. 26	p. 29			p. 32	p. 33	p. 35		p. 36			p. 39		
<b>The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)</b> w: www.komnasperempuan.or.id e: mail@komnasperempuan.or.id	p. 26	p. 29		p. 31	p. 32	p. 33	p. 35	p. 36					p. 41	p. 42
<b>AFRICA</b>														
<b>The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)</b> w: www.defenddefenders.org e: program@defenddefenders.org	p. 26	p. 29		p. 31	p. 32	p. 34	p. 35				p. 37	p. 39		p. 42
<b>Coalition for African Lesbians (CAL)</b> w: www.cal.org.za e: info@cal.org.za				p. 31					p. 36			p. 39	p. 41	p. 42
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>														
<b>The Colombian Commission of Jurist (CCJ)</b> w: www.coljuristas.org e: ccj@coljuristas.org	p. 26	p. 29				p. 34						p. 39		p. 42
<b>Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas-Colombia (LMDC)</b> w: www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org e: institucional@ligademujeres.org	p. 27	p. 29				p. 34	p. 35		p. 36					
<b>Unidad de Proteccion a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEUGUA)</b> w: www.udefegua.org e: udefegua@udefegua.org	p. 27	p. 29				p. 34	p. 35						p. 41	

More info available on organization page

## Participating Organizations: General areas of work

### Amnesty International (AI)

w: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

e: [amnestyis@amnesty.org](mailto:amnestyis@amnesty.org)

**Areas of work:** Defenders, death penalty, armed conflict, business and human rights, children's rights, counter-terrorism, discrimination, economic, social and cultural rights, freedom of expression, indigenous peoples, international justice, poverty, the rights of refugee, migrant and internally displaced people, sexual orientation and gender identity, and violence against women. Through its campaign to Stop Violence against Women, AI has developed and used campaign tools to highlight the profiles and cases of WHRDs.

**Geographic focus:** International

**Languages:** The website is available in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic.

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

**Areas of work:** Protection of defenders at risk.

**Geographic focus:** International

**Languages:** The website is available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, and Russian.

### Human Rights First (HRF)

w: [www.humanrightsfirst.org](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org)

e: [DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org](mailto:DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org)

**Areas of work:** HRF runs a program on defenders. Other areas of work include: refugee protection, discrimination, crimes against humanity, law and security.

**Geographic focus:** International

The defenders program has focused on Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran and Thailand.

**Languages:** The website is available in English, with some urgent actions available in Spanish and Farsi.

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)

e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

**Areas of work:** Together with the OMCT, FIDH runs a defenders program called the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (the Observatory). Other areas of work include: international justice, terrorism, death penalty, women's rights, forced disappearances, migrant rights and globalization and economic, social and cultural rights.

**Geographic focus:** International

**Languages:** The website is available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, and Farsi.

### MADRE

w: [www.madre.org](http://www.madre.org)

e: [madre@madre.org](mailto:madre@madre.org)

**Areas of work:** Women's human rights, including health and reproductive rights, violence against women, peace building, economic development, and environmental justice, education and other human rights.

**Geographic focus:** International. MADRE works in the following countries: Afghanistan, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Palestine, Panama, Peru, and Sudan.

**Languages:** The website is available in English and Spanish.

### Peace Brigades International (PBI)

w: [www.peacebrigades.org](http://www.peacebrigades.org)

e: [admin@peacebrigades.org](mailto:admin@peacebrigades.org)

**Areas of work:** Protection of defenders at risk.

**Geographic focus:** International. PBI currently works in Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Nepal.

**Languages:** The website is available in English and Spanish. Country Groups also maintain websites in their own languages.

## General areas of work

### The Urgent Action Fund (UAF)

w: [www.urgentactionfund.org](http://www.urgentactionfund.org)

e: [urgentact@urgentactionfund.org](mailto:urgentact@urgentactionfund.org)

**Areas of work:** Promotion and protection of WHRDs through rapid response grant making, research, publications, advocacy and alliance building.

**Geographic focus:** There are three UAF sister-fund organizations. One based in Africa, one based in Latin America, and one based in the United States. Any grant application from the continent of Africa should be sent to UAF-Africa. Any applications from Spanish or Portuguese speaking Latin American countries should be sent to UAF-Latin America. All other requests should be sent to UAF in the United States.

**Languages:** The website is available in English. The grant applications are available in French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Nepali, Bahasa, Indonesian, Haitian Creole, Turkish, Georgian, Urdu, Albanian, and Serbian.

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)

e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

**Areas of work:** Together with the FIDH, OMCT runs a defenders program called the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (Observatory). Other areas of work include: torture, economic, social and cultural rights, children's rights and violence against women.

**Geographic focus:** International

**Languages:** The website is available in English, French, and Spanish.

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)

e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

**Areas of work:** Promotion of women's equality and their rights in Muslim and non-Muslim contexts. WLUML provides information, support, and a collective space for women whose lives are shaped, conditioned, or governed by laws and customs said to derive from Islam.

**Geographic focus:** International

**Languages:** The website available in English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Russian, and Chinese.

## ASIA

### Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)

w: [www.forum-asia.org](http://www.forum-asia.org)

e: [hrd@forum-asia.org](mailto:hrd@forum-asia.org)

**Areas of work:** Forum Asia runs a defenders program, which includes WHRDs. Other areas of work include: social justice, sustainable human development, participatory democracy, gender equality, peace and human security.

**Geographic focus:** Asia

**Languages:** The website is available in English.

## General areas of work

### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)  
e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

**Areas of work:** WHRDs, trafficking, migration, women's health, violence against women, economic socio-cultural rights such as right to food and right to women's health, children and youth development, sustainable livelihood, community development, chhahari programme (a drop in center for women working in the informal sector and entertainment area).

**Geographic focus:** Nepal

**Languages:** The website is available in English and Nepali.

### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)  
e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

**Areas of work:** violence against women, including violence against WHRDs.

**Geographic focus:** Indonesia

**Languages:** The website is available in Bahasa Indonesia (currently developing the English version).

## AFRICA

### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)  
e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

**Areas of work:** Protection of defenders.

**Geographic focus:** East and Horn of Africa. EHAHRDP focuses on Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia (together with Somaliland), Sudan (together with South Sudan), Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.

**Languages:** The website is available in English. Communication in French is available.

### Coalition for African Lesbians (CAL)

w: [www.cal.org.za](http://www.cal.org.za)  
e: [info@cal.org.za](mailto:info@cal.org.za)

**Areas of work:** Lesbian equality.

**Geographic focus:** Africa

**Languages:** The website is available in English.

## LATIN AMERICA

### The Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)

w: [www.coljuristas.org](http://www.coljuristas.org)  
e: [ccj@coljuristas.org](mailto:ccj@coljuristas.org)

**Areas of work:** Promotion and protection of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, and humanitarian law through national and international litigation, monitoring, and public policy design.

**Geographic focus:** Colombia

**Languages:** The website is available in Spanish.

### Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas-Colombia (LMDC)

w: [www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org](http://www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org)  
e: [institucional@ligademujeres.org](mailto:institucional@ligademujeres.org)

**Areas of work:** Rights of displaced women in the context of the armed conflict.

**Geographic focus:** Colombia

**Languages:** The website is available in Spanish.

### Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEQUA)

w: [www.undefegua.org](http://www.undefegua.org)  
e: [undefegua@undefegua.org](mailto:undefegua@undefegua.org)

**Areas of work:** Protection of defenders and WHRDs.

**Geographic focus:** Guatemala y Honduras

**Languages:** The website is available in Spanish.

## Urgent appeals

### Amnesty International (AI)

w: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

e: [amnestyis@amnesty.org](mailto:amnestyis@amnesty.org)

AI:

- has established a defenders alert mechanism, which includes urgent appeals for WHRDs at risk;
- has established an automated system that allows individuals and organizations to send a letter or a petition to a government official from the website. See the *Take Action* under the *Defenders* section of the website.

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL has established a defenders alert mechanism, which includes urgent appeals for WHRDs at risk.

It provides sample letters with actions that need to be taken by national authorities and addresses for individuals or organizations to take action. See the *Act Now* section of the website.

### Human Rights First (HRF)

w: [www.humanrightsfirst.org](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org)

e: [DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org](mailto:DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org)

HRF provides sample letters with actions that need to be taken by national authorities and addresses for individuals or organizations to take action. See the *Take Action* section of the website.

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)

e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

FIDH:

- has established a defenders alert mechanism, which includes urgent appeals for WHRDs at risk;
- provides information about each case as well as the actions that should be taken by national authorities;
- provides addresses for individuals or organizations to take action. See the *Urgent Appeals* section of the website.

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)

e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

OMCT:

- has established a defenders alert mechanism, which includes urgent appeals for WHRDs at risk;
- provides information about each case as well as on the actions that should be taken by national authorities;
- provides addresses for individuals or organizations to take action. See the *Urgent Appeals* section of the website.

## Urgent appeals

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)

e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

WLUML:

- has established a women alert mechanism, which includes urgent appeals for WHRDs at risk;
- provides information about each case as well as on the actions that should be taken by national authorities;
- provides addresses for individuals or organizations to take action. See the *Action* section of the website.

## ASIA

### Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)

w: [www.forum-asia.org](http://www.forum-asia.org)

e: [hrd@forum-asia.org](mailto:hrd@forum-asia.org)

Forum Asia produces statements related to violations against defenders and WHRDs. See the *Statements* section of the website.

The website does not include a procedure for individuals or organizations to take action.

### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)

e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

WOREC:

- produces appeals related to violations against WHRDs;
- appeals are not available in the website.

### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)

e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan:

- provides letters of support addressed to local authorities for WHRDs facing threats;
- supports appeals related to violations against WHRDS.

## AFRICA

### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)

e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP:

- produces timely appeals when defenders are under attack;
- has also written letters to national authorities concerning violations of defenders' rights;
- Appeals (*public statements*) can be found on the EHAHRDP website.

## LATIN AMERICA

### The Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)

w: [www.coljuristas.org](http://www.coljuristas.org)

e: [ccj@coljuristas.org](mailto:ccj@coljuristas.org)

CCJ produces appeals when defenders are under attack.



## Urgent appeals

### Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas-Colombia (LMDC)

w: [www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org](http://www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org)

e: [institucional@ligademujeres.org](mailto:institucional@ligademujeres.org)

LMDC:

- produces urgent appeals concerning violations against WHRDs;
- provides information about each case as well as on the actions that should be taken by national authorities;
- provides addresses for individuals or organizations to take action. See the *Mujeres en Resistencia* (women in resistance) section of the website.
- some urgent appeals are available in English.

### Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEFUGA)

w: [www.undefegua.org](http://www.undefegua.org)

e: [undefegua@undefegua.org](mailto:undefegua@undefegua.org)

UDEFEFUGA:

- sends urgent appeals to international and regional human rights mechanisms and to international non-governmental organizations (which can decide to issue an appeal based on the information that they sent);
- only publicizes the appeals at the end of the year in the annual report.

## Work with regional and international mechanisms

### Amnesty International (AI)

w: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

e: [amnestyis@amnesty.org](mailto:amnestyis@amnesty.org)

AI regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

AI also works with:

- The Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa;
- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- EU embassies and other institutions.

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

FL also works with:

- EU embassies and other institutions;
- The Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa.

### Human Rights First (HRF)

w: [www.humanrightsfirst.org](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org)

e: [DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org](mailto:DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org)

HRF regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

HRF also works with:

- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- EU embassies and other institutions.

## Work with regional and international mechanisms

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)

e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

FIDH: systematically submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

FIDH also works with:

- UN treaty bodies;
- The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, including the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa;
- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- EU institutions and dialogues, country delegations and embassies including:
- ODHIR at OSCE;
- Council of Europe;
- Organisation internationale de la Francophonie;
- The Commonwealth; and Supports the development of mechanisms at the ASEAN and at the League of Arab States.

### MADRE

w: [www.madre.org](http://www.madre.org)

e: [madre@madre.org](mailto:madre@madre.org)

MADRE submits urgent appeals to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

MADRE has also worked with:

- UN treaty bodies (the Human Rights Committee and the Committee against Torture).

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)

e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

OMCT regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

OMCT also works with:

- UN treaty bodies;
- The Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa;
- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- EU embassies and other institutions.

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)

e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

WLUML regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

WLUML sends appeals to states and their embassies.

## ASIA

### Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)

w: [www.forum-asia.org](http://www.forum-asia.org)

e: [hrd@forum-asia.org](mailto:hrd@forum-asia.org)

Forum Asia: regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

Forum Asia: also works with:

- EU embassies and other institutions.

## Work with regional and international mechanisms

### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)  
e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

WOREC regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

WOREC also works with:

- EU embassies and other institutions;
- is a part of the EU working group on Human Rights Defenders in Nepal.

### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)  
e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan submits reports to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

Komnas Perempuan supports the development of ASEAN mechanisms on Human Rights.

## AFRICA

### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)  
e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP: regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

EHAHRDP also works with:

- The Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa;
- EU embassies and other institutions. It has recently engaged with EU missions in different countries to have Local Implementation Strategies for EU Guidelines.

## LATIN AMERICA

### The Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)

w: [www.coljuristas.org](http://www.coljuristas.org)  
e: [ccj@coljuristas.org](mailto:ccj@coljuristas.org)

CCJ submits urgent appeals to the UN SR other UN special procedures and Inter-american mechanisms of protection depending on the nature of the violation.

CCJ also works with:

- UN treaty bodies;
- The Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights;
- EU embassies and other institutions.

### Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas-Colombia (LMDC)

w: [www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org](http://www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org)  
e: [institucional@ligademujeres.org](mailto:institucional@ligademujeres.org)

LMDC submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

LMDC also works with:

- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- EU embassies and other institutions.

### Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEFUGA)

w: [www.undefegua.org](http://www.undefegua.org)  
e: [undefegua@undefegua.org](mailto:undefegua@undefegua.org)

UDEFEFUGA regularly submits urgent appeals to the UN SR and other Rapporteurs depending on the nature of the violation.

UDEFEFUGA also works with:

- The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- EU embassies and other institutions.

## Awards

### Amnesty International (AI)

w: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)  
e: [amnestyis@amnesty.org](mailto:amnestyis@amnesty.org)

- Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)  
e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

- Annual Front Line Award
- Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders

### Human Rights First (HRF)

w: [www.humanrightsfirst.org](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org)  
e: [DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org](mailto:DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org)

- Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty
- Human Rights First Human Rights Award
- Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)  
e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

- Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)  
e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

- Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)  
e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

- Nominates WHRDs at risk to various human rights awards.

## Solidarity and monitoring visits

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)  
e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

FIDH in the context of their joint program with the OMCT, the Observatory, carries out fact-finding and solidarity missions. The objectives are:

- to bring support to defenders in difficult situations;
- to support them carrying out their activities;
- to enable them to meet representatives of international and regional intergovernmental organizations as well as foreign authorities, in order to promote their lobbying actions;
- to alert the international media on their situation and on the human rights situation in the country.

These solidarity missions respond to local needs and are dispatched at the request or following a discussion with local members and partners.

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)  
e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

OMCT, in the context of their joint program with the FIDH and the Observatory, carries out ad hoc solidarity missions. The objectives are:

- to bring support to defenders in difficult situations;
- to support defenders carrying out their activities;
- to enable defenders to meet representatives of international and regional intergovernmental organizations as well as foreign authorities, in order to promote their lobbying actions;
- to alert the international media on their situation and on the human rights situation in the country.

These solidarity missions respond to local needs and are dispatched at the request or following a discussion with local members and partners on their usefulness.

## Solidarity and monitoring visits

### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)

e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan:

- can carry out monitoring visits;
- Commissioners or Commission's staff can travel to carry out a visit to verify the information received about a violation.

## AFRICA

### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)

e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP carries out ongoing monitoring of defenders at risk.

### Coalition for African Lesbians (CAL)

w: [www.cal.org.za](http://www.cal.org.za)

e: [info@cal.org.za](mailto:info@cal.org.za)

CAL carries out solidarity visits:

- it has developed an approach to these solidarity visits that involves outside defenders with in-depth knowledge of situations liaising with local LGBTI communities in crisis;
- the expertise of these solidarity visitors is aimed at affirming and strengthening local community organizing during and after crises;
- it also links small emergency grants to its work on solidarity visits. CAL has been able to make small advances of cash. These funds, with simple accountability systems, assist LGBTI community organizing during and after crises.

## Trial observation

### Amnesty International (AI)

w: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

e: [amnestyis@amnesty.org](mailto:amnestyis@amnesty.org)

AI has funds under the relief program that can cover expenses for trial observation.

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL:

- carries out trial observation missions;
- lobbies for international observers when defenders face court proceedings;
- in select cases, may send independent trial observers on its behalf.

### Human Rights First (HRF)

w: [www.humanrightsfirst.org](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org)

e: [DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org](mailto:DooleyB@humanrightsfirst.org)

HRF carries out trial observation missions.

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)

e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

FIDH provides legal assistance to defenders in the context of their joint program with the OMCT, the Observatory.

Legal assistance can also be carried out within the framework of other programs.

Assistance includes covering legal costs of defenders who are victims of legal harassment and appointing a lawyer.

## Trial observation

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)

e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

OMCT, in the context of their joint program with the FIDH, and the Observatory, carry out joint judicial observation missions.

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)

e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

WLUML provides referrals.

## ASIA

### Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)

w: [www.forum-asia.org](http://www.forum-asia.org)

e: [hrd@forum-asia.org](mailto:hrd@forum-asia.org)

Forum Asia carries out trial observation missions.

- Provides assistance to defenders and WHRDs facing legal charges by state or non-state actors.
- Trial observers are members of Forum Asia's network or partners with expertise in monitoring cases involving human rights issues.
- Financial support for trial observation up to USD 2,000.
- Defenders must be a member of Forum Asia's network or work with Forum Asia on human rights issues.

### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)

e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

WOREC attends trials to provide observation.

### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)

e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan provides referrals and monitors trials through defenders' networks.

## AFRICA

The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)

e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP has trial observation missions that are carried out in cases involving defenders working in the East and Horn of Africa sub region to ensure adherence to international fair trial guarantees.

## Legal assistance

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)  
e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL provides financial assistance to defenders to cover lawyer fees, bail, prison visits, and clothes in prison through the security grants program.

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)  
e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

FIDH provides legal assistance to defenders in the context of their joint program with the OMCT, the Observatory. Legal assistance can also be carried out within the framework of other programs.

Assistance includes covering legal costs of defenders who are victims of legal harassment and appointing a lawyer.

### MADRE

w: [www.madre.org](http://www.madre.org)  
e: [madre@madre.org](mailto:madre@madre.org)

Facilitates legal support to national groups.

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)  
e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

OMCT provides legal assistance to defenders under the Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture fund, as well as in the framework of the Observatory.

Assistance includes covering legal fees and support for processing requests for political asylum (when fear of refoulement) as well as covering legal fees of counsels or lawyers of defenders who are subjected to judicial proceedings because of their human rights activities.

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)  
e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

WLUML provides referrals, linking WHRDs with lawyers in asylum cases.

## ASIA

### Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)

w: [www.forum-asia.org](http://www.forum-asia.org)  
e: [hrd@forum-asia.org](mailto:hrd@forum-asia.org)

Forum Asia provides financial assistance to cover legal fees for lawyers up to USD 2,000:

- Defenders must be a member of Forum Asia's network or work with Forum Asia on human rights issues.

### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)  
e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

WOREC provides legal support:

- to cover lawyers' fees and provide regular follow up with the lawyers.

### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)  
e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan provides referrals and letters of support addressed to judiciary institutions.

## Legal assistance

### AFRICA

#### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)  
e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP provides legal advice and support to defenders that require legal interventions.

### LATIN AMERICA

#### The Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)

w: [www.coljuristas.org](http://www.coljuristas.org)  
e: [ccj@coljuristas.org](mailto:ccj@coljuristas.org)

CCJ provides legal orientation. It also provides legal representation in some cases.

#### Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas-Colombia (LMDC)

w: [www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org](http://www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org)  
e: [institucional@ligademujeres.org](mailto:institucional@ligademujeres.org)

LMDC provides legal assistance to WHRDs who are victims of displacement and sexual violence.

#### Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEGUA)

w: [www.undefegua.org](http://www.undefegua.org)  
e: [undefegua@undefegua.org](mailto:undefegua@undefegua.org)

UDEFEGUA provides support to cover legal fees or identifying pro bono lawyers to work on some cases. It also assists with the development of strategies for the litigation of the cases.

## Medical assistance and psychosocial counselling

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)  
e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL provides financial support to defenders and WHRDs in need of medical assistance and counselling through the security grants program.

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)  
e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

FIDH provides medical assistance in the context of their joint program with the OMCT, the Observatory. Medical assistance can also be provided within the framework of other programs.

### MADRE

w: [www.madre.org](http://www.madre.org)  
e: [madre@madre.org](mailto:madre@madre.org)

MADRE has provided financial support for medical assistance for WHRDs in several cases.

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)  
e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

Under the program to assist victims of torture, OMCT works with network members and centers for rehabilitation of torture at the national level to provide medical support to defenders and WHRDs.

Support can also cover medical fees required for physical and psychological treatment, cost of transfer to specialized centers and the fees to cover essential needs in cases in which the patient's hospitalization is not required.



## Medical assistance and psychosocial counselling

### ASIA

#### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)  
e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

WOREC provides psychosocial counselling for WHRDs in the districts. When WHRDs require advanced counselling, they are requested to come to Kathmandu where they can stay for few days and meet with the counsellors.

#### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)  
e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan is developing a healing program.

### AFRICA

#### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)  
e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP: works with network members, the Independent Medico-Legal Unit in Kenya and the Center for the Victims of Torture in Uganda, to provide assistance to defenders and WHRDs in need of trauma counselling. In some cases, private counsellors are retained to extend the necessary support.

### LATIN AMERICA

#### Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas-Colombia (LMDC)

w: [www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org](http://www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org)  
e: [institucional@ligademujeres.org](mailto:institucional@ligademujeres.org)

LMDC provides psychological counselling to WHRDs who are victims of displacement and sexual violence.

#### Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEFEGUA)

w: [www.udefegua.org](http://www.udefegua.org)  
e: [udefegua@udefegua.org](mailto:udefegua@udefegua.org)

UDEFEFEGUA provides psychosocial counselling support to defenders and WHRDs at risk.

A psychologist working with the organization provides this support to individuals, organizations or in some cases communities. In some other cases, defenders may be referred to a specialized psychologist

UDEFEFEGUA is working on developing a national support network to provide this type of assistance.

## Stress management program

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL is currently developing a stress management program to offer this type of support to defenders well known to the organization:

- assistance under the program is decided on a case-by-case basis;
- in some cases, measures have included supporting the staff of an NGO to go on a few days retreat to receive counselling or relaxation techniques, individual counselling, supporting a WHRD to get medical treatment or take a short break;
- the program supports families as well as individuals.

### ASIA

#### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)

e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan is currently developing a healing program for WHRDs, particularly those working in post-conflict and conflict situations.

## Safe houses

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)

e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

WLUML provides referrals.

### ASIA

#### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)

e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

WOREC has built facilities in the office for WHRDs to stay for short periods of time when facing threats and harassment.

### AFRICA

#### Coalition for African Lesbians (CAL)

w: [www.cal.org.za](http://www.cal.org.za)

e: [info@cal.org.za](mailto:info@cal.org.za)

CAL as part of its Human Rights Defenders Project, is establishing a safe house for WHRDs which includes LGBTI persons in Africa.

CAL also links a few short annual fellowships to its safe house project. This will link WHRDs to local organizations and institutions for learning, cross learning and for the creation of feminist knowledge by WHRDs who seldom have time to write or otherwise document their ideas, experiences, and analysis.

### LATIN AMERICA

#### Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas-Colombia (LMDC)

w: [www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org](http://www.ligademujeresdesplazadas.org)

e: [institucional@ligademujeres.org](mailto:institucional@ligademujeres.org)

LMDC has built safe houses for WHRDs who are victims of displacement and sexual violence.

## Protective accompaniment

### Peace Brigades International (PBI)

w: [www.peacebrigades.org](http://www.peacebrigades.org) e: [admin@peacebrigades.org](mailto:admin@peacebrigades.org)

PBI carries out protective accompaniment:

- Volunteers stand side by side with threatened defenders and accompany them in their work. When there is an attack or serious threat, PBI can activate an extensive, high-level network of parliamentarians, lawyers' associations and development agencies around the world to put pressure on the government of the country in question.
- Accompaniment can be in cities or rural areas. When the level of threat is high, accompaniment can be around the clock. In other situations volunteers stay with threatened communities or remain in the offices of organizations, and accompany activists when they travel.
- Another form of accompaniment is regular phone calls to organizations to check on their safety.

## Emergency hotline

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)  
e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL has established an emergency telephone hotline to support defenders at immediate risk:

- +353 1 21 00 489; service provided in several languages: Arabic, English, French, Russian, and Spanish;
- Mobilize rapid international support and action.

## AFRICA

### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)  
e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP has a 24 hour emergency number available for defenders at risk.

## Temporary relocation

### Amnesty International (AI)

w: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)  
e: [amnestyis@amnesty.org](mailto:amnestyis@amnesty.org)

AI runs a small placement program to help defenders and WHRDs escape dangerous situations.

AI Spanish section:

- Facilitates the granting of residency permits for defenders and WHRDs to Spain.
- Residency permits can be granted from three months to one year (permits can be renewed for an additional year, but the protection program of AI lasts from three months to one year only).
- Accompanies WHRDs throughout the process. Provides logistics and material support, including visa applications (can take from two to three months), receiving WHRDs at the airport, and finding accommodation for them and their families.
- Provides medical assistance (physical and psychological).
- Ensures continuation of human rights work (places WHRDs with local chapters and put them in contact with other human rights organizations).
- Places four to five defenders and their families every year.
- Most defenders relocated under this program come from Latin America (Colombia).
- Defenders are selected through the International Secretariat in London and cannot apply directly to the AI Spanish section.

## Temporary relocation

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL facilitates the granting of humanitarian visas to Ireland:

- There is a procedure to allow defenders and WHRDs to travel to Ireland and obtain a short-stay visa of three months.
- Two main scenarios: emergency situations in which defenders face significant immediate risks; and situations in which defenders have been working in the face of significant risks for an extended period of time but would benefit from a period of respite.
- Program does not cover family members.

FL provides financial support for relocation in-country or to third countries under its grant program:

- Defenders or NGOs coordinate the logistics of the relocation on their own.
- Support provided for maximum of 3 months.
- Grants can cover transport, medical fees, and living expenses for WHRDs.

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)

e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

FIDH provides relocation assistance to defenders in the context of their joint program with the OMCT, the Observatory. Assistance can also be provided to victims within the framework of other programs.

Assistance includes contacting institutional partners at international, national, and ground levels for the issuance of visas in cases of emergency, and providing logistical and financial support.

### MADRE

w: [www.madre.org](http://www.madre.org)

e: [madre@madre.org](mailto:madre@madre.org)

MADRE provides financial assistance for relocation under the Afghan Women's Survival Fund:

- Receives requests from partner organizations in Afghanistan.
- It covers relocation of women and family members.
- Assistance can cover the costs of temporary emergency housing, transportation and passport fees (approx. USD 5,000).

### The Urgent Action Fund (UAF)

w: [www.urgentactionfund.org](http://www.urgentactionfund.org)

e: [urgentact@urgentactionfund.org](mailto:urgentact@urgentactionfund.org)

UAF provides financial assistance for relocation of WHRDs under its rapid response grant program (maximum USD 5,000).

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)

e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

OMCT provides relocation assistance under the Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture fund, as well as in the framework of the Observatory, a program it runs jointly with FIDH.

OMCT covers evacuation expenses to a host country and subsistence expenses for defenders and family members.

### Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

w: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)

e: [wluml@wluml.org](mailto:wluml@wluml.org)

WLUML provides referrals.

## Temporary relocation

### ASIA

#### Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)

w: [www.forum-asia.org](http://www.forum-asia.org)  
e: [hrd@forum-asia.org](mailto:hrd@forum-asia.org)

Forum Asia has set up a relocation program for defenders and WHRDs in Asia:

- provides support for travel and living expenses of up to USD 4,000 for three to six months relocation;
- assists defenders with visa applications;
- places defenders to work with member organizations of its network in Asia;
- liaises with the host organization to secure accommodations and to arrange the regular transfer of funds to cover living expenses;
- Defenders must be a member of Forum Asia's network or work with Forum Asia on human rights issues;
- Defenders applying for this grant must demonstrate that other remedies and protection measures are inadequate.

#### Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

w: [www.worecnepal.org](http://www.worecnepal.org)  
e: [worec.whrd@gmail.com](mailto:worec.whrd@gmail.com)

WOREC facilitates temporary relocation of WHRDs within Nepal:

- it facilitates the relocation of WHRDs from the districts to Kathmandu for a short period of time;
- it provides financial assistance for travel and living expenses in Kathmandu;
- relocations are carried out in coordination with the National Human Rights Commission and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

### AFRICA

#### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)  
e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP provides relocation assistance to defenders and WHRDs from the East and Horn of Africa:

- it places defenders with partner organizations in countries in the sub region to ensure that defenders can continue to work during their temporary relocation;
- it provides financial assistance for housing and other basic requirements. Out of country relocation is only carried out as last resort.

#### Coalition for African Lesbians (CAL)

w: [www.cal.org.za](http://www.cal.org.za)  
e: [info@cal.org.za](mailto:info@cal.org.za)

CAL has a small budget for travel and subsistence for temporary relocation in very specific circumstances. It has also served as a link between activists that need to be relocated and organizations that provide this support.

### LATIN AMERICA

#### The Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)

w: [www.coljuristas.org](http://www.coljuristas.org)  
e: [ccj@coljuristas.org](mailto:ccj@coljuristas.org)

CCJ is also part of the We Are Defenders Program (*Programa Somos Defensores*), a non-governmental initiative for the protection of defenders at risk.

This initiative provides defenders, WHRDs and social leaders at risk the possibility to do fellowships and be temporarily relocated to different regions of the country or to other countries. For more information see the *Programa Somos Defensores* website [www.somosdefensores.com](http://www.somosdefensores.com).

## Grants and relief programs

### Amnesty International (AI)

w: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

e: [amnestyis@amnesty.org](mailto:amnestyis@amnesty.org)

AI has a relief program that provides funds to individuals in emergency situations:

- funds can cover a wide range of assistance, including legal aid, emergency flights, basic cost of living, food and shelter, trial observation or security equipment and other support to defenders;
- funds can also support non-emergency relief applications in the form of limited project and capacity building support to small human rights organizations.

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

FL provides grants for the specific purpose of strengthening the security and protection of defenders at risk:

- grants are for amounts up to a maximum of EUR 6,000;
- the Board of Trustees considers non-urgent applications on a quarterly basis;
- in cases of imminent risk, grants can be approved at the discretion of the Director in a matter of hours or days; and
- FL receives applications in Arabic, Russian, English, French, or Spanish.

For more information see the *Grants and Fellowships* section on the FL website.

### The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

w: [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org)

e: [fidh@fidh.org](mailto:fidh@fidh.org)

Within the framework of the Observatory, FIDH provides grants to defenders and WHRDs, for the specific purpose of strengthening the security and protection of defenders at risk. Within the framework of other programs, FIDH provides support to organizations to enhance their capacity to communicate and to carry out their activities (computers, telephones, software, etc).

### MADRE

w: [www.madre.org](http://www.madre.org)

e: [madre@madre.org](mailto:madre@madre.org)

The Afghan Women's Survival Fund:

- supports an underground rescue network of women in Afghanistan that provides shelter and secret transport to women at risk;
- funds can cover cell phones to link partners in the rescue network, costs of emergency medical care, food, shelter, local and international transportation, and clothing and other personal effects for women who are forced to escape quickly;
- for more information see the *Our Projects* section of the website.

The Emergency and Disaster Relief Fund:

- ensures that community-based women's groups participate in designing and carrying out relief efforts and protects women's rights in times of crisis.

For more information see the *How We Work/Meeting Immediate Needs* section of the website.

## Grants and relief programs

### The Urgent Action Fund (UAF)

w: [www.urgentactionfund.org](http://www.urgentactionfund.org)

e: [urgentact@urgentactionfund.org](mailto:urgentact@urgentactionfund.org)

UAF provides grants under three categories:

1. Response to armed conflict, escalating violence or politically volatile environments.
  2. Potentially precedent-setting legal or legislative actions, or actions that aim to protect a precedent that has already been set.
  3. Protection and security of WHRDs.
- UAF has a rapid response grant making team of three people to review applications. They have a mandate to respond within seventy-two hours.
  - Proposals in languages other than English, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, or Urdu may require additional time for translation.
  - Once a grant has been approved, funds can be disbursed within a week.

For more information see one of UAF's websites:

UAF-Latin America

UAF-Africa

### The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

w: [www.omct.org](http://www.omct.org)

e: [omct@omct.org](mailto:omct@omct.org)

Under the Urgent Assistance to Victims of Torture Fund, as well as in the framework of the Observatory, OMCT provides social assistance to victims of torture, including defenders and WHRDs:

- assistance is temporary and is intended to allow the victim or her/his family to cope with extremely difficult situations. For example, to leave the country, to cover the living costs in the defender's country of origin or in a host country;
- funds can cover legal and medical assistance.

### ASIA

#### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)

e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan develops grant proposals to seek support for WHRDs' medical care.

### AFRICA

#### Coalition for African Lesbians (CAL)

w: [www.cal.org.za](http://www.cal.org.za)

e: [info@cal.org.za](mailto:info@cal.org.za)

See the section: Solidarity and monitoring visits on page 31.

### LATIN AMERICA

#### Unidad de Protección a Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (UDEFEQUA)

w: [www.undefegua.org](http://www.undefegua.org)

e: [undefegua@undefegua.org](mailto:undefegua@undefegua.org)

UDEFEQUA has developed an emergency relief project for defenders facing imminent risk:

- beneficiaries include defenders working in rural or semi-urban areas, where defenders are more vulnerable and have less access to the support provided by regional or international organizations;
- support measures under this program include temporary family relocation, cost of living, transportation, school fees for children, medical expenses, and expenses related to securing offices. The project includes covering funeral expenses in cases where defenders and social leaders come from low-income families.

## Fellowship

### Front Line (FL)

w: [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org)

e: [info@frontlinedefenders.org](mailto:info@frontlinedefenders.org)

The Fellowship program offers defenders and WHRDs at risk the possibility to take some time out from their normal work to undertake a project to further develop their capacities and contribute to their protection.

- Offers three to four general fellowships a year in Dublin, Brussels, Geneva or another location if there is strong reason for it.
- Also offers a digital security fellowship for defenders to come to Dublin and work with their Information Systems Coordinator. Participation on Fellowships is on an invitation basis.

For more information see the *Grants and Fellowships* section on the FL website.

### ASIA

#### The National Commission on Violence against Women in Indonesia (Komnas Perempuan)

w: [www.komnasperempuan.or.id](http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id)

e: [mail@komnasperempuan.or.id](mailto:mail@komnasperempuan.or.id)

Komnas Perempuan has created a fellowship program, but it is still at a very early stage.

### AFRICA

#### The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

w: [www.defenddefenders.org](http://www.defenddefenders.org)

e: [program@defenddefenders.org](mailto:program@defenddefenders.org)

EHAHRDP works in partnership with universities in Uganda, Kenya, USA and England to place defenders at risk in their academic programs and allow them to specialize in a specific area relevant to their work.

#### Coalition for African Lesbians (CAL)

w: [www.cal.org.za](http://www.cal.org.za)

e: [info@cal.org.za](mailto:info@cal.org.za)

See the section Safe houses on page 36.

### LATIN AMERICA

The Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)

w: [www.coljuristas.org](http://www.coljuristas.org)

e: [ccj@coljuristas.org](mailto:ccj@coljuristas.org)

See the section Temporary relocation on page 39.



This mapping of resources for women human rights defenders was developed by Inmaculada Barcia (Consultant for this initiative) and facilitated by the Association for Women's Rights In Development (AWID) as part of its work as Chair of the Working Group on Urgent Responses for WHRDs at Risk of the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRD IC).

The members of the working group on urgent responses are:

Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

Amnesty International (AI)

MADRE

International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH)

World Organization against Torture (OMCT)

Front Line (FL)

Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development  
(Forum-Asia)

Baobab for Women's Human Rights (BAOBAB)

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development  
(APWLD)

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More information on the International Coalition is available at: [www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org](http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org)

More information on AWID is available at: [www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org)

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