



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



While the government may attempt to suppress it, the [“Jin, Jiyan, Azadi”] movement’s fire has not been extinguished; it may smolder, but it will ignite again with a single spark. Let us carry this cry forward and ensure the world hears our call for justice and freedom. Our struggle continues, and together, we will not be silenced.

Iranian WHRD

Front Cover: WHRDs at the Dublin Platform in October 2024

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WELCOME

2024 has been a year of profound challenges and renewed determination for human rights defenders worldwide.

As I reflect on my first year as Executive Director of Front Line Defenders, I am struck by both the devastating escalation of human rights crises globally and the extraordinary resilience demonstrated by defenders on the frontlines. The protracted conflicts in Sudan, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Palestine have continued to exact a terrible toll, even as renewed conflict threatened HRDs in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Meanwhile, we've witnessed alarming democratic backsliding across multiple regions, with authoritarian regimes emboldened to suppress dissent and civil society spaces increasingly under threat.

These challenges have been compounded by the failure of international institutions to uphold their stated commitments to human rights. The gap between diplomatic rhetoric and meaningful action has widened, leaving defenders isolated and vulnerable in many contexts. Human rights defenders have consistently expressed to us their frustration at the selective application of international human rights standards and the apparent immunity of powerful actors from accountability.

Yet amidst these daunting circumstances, the courage and conviction of human rights defenders continues to inspire us all at Front Line Defenders. I think of Dr. [Hussam Abu Safiya](#) currently detained and all the HRDs in [Gaza](#) who continue to support their communities amidst extremely high risks to themselves. Or [Narges Mohammadi](#), who remained outspoken throughout her medical leave from prison in late 2024 in Iran.

This report documents our efforts throughout 2024 to provide rapid and practical protection to human rights defenders at risk. We expanded our reach to support 3,354 HRDs and 579 organisations/communities/collectives in 147 countries. We are particularly encouraged that 89% of defenders reported being able to continue their human rights work following Front Line Defenders' intervention—a testament to the critical importance of timely, targeted support.

Several events stand out for me showing the courage and passion of HRDs. It was hugely inspiring to welcome and learn from the 105 Human Rights Defenders from 97 countries who attended the [2024 Dublin Platform](#) in October. At a time of such heightened backlash against human rights, it was more important than ever to have a space to hear from Human Rights Defenders and call for stronger international support for HRDs. As Georgian HRD, Eduard Marikashvili indicated, "Given the current situation, I call on the international society not to tire of supporting human rights defenders. Help us create more spaces. Our voice must be heard wherever and whenever we can".

In June, during a trip to [eSwatini](#), I met with the family of [Thulani Rudolf Maseko](#), a HRD killed in 2023 and was honoured to spend time with them at his grave. His case shows the severe threats that HRDs face across the world but also the strength of those campaigning for accountability in their cases. These stories of the threats HRDs face but also the courage and resilience they show for creating a better world has made me believe more than ever in the need for protection to enable them to continue to do this work.

In August, I travelled to [Mexico](#) and met with [Pablo López Alavez](#) who has been in detention for over 15



Executive Director Alan Glasgow with the 2024 Award Winners.

Alan at the grave of HRD Thulani Rudolf Maseko

Alan with WHRD Yolanda Pérez, wife of imprisoned HRD Pablo López Alavez

years and is currently facing a 30-year imprisonment sentence. His unwavering commitment to justice, even after experiencing such hardship, reinforced my belief in the transformative power of human rights work. His story—of maintaining dignity and purpose in the face of state repression—reflect the essence of what we at Front Line Defenders strive to support and amplify. We will continue to push for his release, as well as the release of so many more HRDs unjustly imprisoned around the world.

I was also present in September for the launch of the [Free Narges](#) Coalition and spoke at the Nobel Centre in Oslo during the event. The courage of Narges Mohammadi and her family to continue to campaign for human rights in Iran shows the resilience of HRDs across the global. It was particular relief to hear in December of Narges' temporary release from prison, a significant win in such testing times.

As we look ahead, we recognise that the challenges facing human rights defenders are already intensifying rapidly. Rising authoritarianism, significant funding cuts in the sector and the targeting of marginalised communities demand our continued vigilance and adaptation. In spite of

rising challenges, we continue to see HRDs taking daily risks to address the key challenges of our times, such as reducing inequalities, combating corruption and preserving our planet. We see that climate and environmental defenders continue to be at increasingly grave risk. Amid such flux, they are holding the line and deserve greater support and protection. At Front Line Defenders, we remain committed to evolving our approaches, centering the lived experiences of defenders, and ensuring that our support responds directly to their articulated needs.

I want to express my profound gratitude to our Front Line Defenders global team, our global network of partners and our donors whose solidarity makes this work possible. Together, we can continue to stand with those who risk everything to build a more just and equitable world.

In solidarity,

Alan Glasgow
Executive Director

CONTEXT

Please see *Front Line Defenders' Global Analysis report* for more information and analysis on the global situation for the protection of HRDs in 2024.

Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) around the world play a crucial role in advocating for justice, documenting abuses, and protecting communities. Despite facing growing risks due to conflict, restrictive laws, digital threats, and criminalisation, defenders continue their vital work with resilience. In 2024, some of the key threats HRDs had to face were:

Conflict, Post-Conflict And Crisis Situations

In conflict and crisis situations, including in Gaza, Sudan, Ukraine, Myanmar, Ethiopia, DRC, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Colombia and Syria, HRDs play a vital role in documenting violations and supporting communities. In **Sudan**, defenders staffing [Emergency Response Rooms](#) (ERRs) to provide humanitarian support to their communities, provided critical aid despite facing threats and attacks. Women defenders (WHRDs) were particularly targeted and have been physically and sexually attacked, threatened with death and detained. In **Gaza**, Palestinian HRDs and journalists played a pivotal role in exposing atrocities, despite restrictions and targeted attacks. In **Myanmar**, HRDs and journalists faced extreme dangers as the military cracked down on dissent. Some were declared criminals, others were forcibly conscripted, and family members of defenders were targeted in retaliation.

Criminalisation And Restrictive Legislation

Governments worldwide willfully misapplied the judicial system to silence HRDs. In Russian-occupied Ukraine, WHRD [Iryna Horobtsova](#) was sentenced to ten and half years in prison in a closed trial, emblematic of the persecution faced by many defenders. Restricted laws were drafted or introduced in **Georgia, Serbia, Rwanda, Zambia, Paraguay, Venezuela**, and **Tunisia**, imposing burdensome requirements on NGOs and restricting access to foreign funding. In **Peru, Slovakia**, and **Angola**, new laws severely curtailed the right to peaceful assembly, criminalising protests and expanding state control. HRDs engaging in peaceful protest were met with repression in **Bangladesh, El Salvador, Uganda**, and **Iran**. Across the **United States**, students calling for an end to the Israeli war on Gaza faced police repression, arrests, and threats to their academic futures.

Human Rights Defenders In The Digital Space

Digital platforms are crucial for human rights defenders, enabling communication, coordination, documentation, and advocacy. However, these technologies are also increasingly weaponised to target defenders through surveillance, censorship,



Tbilisi, Georgia. 25 December 2024. Thousands of people are seen on Rustaveli Avenue during the protest against repressive measures introduced in Georgia. © Karol Serewis/SOPA

harassment, and digital silencing tactics like shadow-banning. Online attacks create a chilling effect, leading to self-censorship and potentially escalating to physical threats.

Relocation And Mobility

Travel restrictions also intensified, with governments targeting HRDs seeking asylum or relocation. HRDs encounter numerous

obstacles including financial costs, bureaucratic requirements, and discriminatory procedures to obtain visas for temporary protection or professional activities. However, the June 2024 revision of the EU Visa Code Handbook represented a positive step forward, offering more supportive provisions for HRDs at risk.



Residents take part in a funeral procession for slain Catholic priest and HRD Father Marcelo Pérez, in San Andrés Larráinzar, Chiapas state, Mexico, Tuesday, 22 October 2024. © AP Photo/Isabel Mateos

Land, Indigenous And Environmental Rights Defenders

HRDs protecting land and indigenous rights faced heightened threats from paramilitary groups and corporations. In Brazil, rural, armed militias attacked rural communities, while in **Mexico**, indigenous defenders were subjected to arbitrary arrest and lengthy prison terms in a system riddled with racism.

Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs)

WHRDs led protests in **Bangladesh** despite facing threats and violence. In **Myanmar, Ukraine, Palestine**, and in **Sudan**, despite systemic targeting, WHRDs continued to advocate for justice, gender equality and peace, documenting abuses and mobilising communities. In **Guatemala**, indigenous women faced eviction and reported being physically and sexually assaulted, and criminalised by powerful business interests.

LGBTIQ+ Rights Defenders

LGBTIQ+ defenders saw some progress in **Thailand, Estonia, Greece** and **Czechia**, but this was overshadowed by dire developments elsewhere. **Uganda, Liberia**, and **Ghana** introduced harsh anti-LGBTIQ+ laws, while in **Malawi** a challenge to sections of the penal code which criminalise homosexual relationships was rejected. Legislation targeting same-sex 'propaganda' in schools was introduced in **Bulgaria** while **Georgia's** new law banned same-sex marriage as well as the positive portrayal of LGBTIQ+ identities, directly threatening activists.

PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING OUR VISION



Front Line Defenders’ vision is that **HRDs are recognised and supported as essential actors in defending and advancing human rights, and bringing about positive change in society.**

Achieving this vision may seem impossible in a world where human rights are so deeply under threat, however, Front Line Defenders continues to make progress supporting HRDs and advancing the human rights agenda.

IN 2024, FRONT LINE DEFENDERS SUPPORTED:

 **3,354** Human Rights
Defenders at Risk

 And **579** Organisations

 In **147** Countries

89% Of HRDs reported being
able to continue their
work following support
from the organisation.

Front Line Defenders provides rapid and practical support to human rights defenders at risk through:

- ▶ **RAPID RESPONSE** including a 24/7 hotline for HRDs, urgent appeals, and protection grants. Protection Grants provide rapid and practical financial support to HRDs at risk. They can be delivered in 48h in cases of emergency, and can be used for, amongst other things: emergency relocations; equipment to improve physical or digital security; and legal or medical support.
- ▶ **CAPACITY BUILDING** consultations, workshops and resource materials to promote HRDs’ holistic protection, addressing physical, digital and psychosocial security. We also offer Rest and Respite opportunities for defenders to recuperate from the challenges of their work/environment.

- ▶ **ADVOCACY** at national and international level, through UN and regional mechanisms, including tailored advocacy for HRDs and input on key regional and international policy developments.

STRATEGIC GOALS 2023-2027

As part of Front Line Defenders’ Strategic Plan 2023-2027, Front Line Defenders has developed a results framework with three goals that are key for achieving the organisational vision.

GOAL/OUTCOME 1.

HRDs working at local/ national level have increased protection through the provision of rapid, practical and intersectional support.

GOAL/OUTCOME 2.

HRDs, their communities and civil society have strengthened resilience and capacity to manage their protection in the longer term.

GOAL/OUTCOME 3.

There are stronger policies and political/practical action at national, regional and international levels to protect human rights defenders at risk.

GOAL 1. RAPID RESPONSE



FRONT LINE DEFENDERS HAS CONTINUED TO MAKE STRONG PROGRESS UNDER THIS OUTCOME:



88% of HRDs reporting increased security as a result of Front Line Defenders urgent support.



99% of grants improved security.



32% of urgent advocacy positive outcome.



35% of Urgent advocacy/Emergency Grants being responded to within 48hrs.

INCREASED PROTECTION THROUGH RAPID, PRACTICAL AND INTERSECTIONAL SUPPORT

Front Line Defenders continued to carry out outreach country visits to expand its reach to those most at risk, document needs, build trust and provide support. During the reporting period, Front Line Defenders strengthened accessibility and outreach and expanded its network of HRDs at risk, adding **1,579 HRDs and 280 organisations/groups** to its database.

During 2024, Front Line Defenders carried out **72** outreach country visits in **53** countries globally. Following outreach, **84%** of HRDs and organisations added to Front Line Defenders' internal database were from marginalised groups.

✓ GUINEA-BISSAU

An example of an outreach visit was one to West Africa, where the Protection Team travelled to three countries: Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and The Gambia. The mission to Guinea-Bissau aimed to better understand the context and working environment for local HRDs and organisations and share ideas on how to strengthen their protection in a restrictive environment. This included a discussion session on security issues and the need for HRDs protection, as well as an introductory session and sharing on Front Line Defenders' security handbook, Practical Measures for Human Rights Defenders at Risk, which was translated into Portuguese. The visit also

included a meeting with the EU Delegation and some embassies based in the country on how to reinforce and ensure the security and protection of HRD.

It was also an opportunity for the team to meet with a HRDs Network of 30 organisations that defend and promote human rights in Guinea-Bissau. Since its creation, it has monitored the situation of violations against HRDs and has worked on national and international mechanisms for the protection of HRDs as a way to mitigate discrimination, persecution, and threats to defenders.



Local journalists inspect a destroyed hall of the Republican Palace after it was recaptured by Sudan's army from the Rapid Support Forces paramilitary group, in Khartoum, Sudan, Monday, 24 March 2025. © AP Photo

Rapid Support To HRDs In Crisis Contexts

In 2024, Front Line Defenders continued to provide rapid support to HRDs in crisis contexts globally and saw a continued increase in requests for support as a result of the numerous ongoing crises.

EXAMPLES OF RAPID SUPPORT IN CRISIS CONTEXTS:

Numerous **Afghan** HRDs, the bulk of them promoting the rights of women, sought assistance in finding safety following arrest, torture and physical attack by or death threats from the Taliban because of their work. Afghan defenders, particularly women, have faced serious risks in reaching safety, facing obstacles at every turn while trying to locate pathways for themselves and family members. HRDs and organisations

working in Afghanistan were the second highest recipients of Protection Grants in 2024, totally 101 grants with almost 60% of these grants supporting temporary relocation/resettlement. Of the grants that supported temporary relocation, 51% were within the country, 37% were relocations within the region (often to Pakistan or Iran) while awaiting visa approval for onward resettlement. Other grants supported the onward relocations once visas were approved. Of those who received a grant and responded to the survey, 92% stated that it had increased their security.

In **Sudan**, HRDs faced grave risks, including multiple home raids, repeated death threats and arbitrary arrests. WHRDs specifically working on the rights of women have been targeted in great numbers, by both sides in the conflict, and have been physically and sexually attacked, threatened with death and detained. With no institutions or mechanisms able

to provide protection to these defenders, temporary relocation—either to another part of Sudan or to a neighbouring country—was often the only option for the preservation of life and comprised the vast majority of requests that Front Line Defenders received from HRDs in the country. In 2024, the highest number of grants provided by Front Line Defenders went to HRDs from Sudan (138). Of those who received a grant and responded to the survey, 96% stated that it had increased their security to some extent.

HRDs in **Myanmar** were targeted for their work by armed groups and Front Line Defenders is aware of several cases of HRDs documenting human rights violations who have been threatened. There was growing hostility towards Rohingya activists in Northern Rakhine State, as the Arakan Army was [accused](#) of multiple human rights violations, and the main armed Rohingya groups affiliated themselves with the Myanmar military. Assistance for relocation to opposition territory or into neighbouring countries was a common request from HRDs who, given the networks they had developed throughout Myanmar, remained vital to the gathering of information regarding atrocity crimes carried out by the military. 24 Protection Grants were provided to HRDs and organisations from Myanmar in 2024. Of those who received a grant, 88% stated that it had increased their security.

Remarkable work continued to be carried out by Palestinian HRDs in **Gaza** who were successful in keeping the world informed of the ongoing slaughter during the year. With the borders so tightly controlled and all of Gaza considered “[a potential killing zone](#)”, relocation to safer parts of the territory or abroad was not an option for most Gazan HRDs. Defenders continued to document and report on the situation as family members and friends were killed around them. This was reflected in requests Front Line Defenders received from HRDs for information and communications equipment to replace those that were destroyed or confiscated by the Israeli military. Seven Urgent Actions were taken on behalf of HRDs and organisations from Palestine in 2024. 20 Protection Grants were provided to defenders working on Palestine. Of those who received a grant, 94% felt that it helped them continue with their work documenting the violence in a more secure way.



Argentina: Perimeter fence and gates constructed with the support of a protection grant



ICT equipment purchased through a protection grant

Argentina: Perimeter fence and gates constructed with the support of a protection grant (same as above)

PROTECTION GRANTS

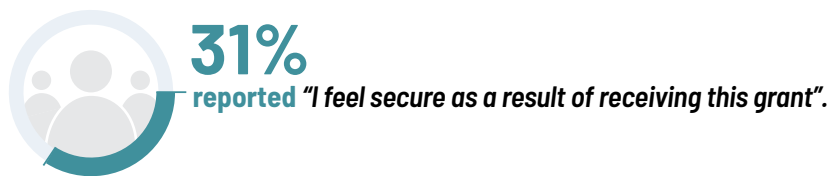
It has allowed me to continue my work as a Human Rights Defender... it has also allowed me to meet other people, to share experiences with other women, with other people. But above all it has kept me **ALIVE**. And with much more strength to continue in my struggle.

HRD from Colombia who received a protection grant in 2024

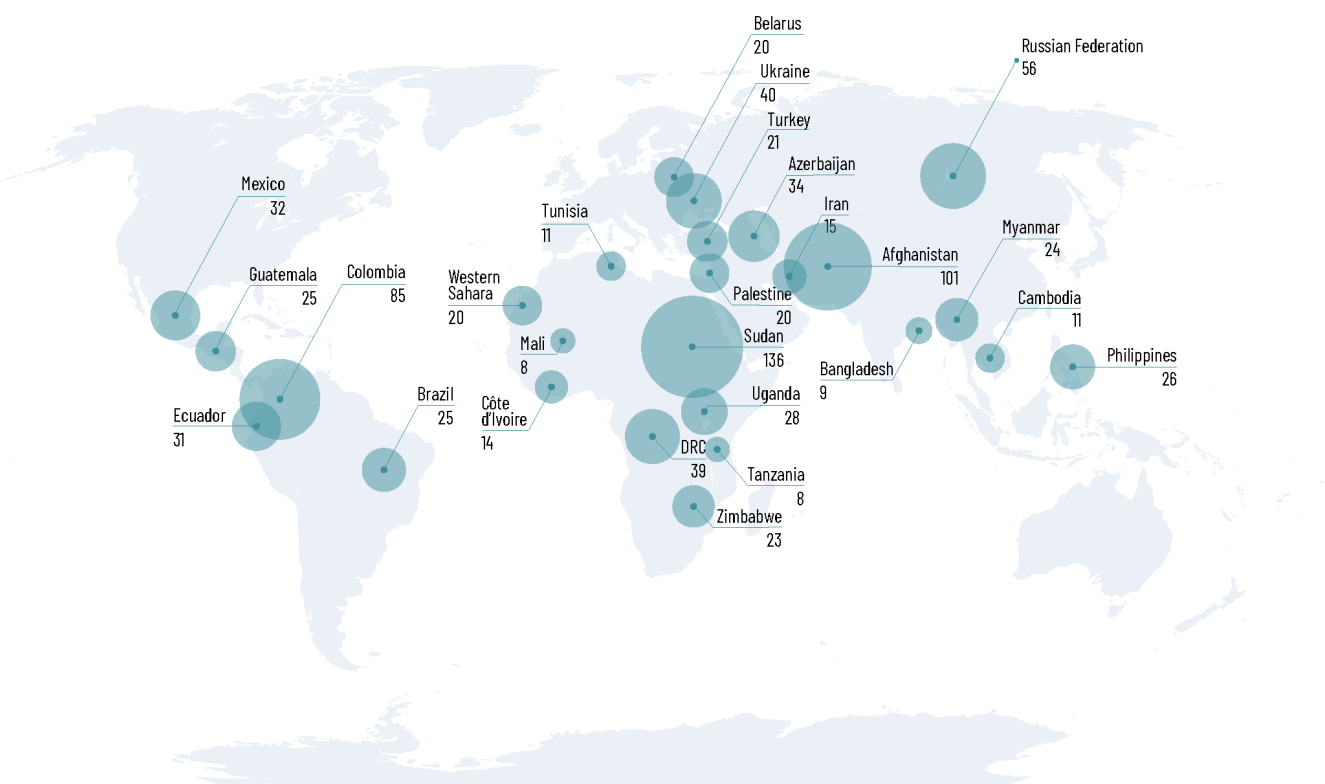
In 2024, Front Line Defenders provided **1,206 protection grants** to HRDs amounting to €3,578,823, including 865 protection grants to individual HRDs and 341 human rights organisations at risk in **107 countries**.

IMPROVED SECURITY

Of the Grant Recipients who responded to the follow-up survey:



TOP 5 COUNTRIES FOR GRANT APPROVALS PER REGION



- **Europe and Central Asia:** Russian Federation (56), Ukraine (40), Azerbaijan (34), Turkey (21), Belarus (20)
- **Americas:** Colombia (85), Mexico (32), Ecuador (31), Brazil (25), Guatemala (21)
- **Middle East and North Africa:** Sudan (136), Palestine (20), Western Sahara (20), Iran (15), Tunisia (11)

- **Asia:** Afghanistan (101), Philippines (26), Myanmar (24), Cambodia (11), Bangladesh (9)
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** DRC (39), Uganda (28), Zimbabwe (23), Cote D'Ivoire (14), Mali and Tanzania (8 each)

HRDS Supported

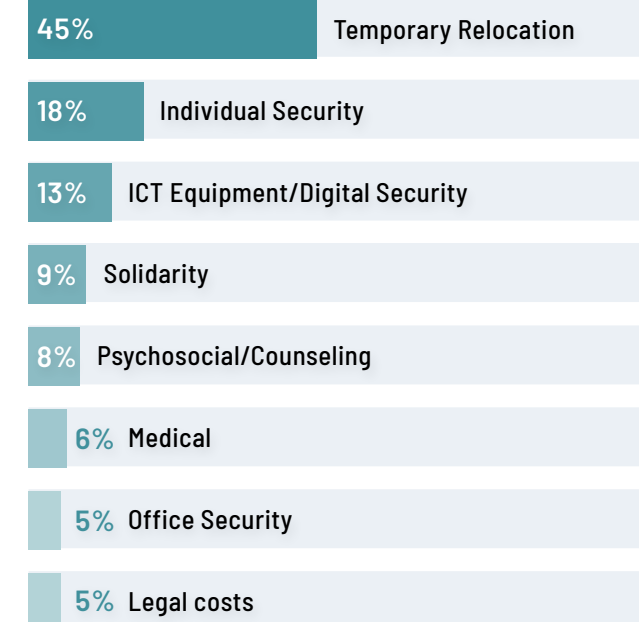
Similar to previous years, Sudan and Afghanistan have been the countries with the highest number of protection grants provided to HRDs. The highest number of grants in 2024 was provided to HRDs working on Sudan with 138 grants (11%). The second highest number of grants was to HRDs working on Afghanistan with 101 grants (8%), followed by Colombia with 85 (7%). The proportion of grants per region was quite evenly split (between 16-22%).

In 2024, 484 (40%) of grants were provided to men HRDs (including 6 to transmen), 360 (30%) to WHRDs (including 14 to transwomen) and 21 (2%) to gender non-conforming HRDs, while 341 (28%) went to human rights organisations.

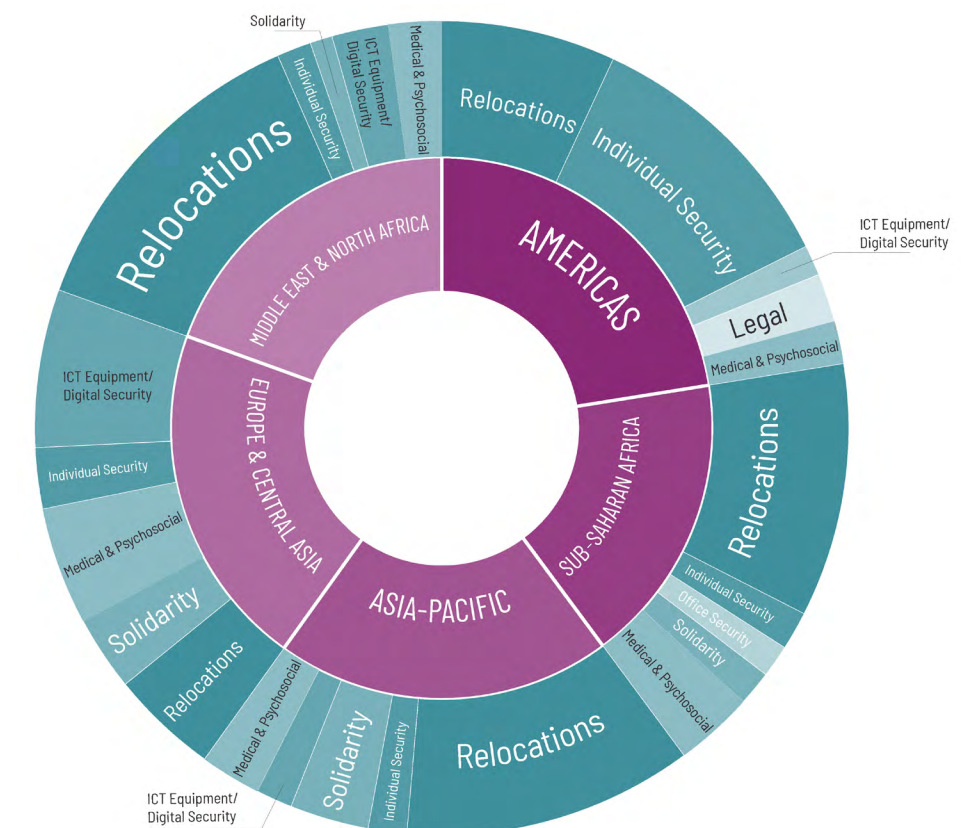
Of the 1,206 protection grants provided, 201 were provided for multiple types of support (for example temporary relocation and medical costs). As such, the statistics presented here take into account the percentage of grants that included a certain type of support.

TYPES OF SUPPORT

Of the 1,206 protection grants provided, 201 were provided for multiple types of support (for example temporary relocation and medical costs). As such, the statistics presented here take into account the percentage of grants that included a certain type of support.



Once again a large proportion of grants were provided to support temporary relocation (45%), reflective of the crisis and conflict contexts where many supported HRDs and organisations are operating. Other types of support included grants for individual security (18%), ICT equipment (13%), solidarity grants (9%) and office security (5%).



TOP AREAS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WORK SUPPORTED



* Front Line Defenders recognises that human rights movements often take varying forms in the different regions and for the purpose of reflecting on their work, human rights movements refers to collective efforts or organisations targeted for promoting, protecting, and advocating for human rights as recognised under international legal frameworks.

Examples of different types of protection supported Through protection grants in 2024

✓ GHANA, OFFICE SECURITY, €5,700 -

"The Frontline Security Grant has profoundly enhanced our work as a Human Rights Defender organisation by significantly bolstering our security measures, allowing us to operate more effectively and confidently in hostile environments. With the grant, we have implemented advanced security protocols, acquired essential protective gear, and established rapid response systems for emergencies. These improvements have reduced the risks faced

by our staff and activists, enabling them to focus more on their advocacy without constant fear for their safety. Additionally, the grant has facilitated the development of secure communication channels and data protection measures, ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of sensitive information. Consequently, we have seen a notable increase in our capacity to document human rights violations, engage with affected communities, and advocate for justice with greater efficacy and impact."

A grant to a women-led organisation that seeks to promote gender equality.

Due to their work on LGBT issues, they wanted to take preventative measures to ensure their security. The grant allowed them to improve the physical security of their office, including having CCTV and alarm systems.

✓ MALAYSIA, OFFICE SECURITY, €1,150 -

"The implementation of some of the security policies derived from this grant has reduced the mental duress and constant fear and worries of the staff due to past security incidents as there are better mechanisms to observe, monitor and protect us. The additional security resources also enabled us to maintain ideal backup for our key documentation, reducing risk of data loss that would significantly hamper the organization's work."

A grant to an organisation focused on the death penalty.

The organisation was mostly concerned about attacks from those who might be against their work in support of the rights for prisoners on death row. They therefore sought to improve their office security. The grant covered measures including CCTV and secure locks.

✓ TAJIKISTAN, OFFICE SECURITY, €4,370 -

"The physical security of both the premises and the staff of the organisation is now ensured."

A grant provided to an organisation supporting vulnerable groups including women and youth

(families of migrant workers, women facing violence, women living without official marriage registration, women with disabilities, people living in remote communities). They promote programs for women and youth on legal protection, financial literacy and business skills training. The grant paid for, among other measures, a CCTV system, door and window bars, external hard drive and a metal door.

✓ HONDURAS, INDIVIDUAL SECURITY, €1,000 -

"The grant made it possible to hold the meeting without any serious situations, as planning and foresight allowed us to move forward successfully. The experience with the presence of fellow defenders who came from different regions of the country to energetically support the community and their struggle for the legitimate defence of territory in Honduras...and to be able to focus and unify forces for a cause that moves us all has undoubtedly been a historic achievement."

A grant to an environmental rights organisation defending territory in Honduras against mega-extractivist projects.

They have been threatened and intimidated by security forces and six members of the organisation have suffered criminalisation attempts in the last couple of years. In 2024, they carried out a national coordination event for members of the communities and requested support for Security Coordinators to monitor the safety of the participants. The grant covered transportation and communication costs for the Coordinators to attend the event.

✓ SUDAN, TEMPORARY RELOCATION, €4,500 -

"This grant has impacted me as a defender by enabling me to carry out my work without any restrictions or security threats. I still practice my work comfortably, and I am not deterred by threats because I am in a safe place."

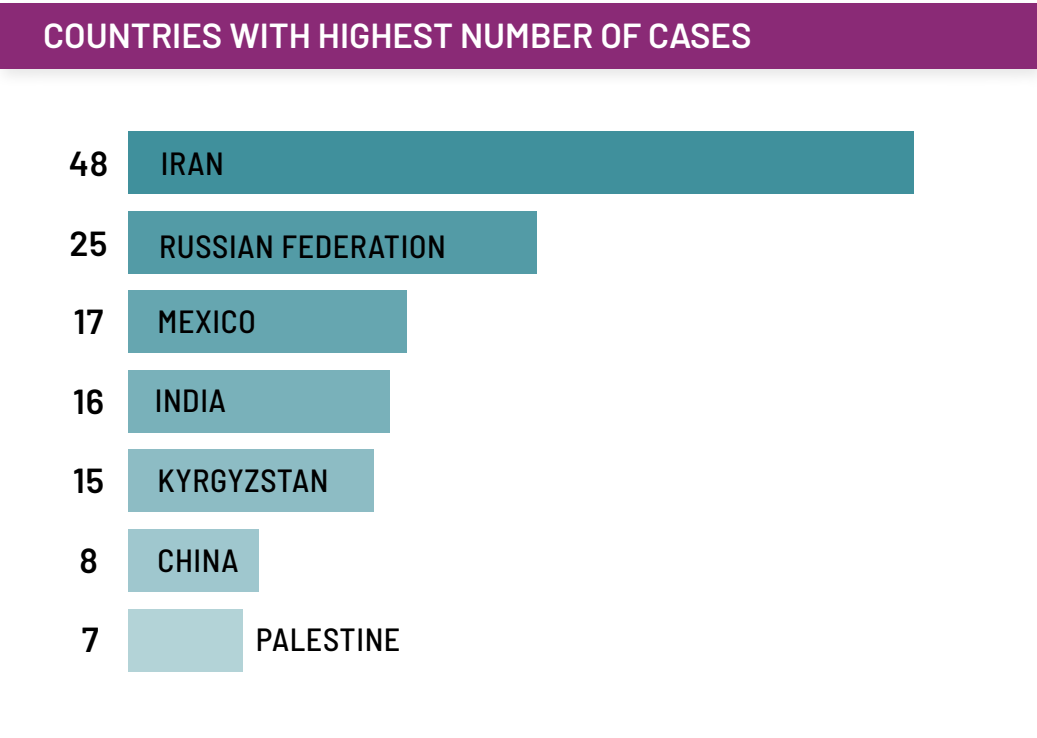
A grant to a WHRD whose work focused on documenting violations committed against women.

She had previously been arrested and put under house arrest and was at risk of being arrested again. The WHRD needed to relocate with family members. The grant allowed for safe transport and three months living expenses.

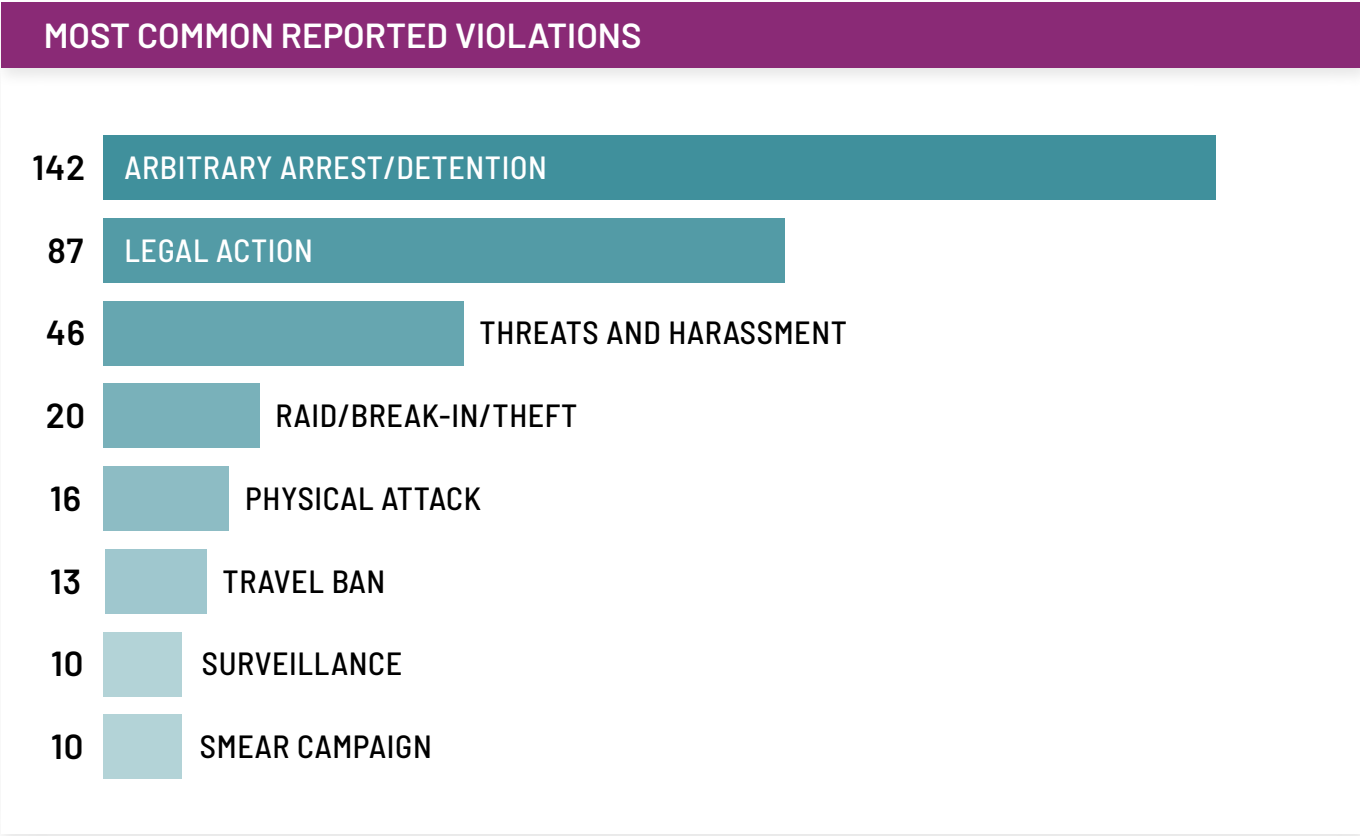
ACTION TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO URGENT HRDS CASES

Front Line Defenders’ Urgent Actions include urgent appeals, alerts, statements and other forms of urgent advocacy, tailored to the specific context which are used to advocate for national governments, international institutions and other relevant actors to take action on the cases of HRDs. In 2024, Front Line Defenders issued **241 urgent actions** for HRDs in 55 countries. In total, **81 organisations** and **369 HRDs** (119 Women/249 Men/1 GNC) were supported through urgent actions.

The region with the highest proportion of cases was Europe and Central Asia (71), followed by the Middle East and North Africa (66), the Americas (50), Asia-Pacific (46), and sub-Saharan Africa (8).



The most common issues addressed in urgent cases during the period were Freedom of Expression (cited in 33% of cases), Freedom of Assembly/Protest Movement (27%), Environmental Rights (17%), Women’s Rights (16%), Indigenous Peoples’ Rights (11%), and Citizen Participation (10%).



Front Line Defenders issued 12 urgent actions responding to the killings of HRDs, as well as 142 urgent appeals, statement and updates on behalf of HRDs facing detention or a risk of detention.

Of the urgent actions, **32% recorded positive outcomes** in 27 countries. Of the positive outcomes:

- ▶ 31%: HRD received a pardon, amnesty or early release
- ▶ 14%: Case was dropped or investigation closed
- ▶ 8%: HRD released on bail
- ▶ 10%: Threats ceased
- ▶ 8%: Detention conditions improved (e.g., access to lawyers, visitation rights)

GOAL 2. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT



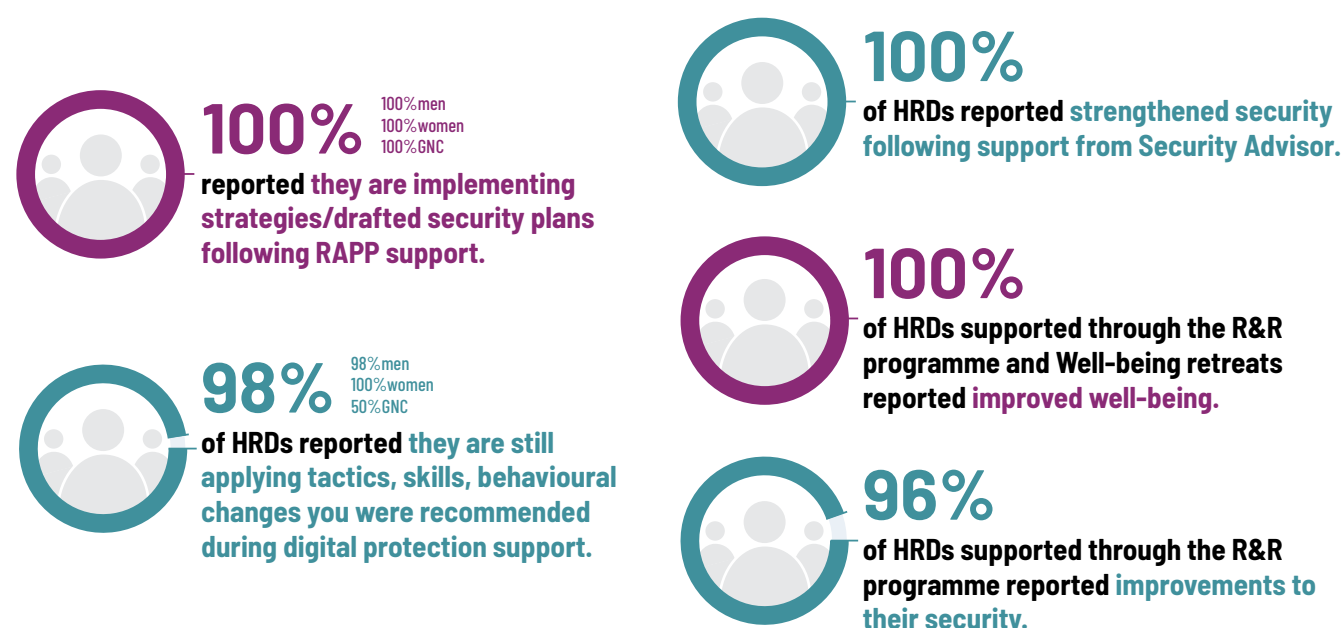
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Our capacity development work aims to strengthen HRDs, their communities and civil society resilience and capacity to manage their protection in the longer-term. This work provides training and consultations in a variety of areas, including risk and protection planning, digital security, physical security, visibility for protection, and well-being support.

In 2024, Front Line Defenders Capacity Building, Digital Security, and Physical Security teams

(hereafter the teams) supported a total of **988 HRDs** and **262 organisations** compared to 1,188 HRDs and 198 organisations in 2023. This decrease in the overall number of HRDs and organisations reached reflects an increase in demand from HRDs for holistic protection support. Accordingly, the teams coordinated to hold consultations across multiple intersecting program areas with the same cohort of HRDs. This approach enabled more in-depth holistic protection support, though it reduced the overall number of HRDs reached.

FRONT LINE DEFENDERS HAS CONTINUED TO MAKE STRONG PROGRESS UNDER THIS OUTCOME:



Capacity Development Support And Resources

98% of HRDs reported that the trainings and support provided by the Capacity Development team, the Digital Protection team, and the Physical security team led to improved capacity.

988 HRDs (361 men including 2 trans men, 602 women including 9 trans women, and 36 GNC) and **262 organisations** received this tailored capacity building support.

ID cards were also sent to 590 HRDs around the world (284 men including 1 trans man, 301 women including 1 trans women, and 5 GNC).

Capacity building continued to be supported by the development, updating, and translation of several resources, including:

- ▶ Updated [Security in a Box](#), Front Line Defenders' Digital Protection Toolkit, including new guides on six topics (including creating and protecting online identities, securing email, and browsing the web more securely), and complete translations into French, Indonesian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese, as well as on-going translations into Arabic, Burmese, Chinese, Farsi and Pashto;

- ▶ The development of internal security guidelines for the Dublin Rest & Respite Programme, a programme where HRDs stay in Dublin for a period of time to recover from stress and trauma;
- ▶ The development of guidelines for HRDs travelling to the Dublin Platform (internal);
- ▶ A review and update of the [Workbook on Security](#), a key resource for HRDs, that will be completed in 2025.

Collectively, in 2024, Front Line Defenders deepened its focus on strengthening resilience and capacity among HRDs, recognising these as essential for long-term protection. Through targeted initiatives and collaborative approaches, Front Line Defenders delivered more comprehensive and integrated support across our programmes.

Adjusting training for holistic protection

Front Line Defenders is placing an increasing emphasis on adjusting and integrating other protection expertise into the delivery of Risk and Protection Planning workshops. Below are two examples of this working in practice, with adjustments made for the profile of HRDs as well as the integration of different types of support.

Risk and Protection Planning Workshop in Guatemala

In December 2024, the Americas Capacity Builder and Protection Coordinator delivered a risk and protection planning workshop to 15 HRDs in Guatemala. All of the participants focused on indigenous or environmental rights in some way. Due to their profile, it was important to ensure that the training was adjusted to reflect the unique ways in which indigenous HRDs see security and experience threats. This was particularly important when considering their well-being. Many have a spiritual connection to the land which both motivates their work and also impacts their well-being and sense of security, as attacks on the land, including by corporations, are seen to be an attack on themselves. This meant that the discussions on risk, particularly to well-being, were adjusted to take their spiritual connection to the land into account. The spirituality of the defenders was thoughtfully integrated into the workshop, acknowledged throughout, and given dedicated attention.

The workshop was also attended by a mixed age group, with young and older HRDs represented in the group. This dynamic allowed for the sharing of experiences across generations while also highlighting the need to consider the specific needs of HRDs at different ages.

Overall, all participants highlighted how the workshop had increased their knowledge of risk and protection planning, with many highlighting the need to take the learnings back to their community and organisations and implement the tools learned.



Facilitators deliver RAPP workshop in Guatemala to indigenous rights defenders

WELL-BEING AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

In 2024, 284 HRDs and two organisations were supported through well-being activities.

Well-being Workshops were conducted with 151 HRDs, a significant increase from the 65 HRDs reached with workshops in 2023.

Well-being Consultations were also conducted with seven individual HRDs and two organisations. Front Line Defenders also provided well-being support to 25 HRDs and three groups (organisations and families) through its **Rest & Respite Programme**. 54% worked on the Middle East and North Africa region, a significant increase from 14% supported from the region last year. This reflects the huge need for well-being support within the region as multiple crises unfolded and continued.

This programme should be considered a priority in the work of supporting and defending human rights defenders. Generally, when we commit to this path, we forget the impact it has on our lives, the tensions we face, the challenges we have to overcome and the risks we submit ourselves to. This period of recovery allows us to leave behind the context of tensions and concerns, even if it is never one hundred percent, but it guarantees us a safe place with resources to gather strength and return.

WHRD who benefited from the R&R Programme

96 HRDs were also supported through **Well-being Retreats**, including in Argentina, Bangladesh, Ukraine and Tajikistan.

Front Line Defenders is an active member of the **EU Temporary Relocation Platform**, and a staff member sat on both the ProtectDefenders.eu Temporary Relocation Committee and the Shelter Initiatives Committee. Additionally, staff members continued to sit on the Advisory Board of the **Centre for Applied Human Rights at York University** on their Protective Fellowships for Human Rights Defenders and the Steering Committee of the **University of Dundee's Scottish Human Rights Defenders Fellowship**.

SUPPORTING LOCAL PROTECTION CAPACITY

70 HRDs (24M, 40W, 6GNC) were supported through Training of Trainers workshops/sessions or as support to local champions. This included the delivery of six ToTs, including one in physical security, two in Risk Assessment and Protection Planning (RAPP) and three in Digital Protection.

The RAPP workshops were conducted in Zambia and Central Asia and reached a total of 14 participants (7W/5M/2GNC). A Physical security ToT was provided to a man in Serbia. Front Line Defenders continued to offer mentorship to those that had received training.



HRDs participate in Zambia RAPP.

For the RAPP team, follow-up with the Zambia ToT participants led to two HRDs jointly delivering workshops in Zambia with Front Line Defenders. A third one, without Front Line Defenders, is planned for early 2025, showing how this knowledge has now become embedded within the local ecosystem.

For Digital Security, a total of 45 HRDs (14 men, 29 women, 2 GNC) were either trained through ToTs or received one-on-one support to become local champions for digital security. Many of these activities were regional, including ToTs in the Americas, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa.

In 2024, 10 local (national and regional) protection initiatives/networks were supported through strategic funding (8 grants) and additional capacity and networking support. This specific support was provided to Local Protection Initiatives in the following countries: Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Palestine, South Africa, Sudan, Ukraine, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This includes supporting newly emerging networks, such as in Zimbabwe, who have now received funding to set-up a protection mechanism. This example shows the significant impact that working with local protection initiatives can have on the national protection ecosystem.

EXPERIENCE SHARING AND LEARNING

In 2024, Front Line Defenders organised the Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders at risk. In addition, Front Line Defenders also supported other events, such as the International Service for Human Rights WHRD Advocacy Week in Geneva, and the Tech and Society Summit in Brussels.



HRDs enjoy entertainment during the Dublin Platform.

Dublin Platform 2024

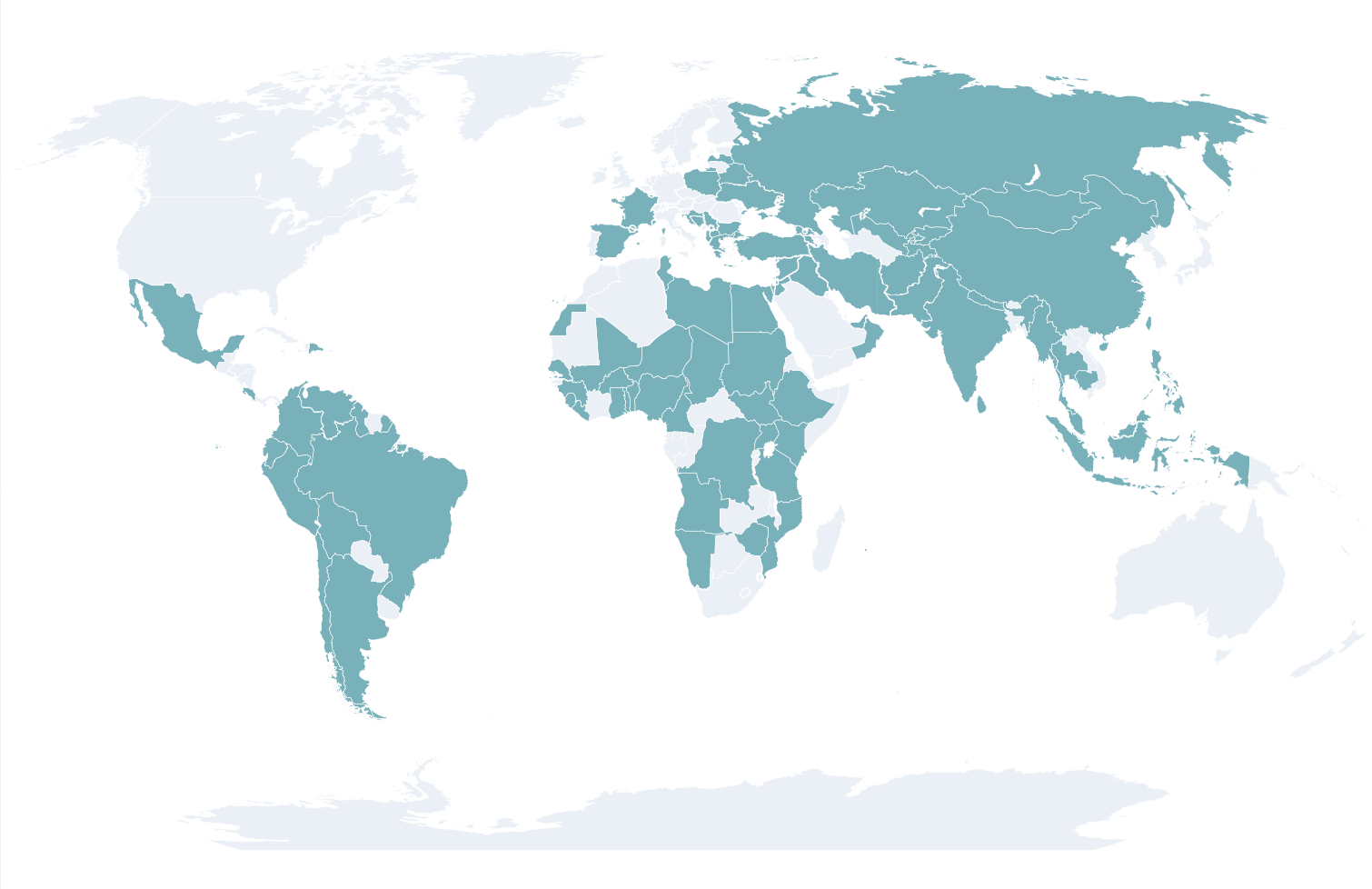
Given everything, my presence at the Platform and the kindness and attention I received from all of you was of crucial importance for my mental and emotional health. It provided me with a sense of safety, support, and belonging during a very challenging time.

HRD Attendee

Established in 2002, the Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders is a biennial event providing a truly unique opportunity for human rights defenders from almost every country in the world to gather in Dublin. Over three days in Dublin Castle, HRDs share strategies for advocacy and protection, build solidarity with colleagues around the world, and network with high-level decision makers from governmental and intergovernmental bodies.

In 2024, the Platform brought 105 HRDs (68W including 1 trans woman, 36M including 2 trans men, and 1 GNC) from a total of 97 countries to Dublin to access protection support, increase their well-being, and build networks and solidarity. They included 21 women’s rights defenders, 8 LGBTIQ+ rights defenders, 22 indigenous, land and environmental defenders, and eight journalists.

DUBLIN PLATFORM HRDs PARTICIPANTS' COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



The HRDs taking part in the Platform face a wide range of risks, from digital surveillance and online harassment, to death threats and violent attacks, to criminalisation and vilification through smear campaigns. Some work in extremely challenging circumstances amid armed conflicts, crackdowns and other large-scale crises. The Platform gives them space away from these challenging contexts, increasing their well-being, as well as giving them access to expert security advice. A key aspect of the Platform is also giving HRDs space to build solidarity amongst each other, build their networks with HRDs, donors, and other stakeholders, as well as share lessons learnt amongst peers.

64 individual testimonies were heard from HRDs, detailing their work and the challenges they face. This gave space to HRDs to build solidarity in sharing their stories of human rights defenders to the audience. The conference also provided space to share experiences and knowledge along regional and thematic areas of work. Five regional workshops were held for the Americas, Asia, Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa. Thematic sessions were also held on the gender backlash and collective protection, land, environmental and indigenous rights defenders, criminalisation against HRDs, and protest movements and protest strategies. Alongside these, panel discussions were held in the main hall.

I particularly appreciated how HRDs were centered at every turn of the platform - from language services, to the protection clinics, and hands on care for each defender. The values and intentions of your work shined through in how the space was convened.

Donor Attendee

Alongside these events, HRDs had the option of availing of a number of services. They were able to attend one-on-one clinics with experts on digital protection, physical security, and risk and protection planning. 95% of HRDs who attended the Dublin Platform reported that their security was positively impacted. They also reported a range of outcomes, with many reporting multiple outcomes, including: solidarity (95%), international contacts (89%), a strengthened network (86%), new energy (86%), increased knowledge on protection (81%), a sense of well-being (51%), and some rest (35%).



HRDs take part in break-out groups during the Dublin Platform



HRD delivers testimony at the Dublin Platform

VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Overall, communications at Front Line Defenders supported 150 HRDs (86 men, 63 women including 1 trans woman) through the Annual Front Line Defenders Award, podcasts, photo exhibitions, other events, and with visibility on their cases through the website or social media.

Front Line Defenders continued to produce communications, highlighting the significant threats that HRDs are facing. This included seven

podcasts, 14 videos, 25 digital campaigns, joint campaigns and social media mini-statements, 13 solidarity posts, and a photo booklet on the Award Winners.

As well as this, the Communications team continued to engage with traditional media. Following direct contact with journalists, Front Line Defenders' work and the work of the HRDs we support was highlighted in over 600 publications.

Front Line Defenders held its annual award ceremony on 26 May in Dublin. The following were recipients of the award:

AFRICA: GAMITO DOS SANTOS CARLOS, Mozambique

Gamito is the Executive Director of AJOPAZ, the Youth Association for Peace. His human rights work centres around social, civil and political rights and accountability. Gamito has been advocating for the protection of human rights activists and engaging with young people to advocate for significant social changes in his community, to foster justice and sustainable decision-making by authorities. He is also a member of the Friends of Amurane Association for a Better Mozambique - KÓXUKHURO, as well as an analyst and Provincial Coordinator of the Mozambican Network of Human Rights Defenders (RMDDH).

AMERICAS: Colectiva de Mujeres Trans Muñecas de Arcoiris, Honduras

Muñecas is a collective of trans women from the city of Tegucigalpa and Comayagüela in Honduras, founded in 2008. Muñecas works under the LGBTIQ+ Arcoiris Association of Honduras with the aim of creating a safe space for trans sex worker women. Most of its members are sex workers, informal workers, stylists, housekeepers, among others.

ASIA: SAMMI DEEN BALOCH, Pakistan

Sammi Deen Baloch is a Baloch woman human rights defender from Mashkai, Awaran District of Balochistan province, Pakistan. She is the General Secretary of the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), a non-governmental organisation that represents and supports victims and relatives of enforced disappearances in Balochistan. In June 2009, at the age of 10, Sammi's father, Dr Deen Mohammed Baloch, was forcibly disappeared in Khuzdar, Balochistan. She began persistently campaigning for the release of her father, which further led to her deeper, collective involvement in advocating against enforced disappearances in Balochistan by state forces.



Front Line Defenders Award Winners, We Are Not Numbers from Palestine, Gamito Dos Santos Carlos from Mozambique, Sammi Deen Baloch from Pakistan, Jennifer Cordova (Colectiva de Mujeres Trans Muñecas de Arcoiris) from Honduras, and Doros Polykarpou from Cyprus, pose for photo after receiving the award.

EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA: DOROS POLYKARPOU, Cyprus

Doros Polykarpou is a leading human rights defender and founding member of KISA (the Movement for Equality, Support, and Anti-Racism). He is an expert on migration, asylum, discrimination, racism, and trafficking in Cyprus. For over 27 years, he has dedicated himself to defending and advocating for the rights of people on the move and tackling discrimination and xenophobia in Cyprus, navigating the unique socio-political environment of the small island nation with strong conservative elements.

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA: WE ARE NOT NUMBERS, Palestine

We Are Not Numbers (WANN) is a youth-led Palestinian nonprofit project established in the Gaza Strip in 2014, with the aim of telling the everyday, human stories of thousands of Palestinians. Their vision is to spread Palestinian voices and narratives, based on respect for human rights through the work of peaceful, non-violent, youth led Palestinians.

GOAL 3. ADVOCACY



TAILORED ADVOCACY ON SPECIFIC HRD CASES

Front Line Defenders’ advocacy work in 2024 focused on providing critical support to human rights defenders at risk through targeted interventions with key international stakeholders, including the European Union, United Nations, and numerous national governments.

In an attempt to tailor advocacy approaches to the needs of HRDs, beyond the traditional advocacy targets, Front Line Defenders engaged during the year with international trade unions, bar associations, journalists, academics, penitentiary authorities, regional authorities, Interpol, tech companies and international financial institutions.

Throughout 2024, the Global Advocacy Team supported **140 HRDs (89 men, 50 women, 1 GNC) and 38 organisations across 88 countries through their advocacy on 68 cases**. This work demonstrated a commitment to supporting HRDs most at risk, including 50 women human rights defenders (WHRDs), 28 Land, Indigenous and Environmental defenders, and eight LGBTIQ+ rights defenders.

Over **82%** of cases that Front Line Defenders brought yielded positive responses from advocacy targets, including commitments to act, requests for further details or follow-up meetings, and other cooperative steps to support the case of an HRD.

FRONT LINE DEFENDERS HAS CONTINUED TO MAKE STRONG PROGRESS UNDER THIS OUTCOME:

 In **82%** of cases, targets at EU, UN, US level took action as a result of Front Line Defenders advocacy.

 In **26%** of HRD cases resulted in a positive outcome.

You were the biggest campaigner who worked a lot for my case with advocacy and visibility.

Ieva Raubiško (Latvia)

This has been the first time when an international organization took upon itself professionally, conveying my voice and handling my daughter’s transportation. I hadn’t expected to be heard being a mother of an infant [...] I will always be grateful for the opportunity you’ve provided me to deliver my message.

Sabaa (Iraq)

Front Line Defenders’s internal monitoring showed that there was a **positive outcome in 26% of the cases taken up by Front Line Defenders’s Global Advocacy team in 2024**. This result remains lower than the annual target of 40%, however it is in line with recent years (29% in 2023) and reflective of the situation for HRD protection globally. As in 2023, the Global Advocacy team carried out extensive case work for HRDs in conflict or crisis contexts such as in China, Georgia, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Philippines and Ukraine, as well as on the [Long Term Cases](#) that it follows. Despite the challenges in securing concrete positive outcomes for the defenders in these countries, Front Line Defenders believes that the international pressure and solidarity for HRDs in these contexts remains extremely important.

In line with Front Line Defenders’ Strategic Plan, in 2024, the Global Advocacy Team helped **create greater space for HRDs to advocate directly on their issues**, including facilitating direct contact with diplomats and HRDs including, among other

countries, from Syria, Somalia and Côte d’Ivoire. Front Line Defenders also engaged in **pre-emptive advocacy**, raising awareness about situations of HRDs with key diplomatic actors in-country despite there being no immediate need for action.

In November, Front Line Defenders supported the participation of an indigenous HRD and a human rights lawyer from Bolivia to participate in Bolivia’s UPR session at the Human Rights Council.

In December, Front Line Defenders hosted five HRDs from Venezuela, Republika Srpska, Kyrgyzstan, and Burkina Faso for the event entitled “[A Spotlight on Human Rights Defenders: Enhancing the Common Agenda for Protections](#)” and organised four simultaneous advocacy rounds with multiple EU actors, as well as a consultation on HRD protection in countries with foreign agents legislation or similarly restrictive legislation. These are just a few examples of the way that Front Line Defenders creates opportunities for HRD to participate in international meeting.

STRENGTHENED ENGAGEMENT OF KEY ALLIES ON HRD PROTECTION

Front Line Defenders deepened its strategic engagement with key institutions and governments to enhance systemic protection for human rights defenders globally. This work included capacity building for institutions and creating platforms for direct dialogue between HRDs and decision-makers. In 2024, Front Line Defenders conducted over **201 advocacy meetings** and organised **17 advocacy rounds** that supported 37 HRDs (23 of whom were WHRDs) from countries including Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Honduras, Hong Kong, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Venezuela. These initiatives facilitated direct engagement between HRDs and key policy makers, enhancing international recognition of their work and protection needs.

At the **European Union level**, Front Line Defenders continued to engage directly with the EEAS, the European Parliament and several Member States. Front Line Defenders also collaborated with the Fundamental Rights Agency, including on issues related to visas and the protection of HRDs in the EU.

At the **Member States level**, Front Line Defenders increased its engagement with the Belgian government (including as part of the Belgian EU Presidency), and the Spanish government (primarily on the issue of visas). Front Line Defenders also collaborated closely with the Nordic states (Finland,

Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland) on the topic of WHRDs protection, including by delivering a joint online training on the matter, hosted by the Finnish MFA with the participation of the UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs.

At the **UN level**, Front Line Defenders continued participation in the UN coalition on human rights within the context of countering terrorism, including several meetings with UN Special Rapporteur Ben Saul. Front Line Defenders co-hosted several events related to the UN Third Committee, including a roundtable with UNSR Mary Lawlor and civil society peers, and a reception launching UNSR Mary Lawlor’s report on the role HRDs play in achieving the sustainable development goals.

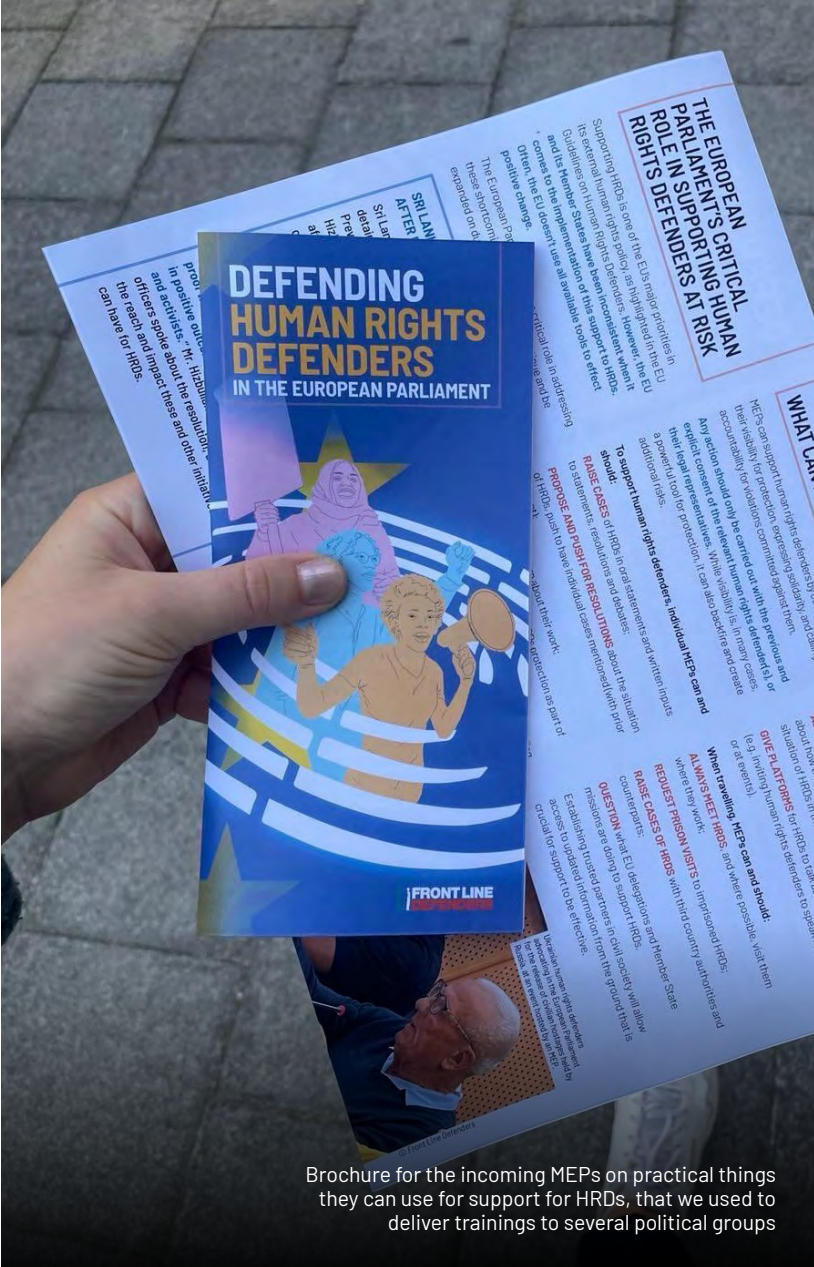
On the issue of **Business and Human Rights**, Front Line Defenders attended the 13th United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva and engaged with International Financial Institutions.

Engagement with the **OSCE** continued in 2024. It included, among others initiatives, a submission to the Moscow Mechanism that the OSCE activated on the issue of Ukrainian civilian hostages detained by Russian occupying forces. Front Line Defenders supported Ukrainian HRDs advocating for the activation of this mechanism.

At the **Council of Europe**, Front Line Defenders engaged with the Human Rights Commissioner on a number of cases of HRD, including cases in Latvia, Turkey, Cyprus and the Balkans. Front Line Defenders also facilitated consultations between the Commissioner and HRDs from Bulgaria, Turkey, Ukraine and Armenia in the context of the Dublin Platform.

Front Line Defenders also continued to engage with **donors** in order to push for the establishment of funding instruments that are best suited to the needs of HRDs. As part of ProtectDefenders.eu, Front Line Defenders actively supported the development of a report on funding for human rights defenders. Front Line Defenders also hosted a Donor Day ahead of the 2024 Dublin Platform, bringing together over 50 representatives from governments, foundations, and multilateral organisations to strengthen protection for human rights defenders at risk.

In 2024 Front Line Defenders also continued to cooperate closely with partners as part of the [ProtectDefenders.eu](#) consortium, the [Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund](#), the Holistic Protection Consortium and the [Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund](#).



Brochure for the incoming MEPs on practical things they can use for support for HRDs, that we used to deliver trainings to several political groups

Examples of Advocacy Rounds with Human Rights Defenders

HONDURAS: In November, Front Line Defenders organised an advocacy round with Honduran WHRD Jennifer Cordova (2024 Americas Award Laureate), director of trans rights organisation Muñecas de Arcoiris, and HRD Donny Reyes in Brussels. Following this advocacy round, the Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium, Petra de Sutter, wrote directly to the President of Honduras praising their work to increase their visibility and legitimacy, and the EU Ambassador met with them in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. As a result of this meeting, the EU committed to partner with Muñecas de Arcoiris for an activity during Pride.

KYRGYZSTAN: Following meetings with major political groups in the European Parliament as part of an advocacy round for Kyrgyz HRDs, a cross-party group of MEPs wrote to the EEAS urging reconsideration of the upcoming EU-Kyrgyzstan Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement given the ongoing crackdown against HRDs in Kyrgyzstan.

INPUT ON KEY REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND PROCESSES

Front Line Defenders engaged strategically with policy developments at regional and international levels to enhance the protection framework for human rights defenders globally. This work included advancing key policy priorities, providing expert input into institutional processes, and leveraging international mechanisms.

Front Line Defenders released country UPRs and policy submissions. The advocacy team released UPR Submissions on [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Iran](#), Bolivia, Kazakhstan, and [Iraq](#). Front Line Defenders also delivered **47 policy submissions**.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITIES:

Front Line Defenders made progress on three strategic policy priorities during 2024:

1 EU GUIDELINES ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS:

A key advocacy priority for the Global Advocacy team has been strengthening the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Right Defenders. In the last quarter of 2024, as the European Parliament prepared its annual report on human rights and democracy in the world, Front Line Defenders provided specific language on the situation of human rights defenders and recommendations on enhancing the implementation of the EU Guidelines.

2 VISAS AS A PROTECTION TOOL:

The adoption of the revised Visa Code Handbook followed sustained advocacy by Front Line Defenders over the last three years. Front Line Defenders has proactively engaged with relevant EU actors with the long-term objective of achieving concrete changes to the EU visa code and also for EU member states to create their own visa programs specifically for HRDs. Front Line Defenders has co-led an advocacy campaign ("[Visa for Defenders](#)")

with ProtectDefenders.eu. Front Line Defenders is now focusing efforts on raising awareness among Member States and HRDs on this new provision in the visa code, including by referring to the [guidance notes](#) released by ProtectDefenders.eu. To advance pressure on member states and the European Commission, Front Line Defenders engaged European Parliamentarians part of an informal working group. The Parliament also initiated its own study and a report was published by the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency.

3 CORPORATE SUSTAINABLE DUE DILIGENCE DIRECTIVE (CSDDD):

Ahead of the formal adoption of the EU's CSDDD, Front Line Defenders engaged with the Belgian EU Presidency and other stakeholders involved in the final technical discussions. Advocacy focused on ensuring explicit recognition of HRDs as affected stakeholders and proper acknowledgment of defenders' rights in the framework. Following the entry into force of the Directive, Front Line Defenders has been engaging stakeholders on best practices and recommendations on how to address gaps in transposition and/or Commission guidelines on the CSDDD. Front Line Defenders has also started the production of a guide for HRDs and workers on how they can use the CSDDD to address company malpractice. At the time of writing this report, the EU had announced a proposal to amend the CSDDD, thus Front Line Defenders will be adapting its advocacy strategy accordingly.

Front Line Defenders also continued to push for policy changes in other areas, including on **protection of HRDs online**. For instance, Front Line Defenders actively engaged with the EEAS around HRD protection and online platforms, contributing to [EU and US guidance](#) that sets out 10 practical steps platforms can take globally.



Donny Velasquez (left) and Jennifer Cordova (right) from Muñecas de Arcoiris (Rainbow Dolls) meeting Petra de Sutter, Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium during an advocacy round in Brussels

ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE



Leadership Transition

Alan Glasgow took up the role of [Executive Director](#) in May 2024. Olive Moore, who held the role of Interim Director during the recruitment process, has resumed her role as Deputy Director.

Governance

In March 2024, Denis O'Brien (Chairman) and David Sykes (Treasurer), stepped down from the board. Kieran Mulvey and Dr. Roja Fazaeli took on the roles of Chair and Deputy Chair, respectively. Two new members joined the board in 2024: [Dermot Hayes](#) (Treasurer) and [Eamon Gilmore](#). Dermot Hayes is an accomplished chartered accountant and Investment Director at Island Capital. Eamon Gilmore has extensive experience in international diplomacy and human rights, including in his most recent role as European Union Special Representative for Human Rights.

The board appointed [Denis O'Brien](#) as patron, in light of his long-term service to the organisation. Patrons are not members of the Board of Directors.

Staffing

In 2024, Front Line Defenders had an average of 75 staff, excluding fellows and short term consultants (82 staff in total). Front Line

Defenders' work is carried out by staff based in offices in Dublin and Brussels, as well as staff stationed globally. At the end of 2024, 35 staff were based in Dublin, nine in Brussels, and the remainder in 22 countries globally. Front Line Defenders is an international organisation with its 82 staff representing over 41 nationalities.

Financial Update

[Audited Accounts](#) are available on Front Line Defenders' website.

Expenditure

2024 total expenditure was €12,455,725. This is an increase compared to 2023 expenditure (€10,946,142). This increase reflects the costs for the organisation of a Dublin Platform in 2024 as well as a moderate growth of the organisation (staff and programmes) in line with our strategic plan (2023-2027).



77% OF FRONT LINE DEFENDERS' 2024 BUDGET WAS SPENT ON DELIVERING ITS THREE MAIN OUTCOMES:

GOAL 1. Rapid Support amounted to **€4,849,640 (40%)**

GOAL 2. Capacity Building amounted to **€3,682,351 (30%)**

GOAL 3. Advocacy amounted to **€839,377 (7%)**



Staff, HRDs and guests at the Dublin Platform gather for a group photo.

Front Line Defenders would like to thank
all its donors in 2024, including:

American Jewish World Service
Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
Channel Foundation
Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland
Dutch Postcode Lottery
Environmental Defenders Collaborative
European Commission
Fair Wind Foundation
Ford Foundation
Global Affairs Canada
Google
The Goldman Environmental Foundation
Hivos International
International Planned Parenthood Federation
Humanity United
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Lifeline: Embattled CSO Assistance Fund
Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
Luminate
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
Misereor
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
Open Society Foundations
Robert Bosch Stiftung
Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
Swedish International Development Agency
Swedish Postcode Lottery
Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Taiwan Foundation for Democracy
UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund
11th Hour Project

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



KIERAN MULVEY

Kieran Mulvey is the current Chairperson of the board. He is the former Director General of the Irish Workplace Relations Commission and Consultant with the International Labour Organisation and the European Union.



PROFESSOR ROJA FAZAELI

Roja Fazaeli is Established Professor of Law and Islamic Studies at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, University of Galway. Professor Fazaeli has published widely on the subjects of women's rights in Iran, the relationship between human rights and religion, women religious authorities, and Islamic feminisms. She is currently deputy chairperson of the Front Line Defenders Board, and additionally serves as the chairperson of the board of directors of the Immigrant Council of Ireland and a member of the board of directors for Scholars at Risk Europe and Iran Academia.



MARIA MULCAHY

Maria Mulcahy is the CEO of the Iris O'Brien Foundation and the Irish-based Head of Philanthropy for the Digicel Group. She was involved with "People in Need" from 1988 to 2000. She was responsible for organising the RTE telethons, which raised €28 million. She was Director of Fundraising for the 2003 Special Olympics World Games.



MARY JANE N. REAL

Mary Jane N. Real is a Co-Founder of Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights Asia and the Pacific – the first rapid response mechanism for women human rights defenders headquartered within the Asia Pacific region. She is a founding member and former Coordinator of the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition. A lawyer, she helped establish the Alternative Law Groups network in the Philippines. She is a long-time advocate of women's rights having worked with women's rights and human rights organisations in Asia and internationally including as Regional Coordinator of Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development.



ARNOLD TSUNGA

Arnold Tsunga is the Principal Managing Partner at Tsunga Law International, a law firm with a strong international human rights law portfolio and Convenor at Civic Space Network in Africa, the Elections and Rule of Law Expert for the Africa Judges and Jurists Forum. He was previously Resident Senior Director at the National Democratic Institute in Zimbabwe, and Africa Director at the International Commission of Jurists, founding Executive Director at Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and founding Chairperson of Southern Africa Human Rights Defenders network. Arnold has received international recognition for his human rights activism including the Martin Ennals Award for human rights defenders.



VERÓNICA VIDAL

Verónica Vidal is the Solidarity Tactic Lead at the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID). She is a long-term feminist activist for women's rights and human rights at the local level and internationally. She has worked as a researcher and advocate in Uruguay and Mexico with a focus on regional integration processes, international cooperation for development, the environment and civil society, as well as in building networks, documentation of attacks and developing protection approaches with Women Human Rights Defenders from a feminist perspective.



JIM CONWAY

Jim Conway is the founder of the Print and Display Group, one of Ireland's largest print companies, where he is now Chairman. Print and Display is one of Europe's market leaders in the screen, digital and litho production of outdoor poster, bus advertising and point-of-purchase materials. He also has a number of other media interests in Ireland and Eastern Europe.



EAMON GILMORE

Eamon Gilmore is the former EU Special Representative for Human Rights. He is a former Deputy Prime Minister of Ireland, and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (2011- 2014). Since 2015, he has been the EU Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Colombia. He was a member of Dáil Éireann (Irish Parliament) from 1989 until 2016, and Leader of the Irish Labour Party (2007-2014). He served on the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (2004-2007) and was Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE (2012). He has received several international honours and awards for his work on Peace and his leadership on human rights issues.



DERMOT HAYES

Dermot Hayes is an Investment Director with Island Capital managing a diverse portfolio of investments in telecommunications, media, healthcare, leisure, property and many other private investments. He has completed more than 50 investments and disposals across a portfolio of companies and raised over US\$8bn in public and private market transactions with investee companies. He is a Director of Island Capital and a non-executive director of a number of portfolio companies including Island Green Power, Beacon Hospital, Actavo Group Limited and various Digicel subsidiaries. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland.



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