



DISPATCHES:

ANNUAL
REPORT

2021

f FRONT LINE
DEFENDERS

ABOUT US

Front Line Defenders (FLD) is an international human rights organisation founded in Dublin in 2001, with the specific aim of protecting human rights defenders at risk (HRDs). FLD works to improve the security and protection of human rights defenders and organisations around the world at risk for their peaceful and legitimate human rights work. Front Line Defenders was awarded the 2018 United Nations Human Rights Prize.

Front Line Defenders maintains its headquarters in Dublin, an advocacy Office in Brussels, and regionally-based field staff in the Americas, Asia, Africa, Europe & Central Asia, and the Middle East.

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

- international advocacy on behalf of human rights defenders at risk, including emergency support for those in immediate danger;
- grants and support for the practical security needs of human rights defenders; including temporary relocation of human rights defenders.
- capacity building and resource materials on holistic security and protection, including digital security;
- Wellbeing opportunities such as the "Rest and Respite" program for human rights defenders dealing with extreme stress as a result of their work;
- Support for visibility needs including media outreach, campaign support, the FLD Award, production of visibility materials, and capacity building training on visibility, aimed at protection.
- opportunities for networking and exchange between human rights defenders, including at the biennial Dublin Platform;
- Emergency and crisis response through an emergency 24-hour phone line operating in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish; as well as rapid crisis support as needed



Every year, Front Line Defenders (FLD) produces Dispatches, its annual report detailing the work of the organisation to support the protection and security of human rights defenders at risk around the world.

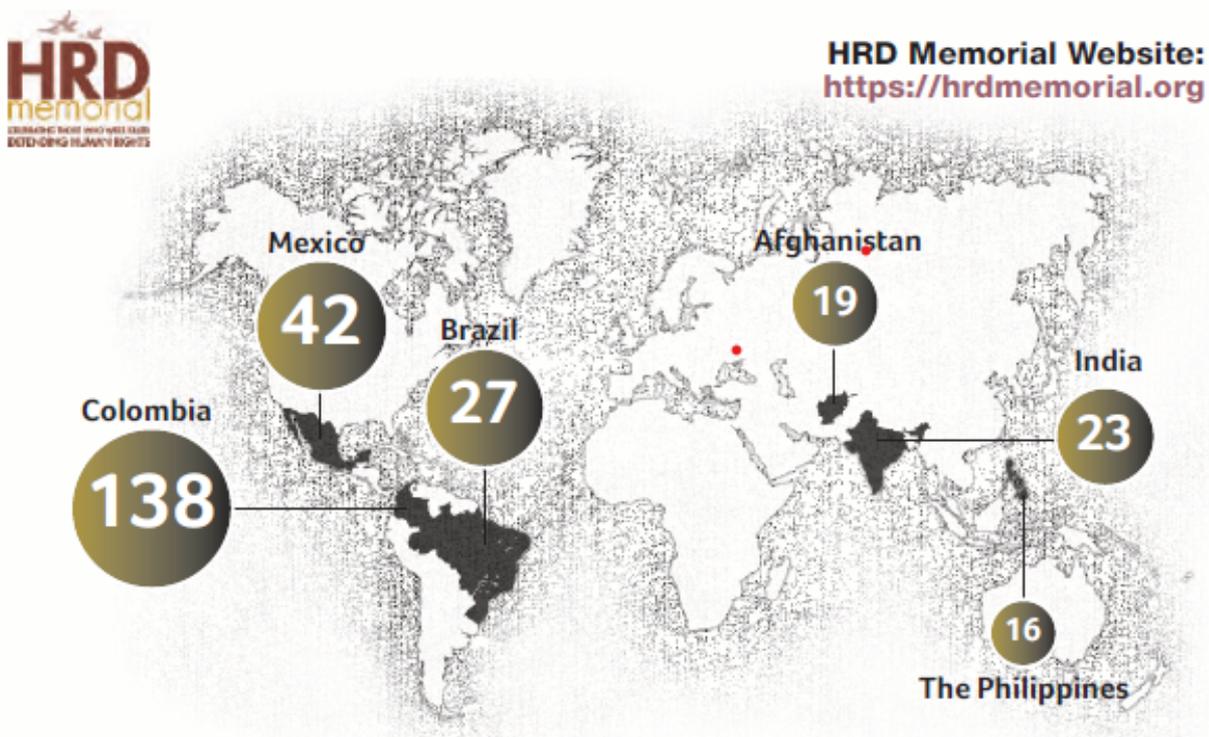
In 2021, FLD continued to expand and strengthen its rapid and practical support to Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) at risk around the world. Despite the challenges posed by multiple human rights crises and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, FLD provided effective and impactful support to HRDs - including providing more support to more HRDs than in any previous year.

As a result of FLD's support, 90% of HRDs continued or returned to work, while 96% reported strengthened security. This is a strong achievement in a context marked by high number of acute human rights crises forcing more and more HRDs into exile and/or hiding, impacting their ability to continue their work.

In 2021, crises in Myanmar, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Belarus and elsewhere were devastating for the people of those countries and were accompanied by sustained attacks against HRDs. Well-known HRDs were compelled to go into hiding or to leave in order to seek safety. According to the HRD Memorial project, **358 HRDs were targeted and killed for their peaceful, powerful human rights work in 2021**. As in previous years, the highest number of killings occurred in the Americas and Asia-Pacific regions.

Defenders working on land, environmental and indigenous peoples rights, whose human rights activities disrupt the economic interests of corporations and individuals, accounted for 59% of the total killings, 26% of which were indigenous persons.

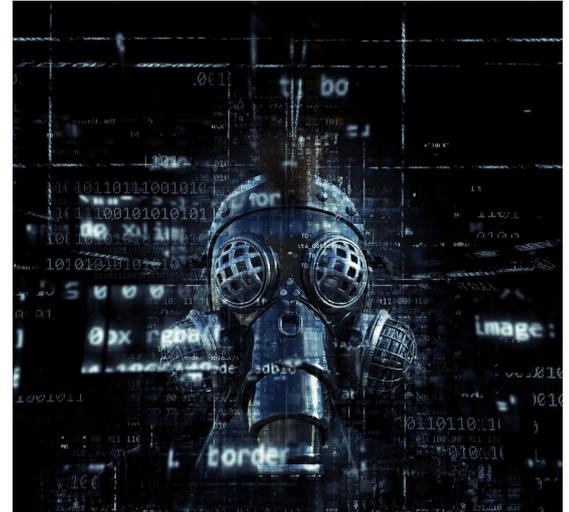
Highest number of killings per country in 2021:



TRENDS AGAINST HRDs IN 2021



Surveillance technologies continue to be used to target HRDs to infiltrate their networks, get access to their information and contacts, and dissuade them from continuing their human rights work. The prevalence of surveillance technology contributes to a chilling effect in which defenders are aware they may be targeted and therefore may become fearful to continue their work. Targeted surveillance has uniquely violent effects on WHRDs, as authorities exploit gendered, political and social power structures to defame, blackmail, and dox WHRDs.



Terrorism charges continued to be used by governments to criminalise HRD activities. Authorities continued to misuse counter-terrorism legislation to suit a wide array political purposes. Those most affected worked on land, environment, self-determination, women’s rights, anti-torture, migrants rights, and indigenous peoples’ rights.



Defamation, smear campaigns, and fear-mongering of HRDs: In addition to accusations of terrorism, anti-nationalism, and anti-development, HRDs were also accused of the promotion of vaguely defined concepts like “gender ideology” and “LGBT ideology.” .



Detaining and sentencing defenders for long periods of 10 years or more remained a tactic used by governments to remove HRDs from their communities. Torture, mistreatment and denial of medical care resulted in the deaths of at least six unjustly imprisoned defenders in 2021.



2021 AT A GLANCE IN NUMBERS

2797 individuals supported (52% men, 46% women and 2% gender non-conforming)

427 organisations /groups supported

1,045 Protection Grants to HRDs at risk in **105** countries worldwide to a total value of

€2,7M

31% increase in no. of grants provided from the previous year, and the highest number of grants provided in one year to date.

139 cases raised by FLD's Brussels Office with EU Institutions and Member States.

210 Urgent Appeals & Statements from 59 countries issued, on

452 HRDs and organisations.

2000 Afghan HRDs + their families supported with evacuation, emergency grants and relocation support. **800 visas and/or referral** space provided.

244 HRDs from **19** countries participated in risk analysis and protection planning workshops and consultations. 96% reported that they have created and are implementing security plans.

525 HRDs in **57** countries received physical security advice through 122 consultations and 29 workshops facilitated by FLD's Security Advisor. 100% reported improved security as a result.

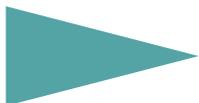
286 individuals **205** organisations from 79 countries were supported by Digital Protection Coordinators. 97% reported they actively use the tactics and tools recommended.

24 individuals **5** groups **3** families were supported through our rest and respite programme, and all reported improved well-being.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2021



FLD developed a specific partnership with the Canadian Government on a dedicated refugee stream for HRDs at risk who have fled due to persecution in their home countries, providing needed support to a number of HRDs at risk in Afghanistan and other locations.

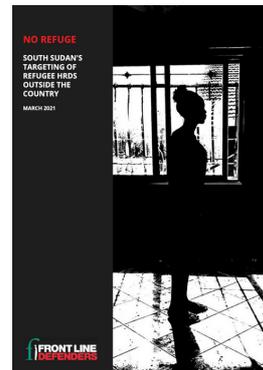


FLD led the organizing of the Dublin Human Rights Festival alongside Smashing Times.



FLD published ground breaking research reports documenting trends in HRD security:

- a 4-year investigation on challenges facing Sex Worker Rights Defenders at risk, which was the first ever of its kind;
- the first published investigation on the uncovering of Pegasus Spyware and its impact on HRDs' security;
- a report on South Sudan's targeting of refugee HRDs outside the country.
- Contributed to a number of joint research and advocacy reports on business and human rights issues, including the "Make it Your Business" report pushing for Irish legislation on businesses respecting human rights



Nine editions of Cypher digital comics magazine produced and seven episodes of the Rights on the Line podcast produced.

FLD developed a number of resources to support HRDs to work more securely, this included an updated Security in a Box toolkit, and a resilience and well-being toolkit (Eurasia).

GRANTS BY REGION AND COUNTRY

Top countries:

Afghanistan (267)* was followed by
Belarus (70)
Nicaragua (68)
Colombia (39)
Myanmar (37)
Russia (34)
Uganda (31)
Brazil (29)
Sudan (23)

43% of grants were assigned to men HRDs, 35% to WHRDs, 1% to transmen, 1% to transwomen and 1% to gender, queer and non-conforming, while 19% went to human rights organisations.

**high number of grants due FLDs broad response to assisting HRDs in the human rights crisis in Afghanistan.*

"If _____ had not received this grant, _____ staff would not be working efficiently. our work would be minimal and it would be hard for us to handle more land and sexual and Gender related cases that involve collecting evidence and storing it as we follow up the cases in different communities. The team would be insecure, coordinating meetings would be a difficult process and report writings would kind of be delayed. With this grant _____ has been able to re-open and resume work with the staff and we feel safe as whoever walks close to our premises is seen through the CCTV camera and we are able to identify them and in case of anything their footage is recorded. The cameras and lights are a threat to anyone with ill intentions". (HRD January 2021, Uganda)

*"It helped me feel safe to move around and I was able to use a private car which enabled me to take secure or alternative routes to meetings and work".
(Nicaraguan HRD, March 2021)*

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

Risk and Protection Planning: In response to concerns expressed by human rights defenders about the challenges of addressing risks and threats, Front Line Defenders has developed a programme of training on security and protection. This programme -which includes workshops, courses, seminars, consultations and capacity-building resources -aims to facilitate knowledge, expertise and sharing of skills, to provide HRDs with additional information and tools that may assist in addressing personal and organisational security and protection issues.

In 2021, FLD provided workshops on Risk Analysis and Protection planning to **139 HRDs from 19 countries** as well as **consultations to a further 116 HRDs**, including in Honduras, Sudan, Chile, El Salvador, and Zambia. While over half of workshops took place in person, FLD’s capacity building team had to continue to adapt to travel restrictions, and provided a range of workshops remotely, or partially remotely. For instance, FLD organised a hybrid training of trainers workshop for Central and Western African HRDs with a series of remote sessions in March followed by in-person sessions in November.

RAPP Training of Trainers: Sudan

In 2021, Front Line Defenders held **4 Risk Assessment and Protection Planning workshops** (including 2 training of trainers) in Sudan for **47 HRDs**, of which 26 were women and 21 were men. Participants included HRDs from Khartoum, Port Sudan, Kassala, Gedaref, South Kordafan, Aljazera and Darfur. The participants reflected the country’s diversity (in terms of gender, culture, ethnicity, age and religion). The training was participatory, using a holistic approach, looking at physical, Digital and well-being sessions. Understanding context is one of FLD’s training components and, according to HRDs’ feedback, has a strong effect on the way they are thinking of risks.

The two Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops took place in Port Sudan and North Darfur. Those locations were chosen for ToT as they are marginalised areas facing conflict and, therefore, having HRDs trained in sharing FLD’s protection methodology to other HRDs would support the wider protection needs of the community. Participants noted in post training evaluation forms that this training raised the capacity of HRDs to help themselves and others. For example in Red Sea State, HRDs who participated in RAPP ToT supported other HRDs during periods of tribal conflict to develop their own protection and security plan.

“A quality training which puts people at the center and very practical, THANK YOU”.

“Rich, Fantastic, human!”

Participants to Training of Trainers for Western African HRDs



Well-being and Resilience

In 2021, FLD initiated a series of region-specific Well-being and Resilience Toolkits due to the lack of resources on well-being for HRDs. Following HRD focus group consultations, FLD released a well-being Toolkit for the ECA (in Russian). The author, illustrator and the layout artists are all WHRDs. This resource is being used by HRDs to strengthen well-being resources and to support the capacity building of HRDs. Similar toolkits will be released in 2022 for the Americas and MENA.



ECA toolkit



well-being resiliency retreat held in Kyrgyzstan in 2021



Rest and Respite Support

“What struck me is that many defenders we met were at the edge of a burnout. It is clear that covid has been hard on everyone and that we need to focus on the mental health of defenders in the coming year if we want people to continue working. Every organisation we spoke to also underlined the need of support when it comes to mental health.” - FLD Mena Protection Coordinator, following mission in Tunisia in December 2021

During 2021, Front Line Defenders provided rest and respite support to **24 HRDs (11 women/13 men) and 5 groups (supporting a wider 29 HRDs)**. The well-being of HRDs continued to be strongly impacted in 2021, with HRDs facing a second year of high stress and uncertainty linked to Covid-19, in addition to the stress linked to their human rights work. In this context, it has been particularly important for FLD to continue to operate its Rest and Respite Programme. Facing strong travel restrictions in many regions (and lack of access to vaccines), FLD has had to remain flexible and identify tailor made solutions to each case, in line with the needs and requests for HRDs.

Due to travel restrictions, the majority of R&R support was provided to HRDs from Eurasia, while no R&R was possible in East Asia. In the majority of cases R&R took place in-country or regionally, while only one R&R was possible in Ireland in 2021.

DIGITAL PROTECTION

Front Line Defenders created its Digital Protection Programme in 2004 to meet the needs of HRDs facing digital threats. The programme includes practical, hands-on workshops and long-term assistance aimed implementing more secure practices and tools. Since 2013, we deliver this support through field based digital protection consultants based in different regions, who directly with human rights organisations (HROs) and individual HRDs. The program aims to more effectively assess HRDs digital needs and risks, help design tailored security policy and assist in implementing it and integrating good practices into daily work and life.

In 2021, FLD's Digital Protection team provided support to **286 HRDs** (48% men, 46% women and 6% trans or gender non-conforming), and **205 human rights organisations** (directly supporting a further 2,904 HRDs). This support was provided to HRDs from **79 countries**, through consultations (including security assessments, responses to emergency incidents and mentoring) and webinars and trainings. Support was provided for a range of issues including **network shutdowns, social media security, online threats/harassment and doxxing, physical surveillance, and online surveillance and censorship**. FLD also updated its "Security-in-a-box" online toolkit, a comprehensive guide on digital security for HRDs.

FLD engaged directly with social media companies, which resulted in quicker responses to account shutdowns and cases of harassment against HRDs on their platforms. FLD worked with local digital protection experts to provide targeted support to HRDs in specific countries requiring additional support as well as in crisis contexts.

Example of Digital protection support: The Asia DPC has been in continuous touch with a group of Indian HRDs dealing with cases of disappearance, office raids and arrests of its members. As there was a heightened sense of risk of further raids, the DPC has been supporting individual staff members with their digital security concerns regarding secure storage, secure deletion of data, awareness on tools for digital security on an individual basis. The DPC has further helped the organisation with their digital security planning by providing a list of services/tools the organisation would need for the safety and protection of its staff members.

Afghan HRD: "Yours and your digital coordinators help to hide the devices and apps from my phone which was very useful. The day before yesterday, the Taliban stopped me in a check point and searched me. They took my phone to check it but fortunately with yours and your digital coordinators help I had already hidden everything and they couldn't find anything. Your digital coordinator help saved my life."

DIGITAL PROTECTION

Groundbreaking investigations and analysis on Pegasus Spyware:

Informed by its day-to-day engagement with HRDs at risk around the world, FLD started to carry out and share more analysis of digital threats faced by HRDs. This included the release of an investigation into the hacking of six Palestine Human Rights organisations by NSO Group’s Pegasus Spyware and further research on the impact of surveillance technology on LGBTIQ+ rights HRDs in Morocco and Egypt; on women human rights defenders from Bahrain and Jordan impacted by Pegasus, and on the use of Pegasus against journalists in El Salvador.



PHYSICAL SECURITY

Front Line Defenders has continued to develop its Security Advisor programme since 2017. The Security Advisor provides personalised, in-country and remote one-on-one security support to the most-at-risk HRDs and HROs regarding managing their context specific threats. With a holistic and intersectional approach, this support focuses on physical and personal security, safe travelling strategies, strategic security, collective protection strategies and practical risk management.

FLD Security Advisor supported **525** HRDs at risk in 2021 through **122 consultations and 29 workshops**, in **57 countries**. The Security Advisor received an increased number of requests in 2021 to support HRDs setting up or running shelters. This support is aimed at advising on shelter safety and security policy and procedures, and to evaluate the physical security of premises. This included consultations with HRDs in Nepal, Indonesia, Iraq, and South Africa, and compiling specific advice for LGBTIQ+ friendly shelters. FLD Security Advisor also continued to make available some security guidance to HRDs in various languages, for instance guidance to relocate to a place of safety was translated in Burmese and shared with HRDs seeking to remain in Myanmar during the crisis (as well as advice on protest safety).

Case study – Support to Ukrainian Disability Rights Organisation:

In 2021, FLD Security Advisor provided security consultations to Ukrainian disability rights NGOs. This involved multiple meetings with the team, discussions to hear the identified needs of the HRDs and the support FLD could offer, and the range of holistic protection options available. Those consultations were also an opportunity for FLD, together with the HRDs, to update its physical security resources to include access and inclusion advice, such as in its physical security guidance and managing security guidance for organisations. Access and inclusion issues are now featuring in risk assessments carried out by FLD with other HRDs.

'We analysed the documents and translated them to Ukrainian in order to disseminate among our community. It is really important information, which actually is missing in our NGO environment.'

HRDs who took part in security consultations.

GLOBAL ADVOCACY

Located in Brussels, the Advocacy Office was established in 2006 to coordinate Front Line Defenders advocacy activities with international bodies, primarily the United Nations, European Union and individual EU Member States, as well as Norway and Switzerland. The office advocates on behalf of individual cases of human rights defenders at risk to EU Institutions (incl. delegations and member state embassies), UN Institutions, and Ministries of Foreign Affairs, pushing them to take quick action in line with international guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.

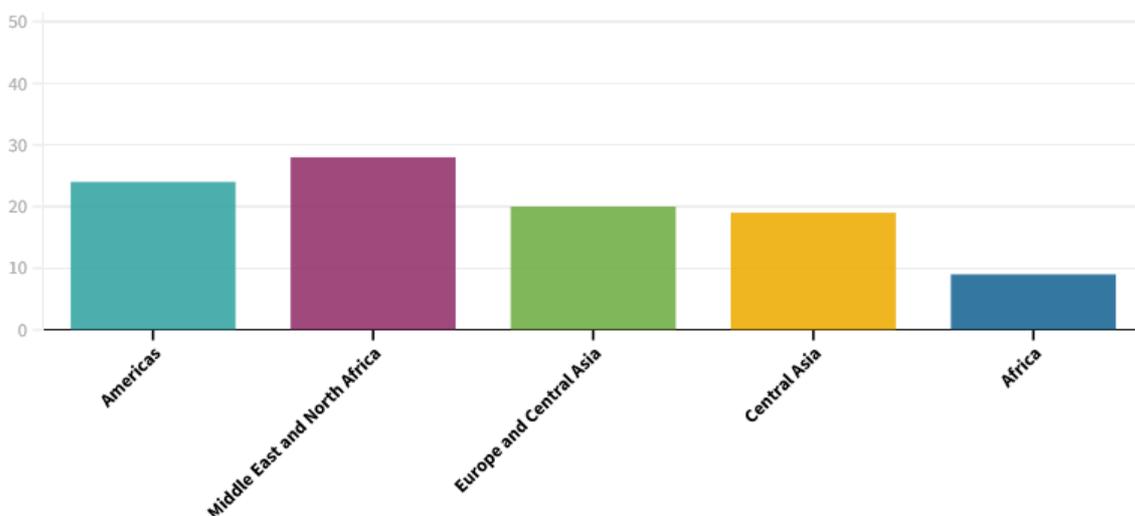
Urgent Appeals

Using its Urgent Appeal mechanism, Front Line Defenders advocates on behalf of individual human rights defenders at risk with international bodies, regional institutions, governments and other actors to urge them to take action towards the protection of defenders. Urgent Appeals provide an outline of the HRDs case and calls for action.

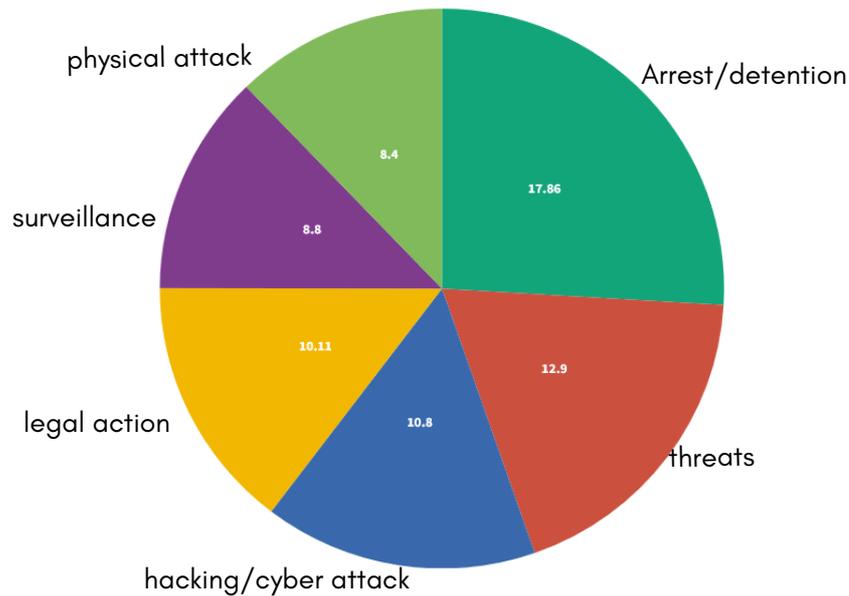
In 2021, FLD issued more group statements than in previous years, both in recognition of cases affecting a collective of HRDs, rather than one individual, and in order to reduce the risk associated with naming one specific HRD on an urgent appeal.

- 210 Urgent Appeals & Statements issued in 59 countries supporting 452 HRDs.
- Of the 210 appeals, 34% were WHRDs, 5% were LGBTIQ+ Defenders, 23% worked on Land, Environment or Indigenous Rights, and 11% worked on Gender Rights.
- 34% of Urgent Appeal cases resulted in some form of a positive outcome for the HRD at risk.
- 139 cases were raised by FLD’s Brussels Office with EU Institutions and Member States.

URGENT APPEALS ISSUED PER REGION



The top types violations globally as indicated by FLD’s casework:



European Union

FLD’s EU office took up **139** new cases for EU advocacy in 43 countries in 2021. The EU Office also ensured that the EU raised HRD cases in human rights dialogues and consultations at EU level with over 11 countries.

During 2021, FLD rolled out workshops on the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders for HRDs in Burkina Faso, Moroccan LGBTIQ+ HRDs and a Ukrainian disability rights Organisation. The workshop in Burkina Faso was carried out in two phases, for 14 human rights defenders from Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, working on a range of issues. These issues included protection of HRDs, media freedom, journalists, bloggers, LGBTIQ+ rights, women's rights, police brutality, torture and the right to health. The Guidelines training served to connect the HRDs with the EU and Member States and improve their understanding of the EU’s HRD policy. The EU delegation in Burkina Faso expressed a lot of openness to continue dialogue with the HRDs present.

“What we learned yesterday and today strengthened our advocacy capacities; at this stage, it is possible to meet with the EU. Most civil society organisations do advocacy. What we learn is added value on how to engage with the EU using a different angle as we do usually”.

Participants to EU Guidelines workshop (Burkina Faso)

United Nations

In 2021, **98** cases sent by FLD were **taken up by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders out of a total of 292 taken up by the mandate.**

FLD researched and presented **four submissions under the UN Universal Periodic Review mechanism in 2021** on the challenges and threats facing HRDs in: South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Thailand and Sudan. Following on from the consistently high numbers of killings of HRDs in Colombia in 2020, FLD, in consultation with HRDs, compiled a **comprehensive briefing document** outlining the grave situation of killings of defenders in the country and the tools available to the UN Security Council (UNSC) to tackle the issues.

United States

In 2021, the first US Representative working on US Advocacy for Front Line Defenders was appointed. The position was taken up by Ana Cutter Patel, based in New York City. Ana joins Front Line Defenders having worked internationally in peace-building and transitional justice.

Priorities for US advocacy included raising individual cases of HRDs at risk to US government and US-based policymakers, seeking support from US Embassies and missions, pushing for increased support of HRDs in the 2022 campaign on revitalized US Guidance on HRDs, and advocating for HRDs at risk because of counter-terrorism policies.



Advocacy in Brussels at the European Union

Business and Human Rights

During 2021, FLD consolidated further its work on HRD protection in the context of business and human rights. The organisation increasingly became a reference point for businesses, IFIs, UN Special Procedures and civil society, for training, advice and policy development inputs in relation to reprisals. Priority areas included advocating for policies on reprisals with the World Bank and other International Financial Institutions, the inclusion of HRDs in mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence (mHREDD) policy making at domestic and EU level and the development of policies on HRDs by businesses.

FLD conducted a series of consultations with HRDs on Human Rights Due Diligence to ensure their views were documented and used to inform advocacy work throughout the year and to increase the visibility of their perspectives among other CSOs.

In conjunction with the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, Indigenous People’s Rights International, ProDESC among others, FLD carried out consultations with HRDs in Africa, Asia and the Americas. The briefing, Hearing the Human: Ensuring due diligence legislation effectively amplifies the voices of those affected by irresponsible business compiles the views of over 60 HRDs.

FLD prioritised advocacy around the EU legislative agenda on mHREDD (mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence) at EU level with a two pronged focus: firstly on ensuring the inclusion of HRD protection in any final regulatory framework, and that there is space for meaningful representation of HRDs. Secondly, that any mHREDD does not put HRDs at further risk.

Report: Make it Your Business



Hearing the human - Ensuring Due Diligence Legislation Effectively Amplifies the Voices of those Affected by Irresponsible Business



Rights:

Memorial Project & Long Term Detention

In 2021, the HRD Memorial initiative recorded the killing of 358 HRDs, including 211 land, environment and indigenous peoples' rights defenders. As part of the Memorial Project, members continued to gather and verify data on killings; carry out advocacy on countries of concern (with a particular focus on Colombia – see also advocacy at UN level); and strengthen coordination and relationship-building among the Memorial's members. A particular focus during 2021 (and 2022) has also been to strengthen collection of data on killings of HRDs in India. Results of the research carried out in 2021 on killings of HRDs is available in FLD Memorial Report released in March 2022.



CELEBRATING THOSE WHO WERE KILLED DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS



Long term detention: FLD has 11 long term cases of HRDs in detention for which sustained advocacy is conducted at different political levels. The long-term imprisonment of HRDs continued to put extreme financial and emotional strain on defenders and their families. FLD's profiling of specific cases provides vital visibility for HRDs who have spent years in detention, with some having been in prison for over a decade. In 2021, Germain Rukuki was released, and Nasrin Sotoudeh was granted medical furlough from prison.

See also the video produced by FLD in March 2022, on the 11th anniversary of the disappearances:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdfdICUKWlg>



Head of Global Advocacy Claire Ivers with HRD Germain Rukuki after his release

COMMUNICATIONS AND VISIBILITY

Visibility for Protection programme

FLD held a series of visibility for protection training activities for HRDs. This included one in-person Visibility for Protection Workshop in Uganda (which is detailed below) and seven online consultations for HRDs from Bahrain, Panama, South Africa, Chad, Mexico, Spain and Honduras.

In partnership with the development organisation Christian Aid Ireland, FLD conducted a series of shorter, small group, country-focused VFP workshops for HRDs in Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, El Salvador and Colombia. The workshops focused on strategies against defamation and stigmatization through practical case examples and discussions. For all Visibility for Protection workshops and consultations, HRDs reported improved capacity to analyse risks related to visibility such as defamation, stigmatization, hate speech and online violence, make protection plans to address these risks, and change what society thinks about them.

Uganda in-person workshop

In Uganda, the level of attacks and risks confronted by WHRDs is concerning. Defamation and stigmatisation has a huge impact on their well-being and frequently develops into an escalation of attacks. In partnership with Women's Human Rights Defenders Network-Uganda, in September 2021 FLD held an in-person convening with 16 WHRDs from Uganda. This was the first workshop of its kind held with the network and it provided a space for the WHRDs to discuss how their identity and public image as activists impacts their security.

"The workshop provided a space for WHRDs to speak out on aspects of their visibility including public image, identity as WHRDs, personal identities and intimacy and how it affects their work and protection in Uganda, as well as define visibility for protection practices to mitigate and respond to risks related to visibility" Uganda VFP workshop participant 2021



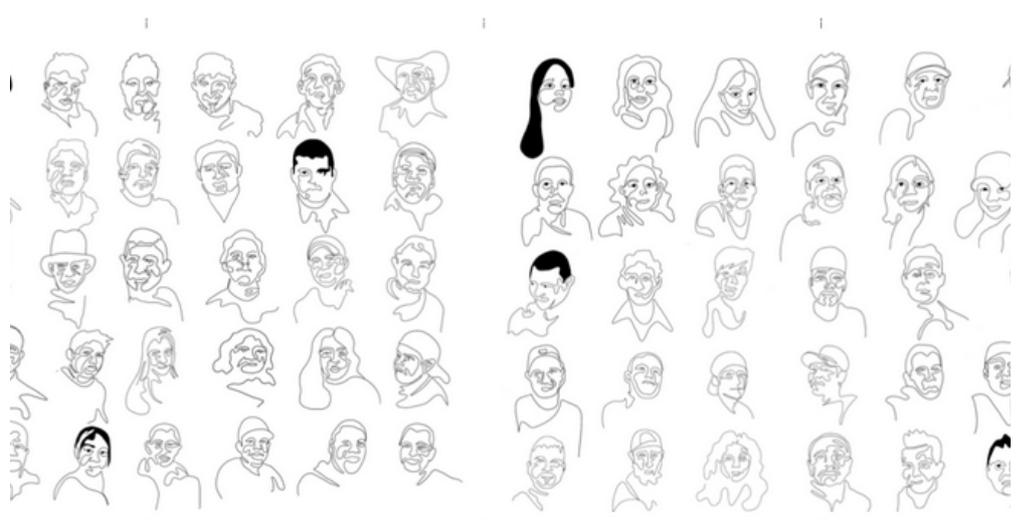
Visibility for Protection: Community calendars as a form of collective protection in Mexico.

FLD has been working with the Concejo Ciudadano Indigena de Nahuatzen (CCIN - Indigenous Citizens' Council of Nahuatzen), along with Serapaz, since October 2019, when two HRDs were sentenced on charges of sabotage. In January 2021, Front Line Defenders supported two communities in Mexico - Nahuatzen (in Michoacan) in collaboration with Serapaz Mexico, and Zacacuautla (Hidalgo) to produce community calendars as alternative collective protection tools to be used for their visibility and advocacy work.

"We have long dreamed of something like this that we could share with the community. That could show our congruence and what we defenders are up against. That could show our work, and combat efforts to defame and delegitimize us." Testimony from a WHRD from Zacacuautla, Mexico, speaking about the VFP calendar



A new Visibility for Protection multimedia production, a fanzine on the struggle of the families of disappeared persons in Guanajuato, México, has been published. Through our partnership with Plataforma por la Paz y la Justicia en Guanajuato and the testimonies of members of collectives of "buscadoras/es" ("searchers"), the multifaceted material will help to visibilise and honour the work of these courageous victims turned human rights defenders fighting throughout the ongoing human rights crisis in Guanajuato.



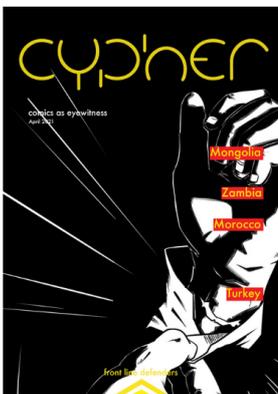
Strategic communication tools

Cypher comic zine:

The Cypher comic continued with nine new editions published in 2021. Examples of topics covered include: the February issue which connected with Black History Month (US) and featured stories of Afro-descendant HRDs in Uruguay, Portugal, Tunisia, Sudan and Japan; and the June edition presents three protest movements of the first half of 2021, and the HRDs at the forefront - from Myanmar, Palestine and Colombia.

The full library of Cypher is at: www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/cypher-comics-library

Cypher 05



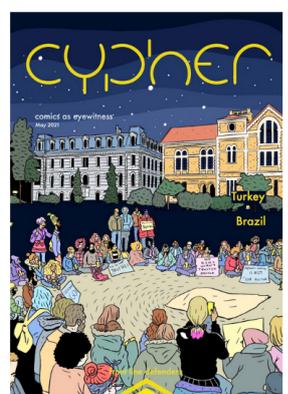
Cypher 07



Cypher 06

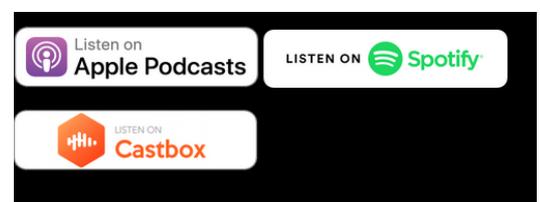


Cypher 09



Rights on The Line podcast:

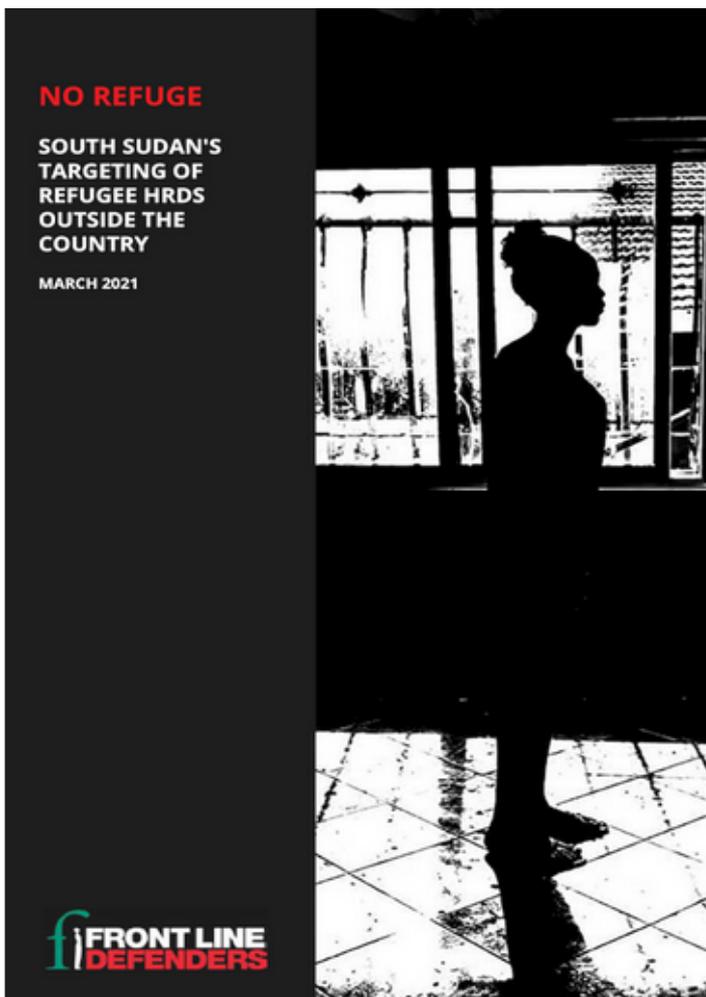
In 2021, seven episodes of FLD's Rights on the Line podcast were produced. These included two podcasts featuring Palestinian HRDs to discuss the context of the targeting of HRDs during the intensification of repression in May; and one featuring Turkish HRDs discussing the challenges faced by HRDs working on gender and LGBTIQ+ rights, in light of Turkey's recent withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention. All podcasts can be accessed here: <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/podcast> (and on podcast platforms).



Reports:

FLD developed a number of specific reports to highlight the contexts that HRDs are working in. These reports included the Sex Worker Rights Defenders at Risk report, which is the first ever investigation into targeted violence, threats and attacks against Sex Worker Rights Defenders - launched in August; and a report on South Sudanese Refugee HRDs at risk, in response to ongoing threats and attacks from South Sudan's intelligence service. It was timed to be released as the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan was under review by the UN Human Rights Council for renewal (and where it was facing opposition).

In November 2021, FLD published a mid-term assessment of China's implementation of the recommendation from the 3rd cycle of the UPR in 2018. This joint report, the Strategies of Silence: Repression of Chinese Human Rights Defenders, Lawyers, and Journalists looks at the implementation of recommendations received in November 2018 over the past three years - a period marked by an intensified repression of human rights defenders, lawyers, and journalists across the country, as well as against the Uyghur and Tibetan peoples, and under the National Security Law in Hong Kong.



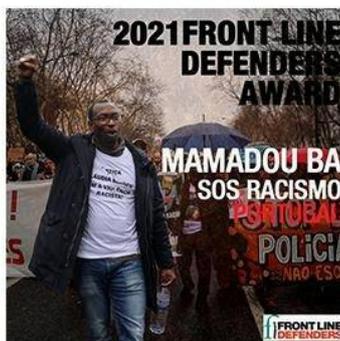
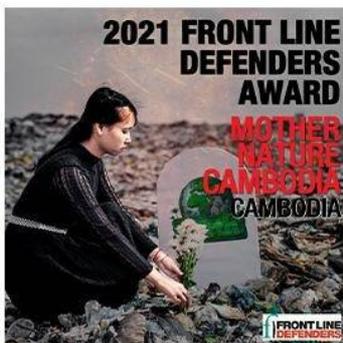
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Front Line Defenders Award

The annual Front Line Defenders Award was established in 2005 to honour the work of HRDs who are courageously making outstanding contributions to the promotion and protection of the human rights of others, often at great personal risk to themselves. The Award focuses international attention on the work and struggles of HRDs, providing a greater national and international platform to speak about and advocate for the human rights issues they are defending. Human rights defenders honoured with the Award believe that it has made a difference to their ability to continue working in difficult circumstances.

The 2021 Award was celebrated online due to Covid restrictions on 9 December – the International day for Human Rights Defenders (ceremony video). FLD hosted a press conference and all six winners were invited to share their stories and to engage in a Q&A with the audience.

2021 Front Line Defenders Award for Human Rights Defenders at Risk



ORGANISATIONAL UPDATES

In 2021, the ongoing pandemic and the many human rights crises required FLD to further adapt its systems, staffing and programming to ensure adequate response to needs of HRDs.

Front Line Defenders continued to increase its staff in 2021, to respond to the growth in requests from HRDs. At the end of 2021, FLD had expanded to 61 staff (compared to 50 staff in 2020).

Staff well-being remained a key concern for FLD in 2021 due to the challenges of Covid-19. In response to those challenges, FLD well-being working group has continued to develop and implement a well-being support programme for staff.

There was no change in the composition of the Board of Directors in 2021 (a new board member joined to Board in March 2022: Dr Roja Fazaeli, Assistant Professor of Islamic Civilisations at Trinity College). Katrin Wilde, Director of the Chanel Foundation, has joined Front Line USA Foundation Board. To strengthen the organisations gender mainstreaming, a comprehensive Gender Action Plan is implemented, as are Guidelines for addressing cases of sexual harassment in the human rights community. In 2021 FLD completed 6 Financial Audits including project audits for donors and partners, in compliance with SORP and in line with specific donor requirements.

Board of Directors for 2021:



Denis O'Brien
Chairman



Arnold Tsunga



Mary Jane N.
Real



Kieran Mulvey



Verónica Vidal



Jim Conway



Maria Mulcahy



David Sykes

2021 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Front Line Defenders is grateful for the generous support of the following donors

€200,000+

- European Commission
- Ford Foundation
- Irish Aid
- Lifeline: Embattled CSO Assistance Fund
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
- Oak Foundation
- Open Society Foundations
- Iris O'Brien Foundation
- Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Swedish International Development Agency
- Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

€50,000 - €199,000

- Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
- Foundation for a Just Society
- Hivos International
- Misereor

€ 2,000 - € 49,000

- American Jewish World Service
- Belgian Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs
- Channel Foundation
- Environmental Defenders Collaborative
- Foundation Nicolas Puech
- French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

- The Goldman Environmental Foundation
- Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
- Mize Family Foundation
- Organisation internationale de la Francophonie
- Overbrook Foundation
- Tikva Grassroots Empowerment Fund / Tides Foundation
- Twitter

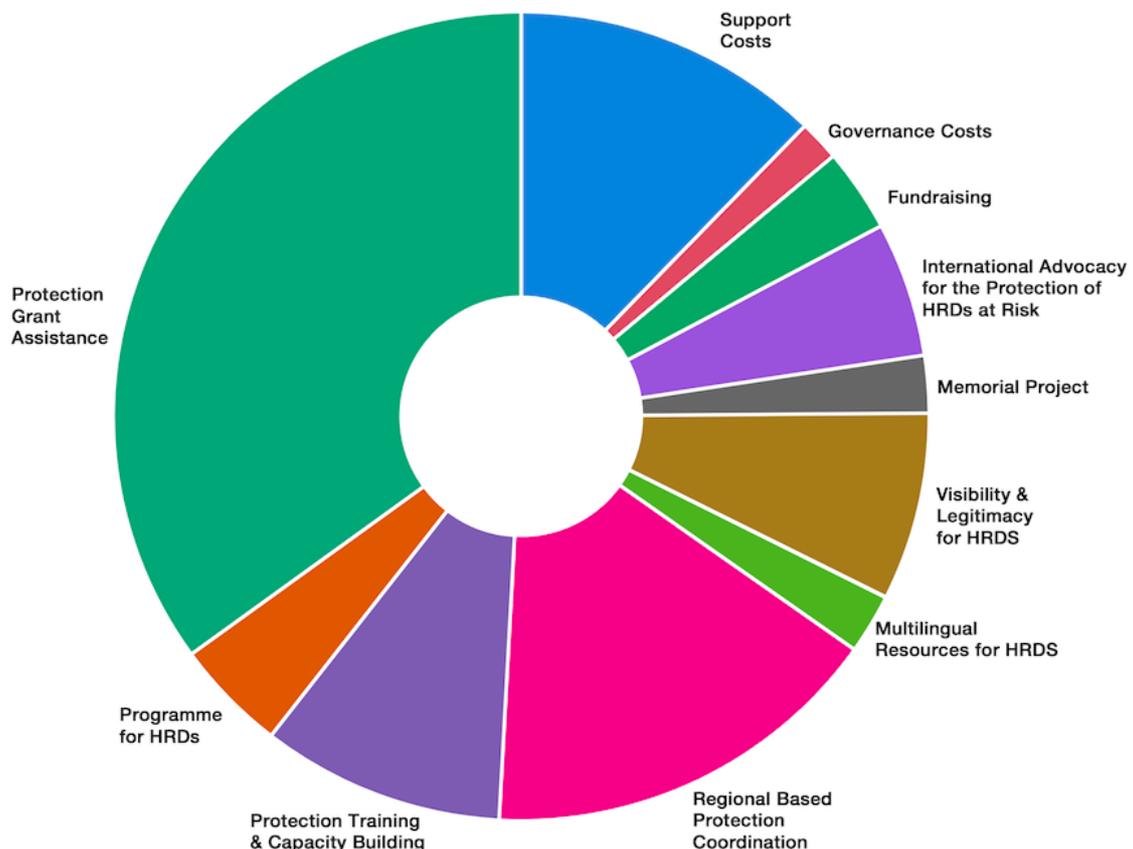
WE ALSO WISH TO THANK OUR MANY PUBLIC DONORS WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE CRUCIAL TO OUR WORK.

Please help us protect human rights defenders by donating to Front Line Defenders at: www.frontlinedefenders.org/donate or contact Laurent Aldenhoff at: laurent@frontlinedefenders.org or +353 1 212 3750

Front Line Defenders guarantees that 100% of your donation will go directly to the protection of human rights defenders at risk. You can also donate to Front Line USA Foundation, which is recognized in the United States as tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Front Line USA Foundation is a separate and independent charity and currently does not accept online donations. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Laurent Aldenhoff for further information.

2021 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Where FLD spends its resources (2021)	€	%
Protection Grant Assistance for HRDs	3,042,916	34%
Programme for HRDs	1,537,484	17%
Protection Training & Capacity Building	744,978	8%
Regional Based Protection Coordination	1,039,719	12%
Multilingual Resources for HRDs	126,481	1%
Dublin Platform for Human Rights	0	0%
Dublin Human Rights Festival	6,298	0%
Visibility & Legitimacy for HRDs	519,608	6%
Memorial Project	76,646	1%
International Advocacy for the Protection of HRDs at Risk	547,300	6%
Fundraising	246,533	3%
Governance	120,550	1%
Support Costs	998,848	11%
Total expenditure	9,007,361	100%



For any general queries, comments or questions contact info@frontlinedefenders.org

For Emergency situation for human rights defenders, please contact the Emergency Line at: +353-1-210-0489

For information on the Canada Global Refugee Stream for Human Rights Defenders please visit <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/canada-program>

For all media requests only, please contact Aisha Hamdulay, Communications Associate, at: campaigns@frontlinedefenders.org

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