

ANNUAL REPORT

2017

ndDefenders

East and Horn of Africa

Human Rights Defenders Network



DEFENDDEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	4
The East and Horn of Africa in 2017	6
Protection and security management	8
Advocacy, research, and communications	12
Capacity building	17
DefendersTech	20
Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network	24
Innovation4Change	26
Financials	27



DefendDefenders staff during the 2017 annual retreat

FOREWORD

Dear friends and colleagues,

Throughout 2017, the human rights situation in the East and Horn of Africa remained extremely precarious. Five out of the eleven countries covered under our mandate are currently subject to UN Special Procedures. All over the world we witness shrinking civic space and attacks against human rights defenders (HRDs), and our sub-region is no exception.

DefendDefenders (the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project) was founded on the principle that all voices of those working for the realisation of the promises enshrined in the Universal Declaration on human rights deserve to be heard, without fear of reprisals.

Sadly, this remains a distant dream in the East and Horn of Africa. This year, our flagship **protection program** provided 199 grants and interventions to HRDs and organisations that faced threats related to their work. Through international and local partnerships such as the **Great Lakes Project** we continue to improve our relations with grassroots HRDs to ensure their safety.

Much can be done to prevent these threats before they arise. In 2017, DefendDefenders organised over 20 workshops and follow-up missions to train HRDs in physical and digital security management. I am particularly proud of our protection and digital security team for publishing **Stand Up!**, a manual with hands-on instructions for African HRDs to improve their security.

International and regional human rights mechanisms have repeatedly confirmed that human rights should be respected both online and offline. Our **technology program** has been on the frontline of exploring new strategies that allow HRDs to safely work online, and document human rights violations.

Meanwhile, DefendDefenders continues to work for institutional change to benefit the position of HRDs. Our **advocacy, research, and communications** department elevates the voices of HRDs to the international level by supporting HRDs to access human rights mechanisms, and publishing research on pressing issues. The **Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network** (PAHRDN) connects HRDs all over the continent. In order to provide better protection for HRDs at risk, the Network has now established three hub-cities, that offer a safe haven on the African continent

The grim reality is that those advocating for human rights still find themselves in the crosshairs of the powerful. However, DefendDefenders remains committed to their defence, and will ensure that their voices never fall silent.

Hassan Shire



Executive Director of DefendDefenders

Chairperson of the Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network

THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA IN 2017

In 2017, DefendDefenders and its partners continued to document human rights violations across the East and Horn of Africa sub-region, whether in the context of elections, conflict, crisis, or repressive governments.

Burundi continued to be in the grips of a violent political crisis following President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term in violation of the 2000 Arusha Accord. Widespread human rights violations have displaced hundreds of thousands. After collecting over 500 testimonials, the United Nations (UN) Commission of Inquiry on Burundi concluded that it has reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity have been and continue to be committed in the country since April 2015.

Civil and political rights in **Djibouti** remained extremely limited, with journalists, opposition members, and artists perceived to be challenging the authorities subjected to judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and, in some cases, torture or other forms of ill-treatment.

The government of **Eritrea** took no significant steps to address grave human rights violations, and there remains no active independent civil society or free media in the sub-region's most closed and repressive country.

The government in **Ethiopia** lifted the 10-month State of Emergency in August 2017, but many HRDs and critical voices remained imprisoned without due process, while many longstanding issues that sparked the massive 2015 protests in Oromia and Amhara were not seriously addressed. Authorities have so far failed to conduct an international, independent, and thorough investigation into alleged violations committed by security forces.

The disputed August 2017 election and contentious October rerun in **Kenya** resulted in a violent reaction from police and security forces against peaceful protesters which left more than 100 people dead. The new government has followed up on this repression by cracking down on opposition figures and independent media. Following the August elections, two prominent NGO's advocating for a transparent electoral process were temporarily suspended.

Elections in **Rwanda** in August 2017 displayed the government's willingness to openly suppress freedoms of expression and association, leading the incumbent ruling party to a sweeping victory, with several key opposition figures barred from running and subsequently harassed or forced into exile.



While **Somalia** made some strides with regards to protecting human rights, non-state actors like Al-Shabaab stepped up deadly attacks, including a car bomb that killed more than 300 people in October 2017. The self-declared Republic of **Somaliland** saw a sharp decline in free expression, especially in the run-up to and aftermath of the presidential elections in November 2017.

Grave abuses of human rights continued to abound in conflict areas of **South Sudan**, with extrajudicial killings, sexual violence as a weapon of war, and mass civilian displacement rampant. State security organs like the National Security Services (NSS) increasingly cracked down on civil society and HRDs through infiltration, harassment, and arbitrary arrests. Meanwhile, a general state of insecurity puts civil society at heightened risk.

The dire economic situation in **Sudan** continues to cause social unrest, especially in urban areas. The practice of overtly censoring media outlets remained common. Serious threats to civic space hampered efforts by civil society to address major ongoing human rights violations in crisis areas like Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile.

Tanzania faced increasing restrictions on civic space, with authorities viewing civil society as opposition, rather than an ally toward development. The government has used contentious new laws to shutter or ban critical media outlets, and targeted HRDs, especially those working with sexual minorities.

A controversial amendment to the Constitution of **Uganda**, which removed presidential age limits, sparked protests from both civilians and opposition members, some of which ended violently. A harsh crackdown on dissent resulted in arbitrary arrests, raids on NGOs, and attacks against journalists.

PROTECTION AND SECURITY MANAGEMENT

DefendDefenders protection department remains available 24/7 throughout the year. We continued to feel the impact of the ongoing crises in Burundi with almost 100 incidents reported. Through increased cooperation with the Great Lakes Projects, the department was able to better coordinate protection requests with local partners. A similar partnership with local organisations has allowed us to provide more timely protection for HRDs in South Sudan, where the situation remains extremely precarious.

In 2017, DefendDefenders provided 199 protection grants, and was able to refer 133 requests to partners. The support provided included legal support, family support, medical and psychological support, internship placements, and relocation. Additionally, DefendDefenders supported 12 organisations to improve their security through the development and implementation of security protocols, and the installation of equipment.

Enhanced access to protection services for HRDs most at risk



HRDs discuss their security plans during a DefendDefenders workshop

Support provided by working area

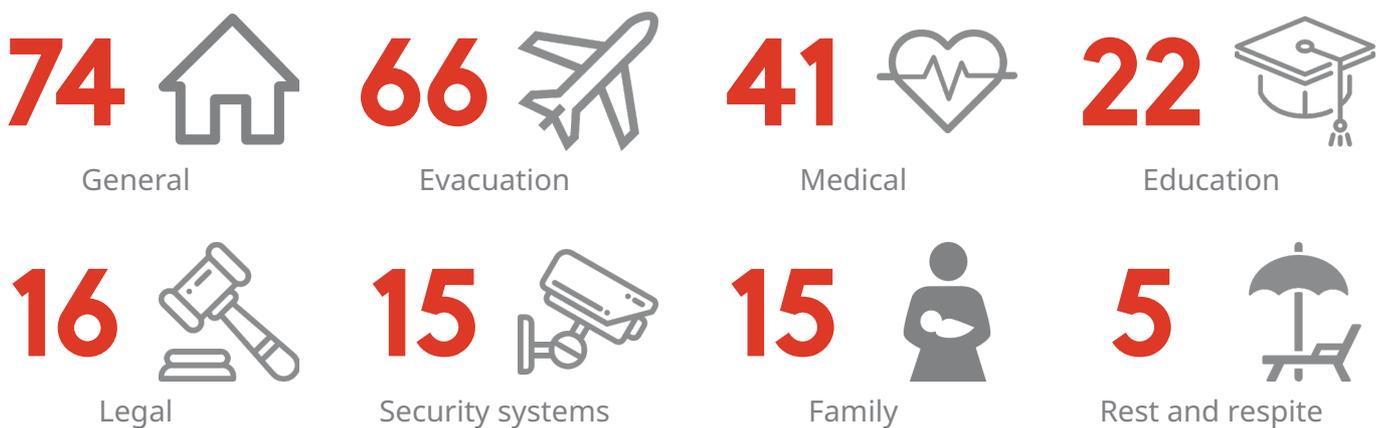


Emergency support provided by county



HRDs discuss possible threats they might face

Types of support provided



Great lakes project

In 2017, DefendDefenders started the Great Lakes Region Project, which is an integrated, multifaceted and coordinated action. The project aims at improving the safety, security and capacity of HRDs in order to enable their physical survival and their professional continuity protecting and promoting human rights.

With a special focus on Burundi for the first years of the project, DefendDefenders is addressing the specific needs and complex challenge of life and work in exile. To respond to those medium-term and long-term goals, DefendDefenders and its 14 project partners have been implementing activities in areas such as protection, capacity-building, digital and physical safety, advocacy, research, and litigation.

Key achievements

363



HRDs trained

8



Received protection services

439



Human rights reports

15



Advocacy missions

1660



Testimonials collected



Official launch of the Great Lakes Project in April 2017





East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network

On 21 and 22 February the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network (EHAHRD-Net) held its **third General Assembly** in Kampala. Bringing together over 78 organisations and individuals, EHAHRD-Net envisions a sub-region where fundamental human rights are respected, and where HRDs can work without fear of reprisal.

After serving as chairperson for ten years, Mr. Hassan Shire declined to run for a third term. Members elected **Mr. Vital Nshimirimana**, a Burundian human rights lawyer and lifelong HRD, to lead the Network.



EHAHRD-Net members during the third General Assembly

ADVOCACY, RESEARCH, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Advocacy at the national, regional, and international level is essential in order to raise awareness of the rights and work of HRDs and ensure that challenges they face are known to decision makers and other stakeholders within and beyond the sub-region. In order to make the voices of local HRDs heard worldwide, DefendDefenders facilitates the effective engagement with regional and international human rights mechanisms, particularly the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UN HRC). In 2016, DefendDefenders attended and supported HRDs to engage at the 34th, 35th, and 36th Sessions of the UN HRC in Geneva and the 60th and 61st Sessions in Niger and the Gambia. The team also undertook a wide range of other advocacy and research activities to support the work of HRDs in the East and Horn of Africa.

Key achievements

25 

HRDs supported to attend ACHPR and UN HRC

18 

Oral statements at human rights mechanisms

2 

Thematic reports

11 

Side-events



Rebranding of DefendDefenders public profile



DefendDefenders' delegation with Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders



Country specific advocacy



Despite being a member of the UN HRC, Burundi continues to flout its obligations by refusing to cooperate with Council mechanisms. Since April 2015, when President Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term in office sparked the current crisis, DefendDefenders has supported Burundian HRDs to attend each session of the UN HRC.

With the UN Commission of Inquiry on Burundi (COI Burundi) concluding that there are reasonable grounds to believe crimes against humanity have been, and continue to be committed in the country during the Council's 36th session DefendDefenders focused its advocacy on urging strong action by the UN HRC toward ensuring accountability and successfully pushed for the renewal of the Commission's mandate.

During the 61st session of the ACHPR, DefendDefenders and the PAHRDN explored possibilities for action through the African Union by facilitating a discussion between Commissioners and representatives of Burundi civil society.



Although the subject of Item 4 special mechanisms and a constant stream of refugees, the Government of Eritrea continues to deny the grave human rights situation in the country.

Despite the damning June 2016 report of the Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea (COI Eritrea), international and regional human rights bodies have yet to take strong action toward establishing an accountability mechanisms for alleged crimes against humanity. The launch of the so-called Khartoum Process meant to stop migration flows has further eroded political will to do so. In this light, DefendDefenders focused its advocacy throughout 2016 on exploring avenues of universal jurisdiction.

During several side-events at the UN HRC and ACHPR, we provided a platform for Eritrean

HRDs, legal experts, and special mechanisms to engage. DefendDefenders' Advocacy Officer also co-facilitated a training for HRDs aimed to explore universal jurisdiction as a possibility to prosecute Eritrean government officials, who regularly travel to European countries where large swathes of the diaspora are based.



Since fighting resumed in July 2016, civil society space in South Sudan has been increasingly restricted. DefendDefenders has highlighted the difficulties faced by HRDs at both the UN HRC and ACHPR. On 24 March 2017 we welcomed UN HRC resolution 34/25, which strengthened the mandate of the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan to identify perpetrators of atrocity crimes.

DefendDefenders continues its engagement with the Commission, for example through the three-day meeting organised in February 2017 in Addis Ababa, that brought together partners from civil society, the African Union, and the United Nation.



Commissioner Yasmin Sooka during a side-event hosted by DefendDefenders at the margins of the UN HRC



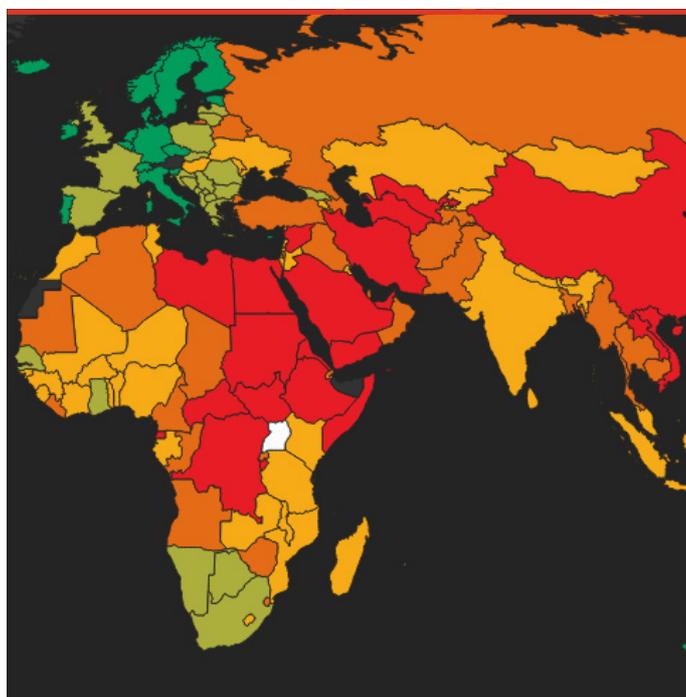
Research

DefendDefenders' Advocacy team continues its thematic and country specific research. In recent years, we have witnessed an increase in protection requests from HRDs working on freedom of expression. Based on this trend we launched "Don't Shoot the Messenger! Journalists as human rights defenders in the East and Horn of Africa" during the 61st session of the ACHPR. The report examines challenges journalists face, and provides an overview of the various coping strategies they use to circumvent and continue their work amid these restrictions.

DefendDefenders submitted two bi-annual reports to the ACHPR that provide an overview of events affecting HRDs in the 11 countries covered by our mandate. DefendDefenders also submitted a joint report on Djibouti and two joint reports on Burundi to OHCHR ahead of their examination under the UPR.

As a research partner of the CIVICUS Civic Space Monitor (CSM), an online platform that tracks the state of the freedoms of association, expression, and peaceful assembly worldwide DefendDefenders submits weekly updates on Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda. During Kenya's election cycle, the country was added to the CSM's watch-list, which highlights areas of particular concern. This required DefendDefenders to submit weekly updates throughout the electoral cycle. In total, the advocacy department provided over 60 updates to the CSM throughout 2017.

Initial research by CIVICUS indicates that the CSM is increasingly used by civil society to support their advocacy, and by diplomats and other policy makers as a source for information.



Screenshot of the Civic Space Monitor portal

Communications

In August, DefendDefenders finished its rebranding process with the launch of a new website. The new brand is reflective of the professional growth of the organisation over the last 12 years, while the new website makes it easier to find information and stay up to date on our work. HRDs will be able to contact us more quickly in case of emergencies and to access essential resources they can use to improve their safety. The website itself was developed with the specific requirements of the East and Horn of Africa in mind, and is designed to work with low bandwidth Internet and on mobile devices.

DEFENDDEFENDERS
East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

About Work Countries Theme **Get Help** 🔍

The East & Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project.

Explore Our Work Get Help 🔍

Latest Stories

HRC39: Address crackdown on civic space in Tanzania
To Permanent Representatives of Member and Observer States of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva, Switzerland Tanzania: Open letter to
16 August 2018

DefendDefenders renews partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Uganda
DefendDefenders (the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project) today renewed its partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the
10 August 2018

HRC39: Call to renew the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi
Version française ci-dessous To Permanent Representatives of Member and Observer States of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva, Switzerland
8 August 2018

Archive

We are DefendDefenders

DefendDefenders is the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project. We seek to strengthen the work of human rights defenders HRDs throughout the region by reducing their vulnerability to the risk of persecution and by enhancing their capacity to effectively defend human rights. DefendDefenders works in Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia (together with Somaliland), South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Sign Up for Updates



Executive Director Hassan Shire accepts the Richard C. Holbrooke Leadership Award on behalf of DefendDefenders

In April 2017, DefendDefenders' Executive Director and Advocacy and Research Manager travelled to Washington D.C. to receive the **Richard C. Holbrooke Leadership Award** during Refugees International's annual gala. The award, which is presented to leading humanitarian organisations and individuals who enhance life-saving assistance and protection for displaced people, recognizes their commitment to working in humanitarian crisis zones. Following the Gala, DefendDefenders and Refugees International conducted advocacy meetings on South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Burundi with State Department, Congress, and Senate staff members.

CAPACITY BUILDING

DefendDefenders is committed to enhancing the capacity of HRDs to effectively promote and protect human rights. We train HRDs and civil society organisations to mitigate threats before they arise.

A particular focus is our Training-of-Trainers (ToT) program, where HRDs are equipped to support their local constituencies. DefendDefenders has also been exploring new strategies that allow HRDs to better cope with the trauma they have experienced and artistic therapy, has been a key focus for our team. DefendDefenders also continues to support National Coalitions as link between grassroots HRDs and international and national protection mechanisms.

Key achievements

14



Workshops and trainings

6



Follow up visits

345



HRDs trained in security management



Development of artistic therapy



HRDs identify their vulnerabilities during a workshop



Artistic therapy

As part of the efforts to meet the psychological and spiritual needs of HRDs, DefendDefenders is now offering stress and trauma management through artistic therapy. Important to mention is that our trainings took on a more holistic approach to safety and security to cater for psycho-socio and emotional needs of HRDs. Most of trainings now include an element of stress-management through a session of artistic therapy.

Engaging participants in expressive arts such as music, dance, drama, poetry and drawing was so relaxing and relieving as well as very insightful to the HRDs. Previously, HRDs would indicate that even though the skills and tools for personal security were very good and useful, these skills were not applied due to high levels of stress in the face of threats. A more holistic approach to security to include skills on stress management has proven useful to enable HRDs to make better security decisions, and to remain in charge of the situation regardless of the pressure that comes with threats.

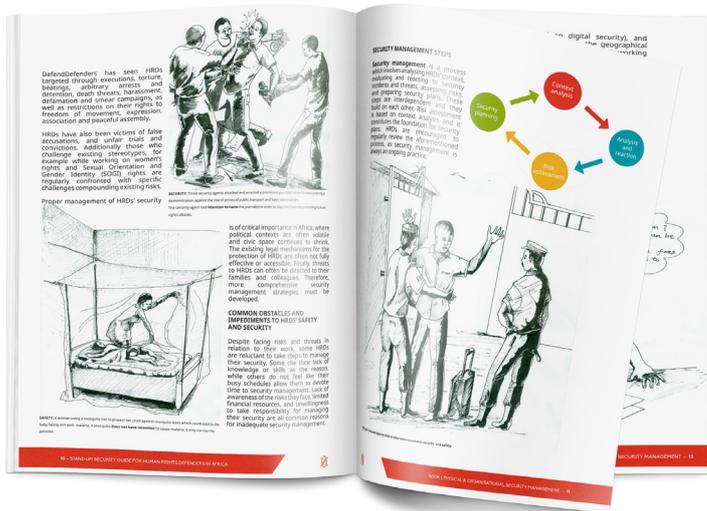


HRDs participating in artistic therapy

STAND UP!

Security manual for African human rights defenders

During the 60th session of the ACHPR, DefendDefenders launched a training manual that offers concrete strategies for HRDs to improve their physical and digital safety.



Book One covers personal, physical, and organisational security planning. Learn the essential framework for security analysis and planning, as well as the support mechanisms available at the regional and international level for HRDs.

Book Two covers digital security for your devices, accounts, and communications. Extend the lessons of security management into the digital realm with risk assessments of your electronic workspace and learn the essential steps to secure your human rights work as you do it from your phone, computer, email, websites, social media accounts, and more.



DefendDefenders launches Stand Up! during the 60th session of the ACHPR

DEFENDERSTECH

The DefendDefenders Technology Program has moved forward on a strategy of working increasingly under established and branded projects, deeper long-term relationships with HRD partners, and a greater focus on process and goals. In 2017, it continued the Doc-IT electronic documentation project and launched the Digital Security Checklist, Safe Sister, USABLE and DATA4CHAN.GE projects. The team began more substantial digital security support to Burundian civil society embattled by the crisis at home. Additionally, Defenders' Tech has supported sub-regional research, such as the publication of Safeguarding Civil Society: Assessing Internet Freedom and Digital Resilience in East Africa.

Key achievements

14



Workshops and trainings

60



Organisations supported

489



HRDs trained in digital security

5



Tailored training projects



HRDs work with designers during a DOC-it workshop



Safe Sister

DefendDefenders conducted the first workshop of *Safe Sister: The East African Women Human Rights Defenders' Digital Safety Fellowship*. The program is developing a cohort of female trainers from across East Africa through a series of self-learning assignments, workshops, mentorship, and opportunities to obtain small grants to implement security education grants. 107 high-quality women human rights defenders applied to the call for fellows posted in March which we had to whittle down to 14 participants. The first workshop was held in June 2017, and the second workshop will be held in March 2018.

Prior to the workshop, over the course of three weeks the Safe Sister fellows were mailed interactive assignments including reading material, e-learning courses, and applied challenges and tool practice.

One of the innovations in this phase was the use of e-learning on Advocacy Assembly, a platform created by another DefendDefenders partner, Small Media. Security First has 4 intro-level digital security courses on the platform. When the Fellows complete a course a certificate is generated for them which they would email to us to verify meeting the requirements of the program. We had very high participation rates within the pre-training assignments.

Usable

In September, we launched calls for an English-language digital safety ToT called Ngao Yetu in Nairobi and a French-language ToT called Juste à Temps in Kigali. We received numerous high quality applications and the participants proved to be passionate and engaging. We also held a 4-day training with the ToT group from Nairobi on collecting user feedback and working with developers to better enhance digital security tools to fit the needs of users such as HRDs, journalists or the general public.



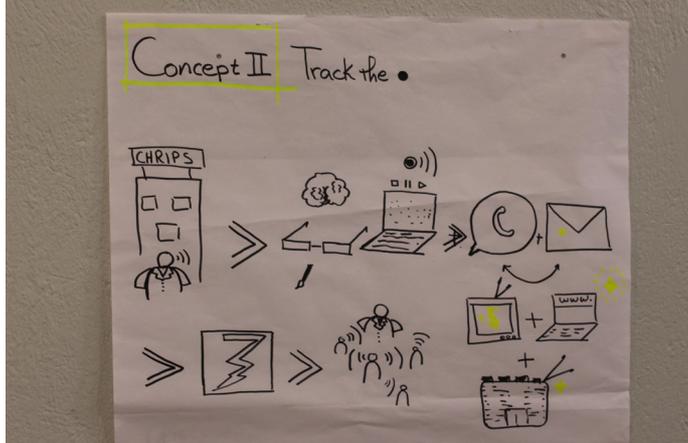
DATA4CHAN.GE

Partnering with Small Media, DefendersTech was successful in winning a VOICE grant administered by Oxfam-Novib and Hivos, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Using this grant we ran a cycle of DATA4CHAN.GE – Small Media's data advocacy program for human rights organisations. Previously run in Lebanon for MENA organisations, we were able to offer the program for organisations in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. Applications opened in April 2017 and we received 160 applicants to the program. From this we selected 10 organisations to take part in a 2-day data-cleaning workshop which took place in June

Subsequent to the June data skills workshop, the main DATA4CHANGE workshop took place in September. Here, we again went through a recruitment process to select both the human rights organisations who would provide data and carry on campaigning as well as selecting regional and international creative professionals - developers, designers, data visualisers, and journalists - who would help them design and refine advocacy campaigns.

We received a whopping 540 applications which we weeded down to only 30 final participants. The main workshop took place 12-16 September at Design Hub Kampala. The workshop was organised into two streams: a human rights organisation training stream, and a creative team sprint stream in which strong campaign prototypes were produced. Five human rights organisations participated: Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies, Haki Afrika (Kenya), Ice Breakers Uganda, SMUG (Uganda), and SANA (Tanzania).

After a week of deliberations, coding, illustrating and researching, teams submitted their final campaigns. Following the meeting in Kampala, each team was awarded \$5,000 to further develop their campaigns and official launch to the public. Over three months, the teams worked diligently with designers and developers to create the final product.

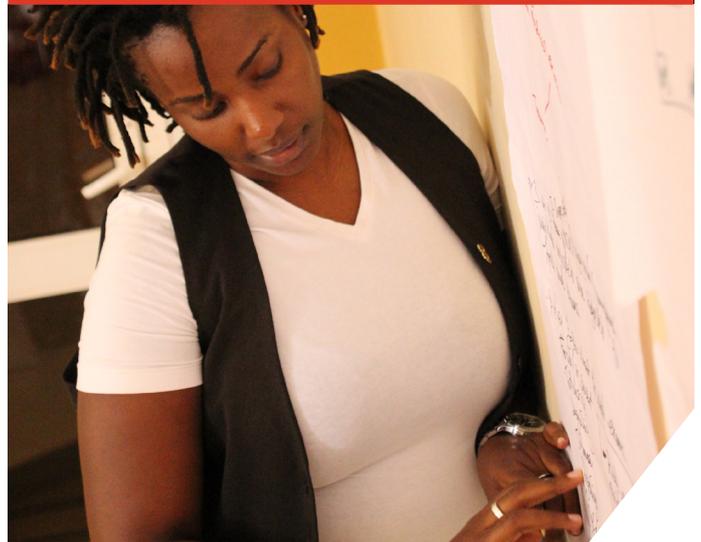
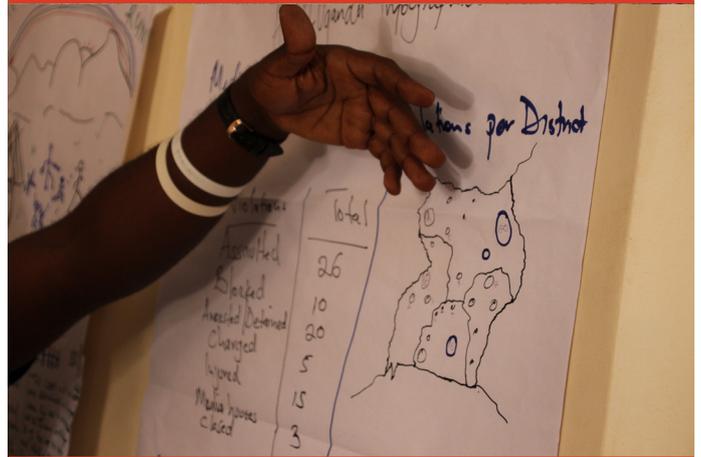


DOC-it

Meanwhile, we are applying lessons learned and experiences from DATA4CHANGE to the existing cohort of DOC-it organisations in Uganda. We continued to assist the seven member organisations to achieve additional tangible outputs from their electronic documentation and improve their data skills and methods in the process.

A final data skills workshop was conducted in October 2017, during which we brought in three design and web development consultants to have conversations with each of the organisations to better understand their needs in terms of online engagement and advocacy with their target stakeholders. From this engagement, a six-week schedule was created to fulfil these needs which included the development of a customized social media image generator, web-integrated chatbots, interactive charts, website design or development, updated logos etc.

All interested participants received access to an online social media image generator for Twitter, Facebook and Instagram as well as a web-embedded Facebook Chatbot to streamline communication from visitors to their webpages. FARUG and RUMI received new, user-friendly websites. Our visiting fellow from Sweden/ Reporters without Borders made a field visit to TLC whereby he provided trainings on storytelling, outcomes of which were an interactive timeline of TLC's work on the Ferdsult case. All participants received report templates to guide them in their writing and design. New logos and branded images were created by the designer. Participants were also assisted in creating charts for their website, infographics and reports.



PAN-AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS NETWORK

PAHRDN connects HRDs all over Africa through five sub-regional networks. Hosted by DefendDefenders, the Network aims to provide emergency protection for HRDs and support institutional change. A key focus of the network is its advocacy at the ACHPR. In 2017, PAHRDN launched “the State of African HRDs” at the Commission’s 61st Ordinary session, highlighting violations against HRDs, and infringements on the right to freedoms of association, expression and peaceful assembly. The Network also contributed to the finalisation of the Guidelines on freedom of association and assembly. After years of consultations and research, this represent a significant gain for African civil society.

Key achievements

6



Advocacy missions

8



HRDs supported to attend ACHPR

8



Trainings and workshops



HRDs supported through Ubuntu hub cities



DefendDefenders delivering an oral statement at the 60th session of the ACHPR



Hub cities

Throughout 2017, PAHRDN focussed much of its attention on operationalising hub-cities – safe havens that allow HRDs at immediate risk to continue their work on the African continent.

To share common objectives and better understand their operation as well as their challenges, we were joined by the Director of Human Rights of the Government of Cote d'Ivoire as an implementing partner of the Hub City of Abidjan for a meeting that brought together more than 300 people from over 50 countries to share expertise and insights.

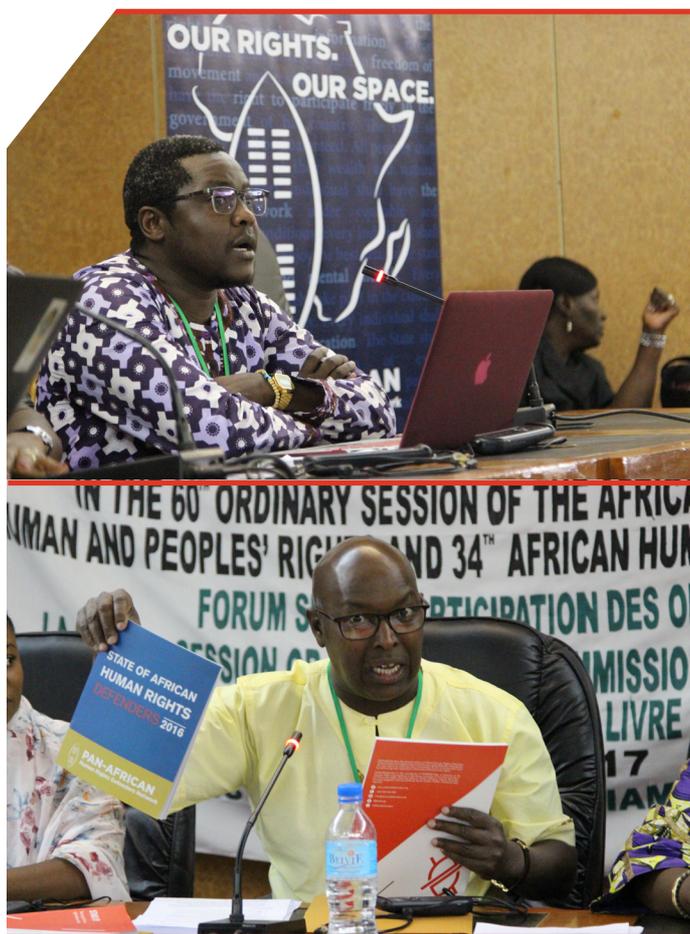
From 8 to 10 June, in collaboration with the International Commission of Jurist, The Lawyers for Human Rights South Africa, and the Southern Africa Human Rights Defenders Network PAHRDN co-organised a strategy meeting for in Johannesburg to discuss an agreement for the operationalisation of the Hub City.

The PAHRDN was invited to share expertise as a peer learning activity during the Asia Regional relocation mechanism for human rights defenders at risk held in Bangkok, Thailand from 15 to 16 July 2017. The objective of the workshop is to build sustainable regional relocation mechanisms in Asia as well as looking into a process to set-up and implementation of temporary relocation assistance; as well as identify potential cities that can host HRDs, countries and allies that can support in setting up sustainable regional relocation mechanisms in Asia.

Over 20 PAHRDN members gathered in Kampala Uganda from 3 to 5 October 2017 to coordinate efforts to design and implement a functional and effective sub-regional support program for HRDs facing imminent risk because of their work. Among the key outcomes of the meeting was a report and joint agreement on the the operation and governance of safe Hub City for HRDs.

Guidelines

PAHRDN was invited by the ACHPR to finalize the African Commission Guidelines on Freedom of Association and Assembly. These guidelines are results of DefendDefenders and PAHRDN appointment by the Commission to conduct a study on the “Freedom of Association, as Pertaining to Civil Society, and Freedom of Assembly in Africa: A Consideration of Selected Cases and Recommendations”. The report recommended that the Commission draft and disseminate guidelines on the freedom of association and assembly on the continent in order to fill the gaps in that area. These guidelines, were adopted at the conclusion of the ACHPR’s 60th Ordinary session held in Niger in May 2017.



DefendDefenders leading panel discussions during the NGO forum

INNOVATION4CHANGE

Civil society around the World is under significant and growing pressure as restricted freedoms which include restrictions on funding, barriers to registration, interventions on how and where to operate, funding limitations, and open political harassment becomes the norm. The internal and external pressure is leading to shrinking space for civil society engagement, as well as shrinking civil society voices. The credibility, survival and sustainability of many civil society organizations now depend on innovative responses that allow for options to scale up and continue the crucial work they are currently doing.

DefendDefenders implemented a 7-month project on behalf of Innovation for Change Africa, with the aim of supporting civil society through strengthening and connecting stakeholders across Africa. The project facilitated and convened various actors across the region to match resources to priority needs and advice on key issues as well as provide capacity building support. In a bid to focus on home grown solutions, the project focused on the creation of a multi-stakeholder platform for innovation, and the establishment of a community that brings together all actors to share knowledge and best practices.



WHERE PEOPLE CONNECT TO CREATE TOMORROW



FINANCIALS

Annual Expenditure



Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. In 2017, DefendDefenders was supported by the following organisations:

- American Jewish World Services;
- Bread for the World;
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Uganda
- European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
- ProtectDefenders.eu (EU Mechanism);
- Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Fund for Global Human Rights;
- InterNews;
- National Endowment for Democracy;
- Open Society Initiatives for Eastern Africa;
- Swedish International Development Agency (Sida);
- Tides for CSII Africa Hub.

We thank our partners for their continued support, and their commitment to make positive change in the daily life of African HRDs.



DefendDefenders' management team



DefendDefenders (the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project) seeks to strengthen the work of HRDs throughout the sub-region by reducing their vulnerability to risks of persecution and by enhancing their capacity to effectively defend human rights.

DefendDefenders is the secretariat of EHAHRD-Net, a network of 78 human rights organisations in the eleven countries of the East and Horn of Africa sub-region: Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia (together with Somaliland), South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

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