



Annual Report 2021



DEFENDDEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

ACRONYMS

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
APRODH	Association Burundaise pour la Protection des Droits Humains et des Personnes Détenues
COHR	Commission on Human Rights
COI	Commission of Inquiry
ECOSOC	Economic commission and social council
EHAHRD-Net	East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network
EHRC	Ethiopia Human Rights Commission
GNC	Gender non-conforming
HRD	Human rights defender
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IE	Independent Expert
IWD	International Women's Day
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-government organisation
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commission
OSINT	Open Source Intelligence
AFRICANDEFENDERS	Pan-African Human Rights Defenders Network
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
TOT	Training of Trainers
TRE	Tension Releasing Exercises
UN	United Nations
UN HRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNWG-DAW	UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WHRD	Woman human rights defender

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FOREWORD

The year 2021 was the first year of implementation of DefendDefenders Strategy 2021-2025, which is focused on enhancing the safety and capacity of human rights defenders (HRDs) in the region for greater resilience and effective fulfilment of their mandate. 2021, like 2020, was largely influenced by new strains of COVID-19 that continued to affect programming and claimed our colleague – Mariam Nakibuuka, who joined DefendDefenders in 2015, and until her demise, served as a Senior Protection Associate.

For those who, in one way or another might have undergone similar or even worse experiences, I condole with each one of you. COVID-19 has been particularly tough on HRDs, who, in addition to the general isolation occasioned by global lockdowns, had to put up with heightened harassment by state authorities under the pretext of enforcing the Covid 19 restrictions. Thus, by challenging the worryingly shrinking civic space, HRDs have incurred physical and emotional harassment, including arrests and detention.

Despite these challenges, my team improvised to continue to support HRDs at risk and reach out to the most at-risk and vulnerable by organizing in-person training and remote support as well as webinar series, reaching a total of 1624 people. Special attention was given to women human rights defenders (WHRDs) through the Safe Sister program. The resourcing resilience/ well-being program has proved to be an effective means in dealing with direct and indirect trauma that HRDs face in line of their work through counselling, art, music, poetry, meditation and theatre.

On the advocacy front, our Geneva office remained active at the UN Human Rights Council, with participation in the 46th, 47th, and 48th sessions, becoming a critical voice for sub-saharan African HRDs in the process. Our leading advocacy role contributed to the adoption of the UN Human Rights Council resolutions on South Sudan and Eritrea, renewing the mandates of the Commission on Human Rights and of the special Rapporteur respectively.

Furthermore, the resolution on Ethiopia has ensured that the human rights situation in the country remains on the Council's agenda, a critical effort in light of the country's fragile human rights situation. Our efforts also saw a resolution on Burundi adopted to retain the country on the Council's agenda as we continue to monitor its hu-



man rights situation. When Sudan's military staged a takeover on October 25, our Geneva office swiftly managed to rally the Council for a special session to restore the country under the Council's scrutiny.

Together with partners, we contributed to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism (UPR) reports for six countries including Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and South Sudan. Additionally, after two years of monitoring Sudan's fragile political transition and especially the role of HRDs in the country's quest for democratic reform, we launched our findings in a report titled: *An Unfinished Revolution: The situation of women human rights defenders in Sudan*.

DefendDefenders remained active at the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), with the submission of oral statements on the *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum seekers, Internally Displaced Persons, and Migrants in Africa*, the *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa*, and on the *Report of the Chairperson of the working Group on Extractives, Environment and Human Rights violations in Africa*.

This annual narrative report therefore provides a synopsis of the sub-regional context in the East and Horn of Africa, the annual performance against the strategy, key challenges faced by HRDs and DefendDefenders, as well as the lessons learned and recommendations for better program implementation in the next period.

I would like to thank all our partners who have walked with us and supported our endeavor to create a safe working environment for HRDs, and pledge that we shall continue to strive to live up to our mandate and commitments in the coming years.

Yours in Solidarity

Hassan Shire
Executive Director, DefendDefenders
Chairperson, AfricanDefenders



ABOUT DEFENDDEFENDERS

DefendDefenders was established in 2005 as the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project and registered as a foreign non-governmental organisation in Uganda. DefendDefenders exists to strengthen the work of HRDs in the region by reducing their vulnerability to the risk of persecution and enhancing their capacity to effectively defend human rights.

The core mandate of DefendDefenders is to promote the safety, security, and wellbeing of HRDs. To achieve this, DefendDefenders work has to-date focused on protection and security management, capacity building, technology development, as well as advocacy, research, and communications. Further, DefendDefenders establishes and supports national coalitions of HRDs in various countries through which HRDs can come together and claim their rights at the national level.

DefendDefenders serves as a Secretariat of the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network (EHAHRD-Net) representing thousands of HRDs and their organisations. The network draws its membership from Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia (together with Somaliland), South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The Network also serves as the secretariat for AfricanDefenders (Pan African Human Rights Defenders Network). DefendDefenders further holds a consultative status at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as well as observer status with the ACHPR.

VISION

A region in which the human rights of every individual as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are respected and upheld.

MISSION

To enhance the safety and capacities of HRDs in the region for greater resilience and effective fulfilment of their mandates.

REGIONAL UPDATE ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

The East and Horn of Africa sub-region continues to experience restrictions and narrowing of civic space. The right to freedom of opinion and expression continues to be violated by multiple governments in the region. Journalists face harassment, threats, detentions, arbitrary arrests, physical attacks, and even murder in some countries. The shrinking civic space creates an environment where journalists self-censor, which ultimately has an adverse impact on citizens' access to information. The volatile situations in Ethiopia and Sudan coupled with the pre and post election violence in Uganda further increased human rights violations recorded in the respective countries and distorted livelihoods. These challenges continue to place HRDs in danger and hamper the work of civil society in the East and Horn sub-region.

COUNTRY	HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021
Burundi	Burundi continued to face grave human rights violations, including widespread impunity for those committed since 2015. HRDs continued to face numerous obstacles, and the environment for civic space remained restrictive. The government continued to try to exert control over civil society and deny citizens the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association. Those particularly perceived as critical of the government faced continued repression.
Djibouti	Like its neighbor Eritrea, Djibouti remains a closed authoritarian regime and was ranked by <i>Reporters without Borders</i> as one of the worst countries in Africa in terms of press freedom in 2021. The Exercise of the right to freedom of expression remains severely curtailed in the country, and public protests are rare.
Eritrea	Eritrea remains a closed authoritarian regime and was ranked by <i>Reporters without borders</i> as the worst country in Africa in terms of press freedom in 2021. The country is under dictatorial rule where civic space remains one of the most restricted in the world. The government controls all ztelevision channels, radio stations, and newspapers, and access to the internet remains severely regulated. This year, Eritrea's security forces were accused of committing grave human rights violations in Ethiopia's Tigray region that might amount to international crimes, including crimes against humanity.
Ethiopia	Ethiopia's ongoing conflict and humanitarian situation in Tigray continued to alarm the world. Gross and systematic violations and abuses such as attacks against civilians, sexual violence, arbitrary arrests, and ethnic cleansing continued to occur. A joint investigation by the <i>Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</i> and the <i>Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)</i> found reasonable grounds to believe that there have been widespread violations of international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law by all parties to the conflict in Tigray. Several journalists have also been harassed, intimidated, deported, or arrested for reporting on the Tigray conflict. On 21 June 2021, the country held elections amid country-wide insecurity and boycott by opposition parties, which Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Prosperity Party won with 410 out of 436 contested seats in the federal parliament.

Kenya	In Kenya, civic space was relatively more open. However, the country continued to grapple with extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture. Protestors and activists were routine victims of police brutality and excessive force. Police officers routinely violated the right to freedom of peaceful assembly under the guise of implementing restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, a repressive Cybercrime Act (2018) continues to be used to target journalists, bloggers, activists, and political figures deemed critical of the government.
Rwanda	Rwanda remains a restrictive country in the region. The government continued to target, harass, arrest, and intimidate critics. High-profile critics continued to be arrested or threatened and the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression remained constrained. In particular, activists and journalists commenting on current affairs via YouTube were arrested or reported missing, including exiled journalists.
Somalia	Somalia's political stalemate remained the main source of tensions in the country. The country's leaders agreed to hold elections by returning to the 17 September 2020 Electoral Agreement, which allowed for indirect presidential and parliamentary elections. However, unaddressed political tensions triggered the country's descent into armed confrontations that almost crippled the country after violence broke out in the capital in April 2021. Furthermore, the feud between President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed and Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble over the death of National Intelligence and Security Agency officer Ikran Tahlil threatened to destabilise the fragile country. Journalists continued to be constantly targeted, harassed, arrested, and attacked by both the state and non-state actors.
South Sudan	South Sudan continued to face armed conflict. Human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law continue, including rape, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), as well as inter-communal violence. In accordance with the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) signed in 2018, President Salva Kiir dissolved the parliament in May, and the reconstituted Parliament was sworn in on 2 August. But the country's National Security Service (NSS) continued to use abusive surveillance methods to target journalists, activists, and opposition members, resulting in fear and self-censorship.
Tanzania	With President Samia Suluhu Hassan assuming office in March 2021, positive measures were taken by the government to improve freedom of expression, including public commitments in favour of the rule of law, and the lifting of suspensions against media outlets issued by the previous administration. However, journalists continued to be arrested and targeted by the authorities while restrictive media laws that stifle civic space are yet to be repealed.
Uganda	The right to freedom of association deteriorated with the suspension and halting of operations of 54 civil society organisations by the NGO Bureau. NGOs that engage in advocacy and monitoring are under pressure due to various legal restrictions and burdensome registration requirements. During the 2021 elections, HRDs and journalists were tortured, arrested, harassed, intimidated, and assaulted in the course of their work. In its 2020 press freedom index report, Uganda's Human Rights Network for Journalists (HRNJ-U) documented over 100 violations committed by the police and Uganda Peoples' Defense Forces (UPDF). On the positive side, a law on the protection of HRDs is currently under consideration in the 11th parliament.

SUMMARY OF 2021 PERFORMANCE

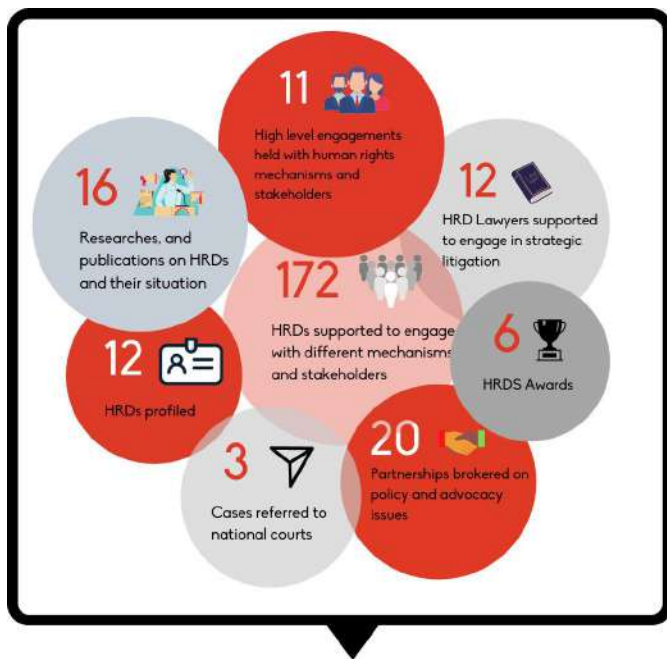


Fig 1: Advocacy, Research and Communications

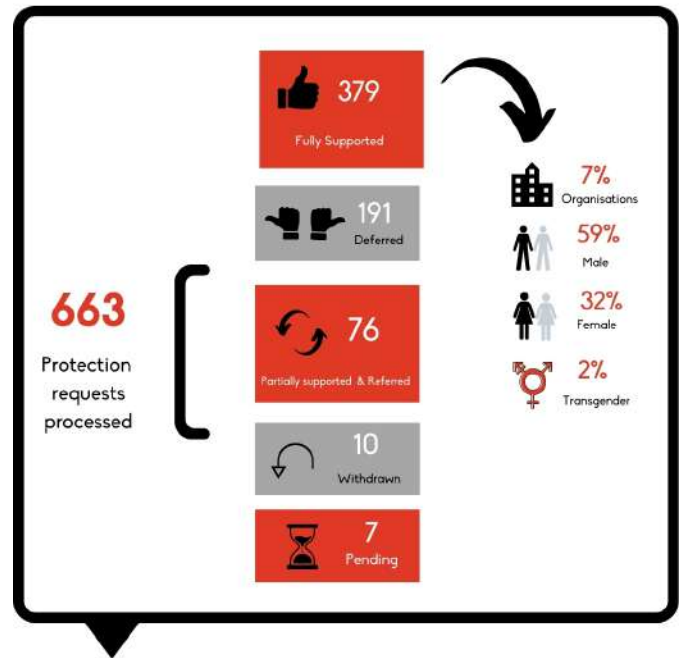


Fig 2: Protection and Security Management

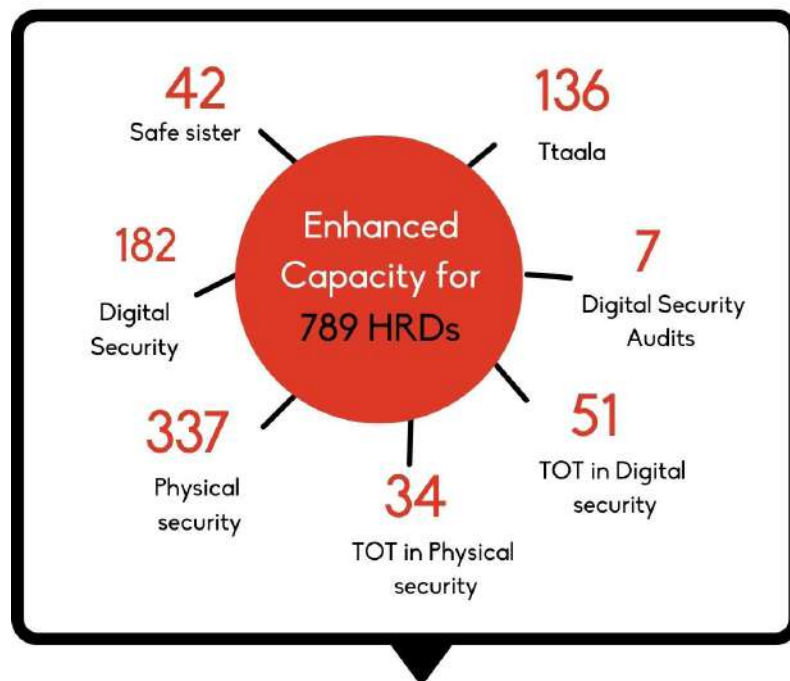


Fig 3: Capacity Building

PROTECTION AND SECURITY MANAGEMENT

This programme area aims to enhance the availability, accessibility and utilisation of emergency and mid-term protection services by HRDs at risk.

Enhanced HRD security, resilience, and continued operation

DefendDefenders received a total of 663 requests from HRDs for emergency protection and re-location under the Ubuntu hub cities Initiative (UHC). Notably, there was a significant increase in the number of women human rights defenders (WHRDs) supported in 2021 totaling 120 compared to 41 in 2020. Through its annual assessment, DefendDefenders established that 94% of HRDs were able to continue with their human rights work as a result of receiving protection support from its programme.

Below is the breakdown of the protection requests recieved

Emergency protection

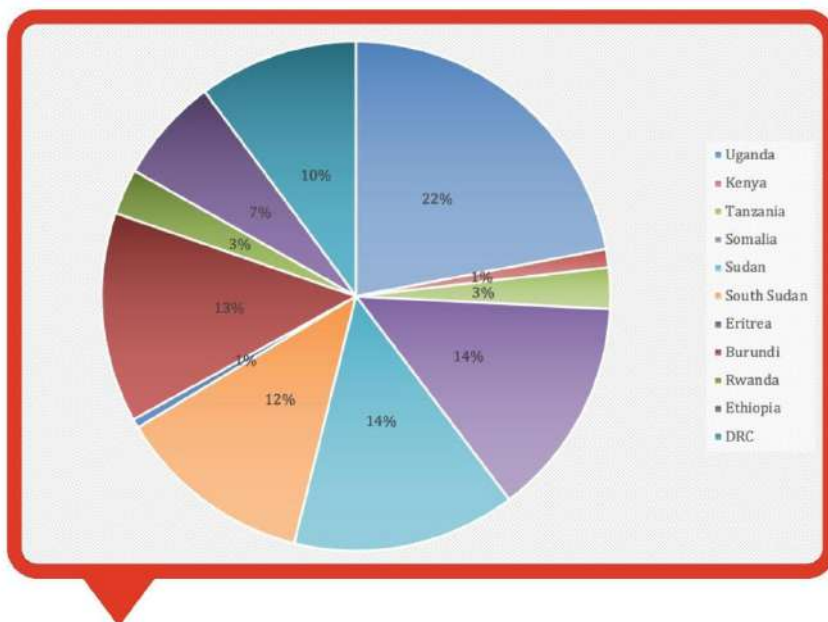


Fig 4: Emergency Protection Grants for HRDs per country

Of the 663 protection requests received, 590 requests were for emergency protection. Of these, 345 (109 female, 201 male, nine transgender, 26 organisational) grants were approved. These HRDs had a total of 975 dependants adding up to a total of 1,320 beneficiaries.

Ubuntu Hub Cities

DefendDefenders received the remaining 73 protection requests from HRDs who were seeking temporary relocation under UHC. Out of these, 34 were approved (21 male, 11 female and two organisations), while 13 were referred and supported by other partners as summarised below.

Fig 5 IN NUMBERS
January-December 2021



Hub cities toolkit

A Hub City Induction Toolkit was developed to facilitate integration of HRDs relocated under the Initiative.

Enhancing protection through strengthening the implementation of Ubuntu Hub Cities Initiative

Feasibility studies to Accra, Ghana and Praia, Cape Verde, were done to assess the viability of the two cities to host Ubuntu Hub Cities. The studies revealed that both Accra and Praia were viable to host HRDs at Risk.

Strengthening HRD resilience through well being

The covid-19 pandemic adversely affected normal life for most people resulting in high levels of stress and other mental health related concerns. HRDs were no exception, and as a result, psychosocial support and wellbeing became an integral part of DefendDefenders activities. In total, at least 206 HRDs (109 male, 88 female and 9 transgender) benefited from our wellbeing and counseling sessions in 16 therapy camps, which also involved the participation of staff and partners. Additionally, different forms of artistic expressions like music, painting, expressive writing, storytelling and crafts work were used to improve the mental well being of participants, in addition to rest and respite.



Fig 6: Participants in Juba watching a documentary produced during their Art clinics.

Testimonies of HRDs from wellbeing sessions

"Leaving this place, I will face things with more strength."

-Ugandan HRD



"The skill I have learnt will keep me busy and take away negative thoughts. I will be able to turn trash into cash"

-SouthSudanese HRD



"This was a worthwhile break from the usual hustle and bustle of the newsroom"

-Ugandan HRD



Annual Month of HRD wellbeing

To commemorate the annual month (June) of HRD wellbeing and resourcing resilience, DefendDefenders organised a campaign in form of a webinar on the impact of exile on HRDs' mental wellbeing in Africa. The campaign specifically highlighted the use of expressive arts (artistic therapy) as a tool for mental health and wellbeing. A total of 50 participants (20 male, 28 female and two transgender) attended from across Africa and beyond.

WEBINAR
IMPACT OF EXILE ON HRDS
MENTAL WELL-BEING in
AFRICA

Register at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83537532421?pwd=d3ZlZkFhOUJ5S25YczNEK2QvMlVEQT09>

21 June
4pm
EAT
(GMT+3)

Moderator

Karic Moses Oteba
Protection Officer and
Well-being Lead
DefendDefenders

Chantal Batamuriza
Founder and Executive Director
Light4All
- Burundi -

Wanjeri Nderu
Human Rights Defender and
Researcher on Mental Health
- Kenya -

Simon Ndaula
Clinical psychologist
- Uganda -

DEFENDEFENDERS
DefendDefenders is a human rights organization that provides legal support and advocacy for human rights defenders in Africa.

AFRICANDEFENDERS
AfricanDefenders is a human rights organization that provides legal support and advocacy for human rights defenders in Africa.

The following recommendations were also developed for stakeholders on how to better support and promote holistic wellbeing of HRDs

1. Create more reflection frameworks.
2. Develop strategies for meeting basic survival needs for HRDs in exile through economic inclusion.
3. Develop solutions for protection of HRDs that are contextualized and more sustainable.
4. Put in place peer support mechanisms for HRDs in exile.
5. Map out referral pathways for psychological interventions for HRDs.
6. Use artistic forms of expression for therapy and advocacy.
7. Document good practices and concerns to inform advocacy and programming around issues of HRDs in exile.

ADVOCACY AND POLICY ENGAGEMENT

DefendDefenders engaged at national, regional and international levels to influence the global agenda for HRDs, primarily at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACH-PR). The major objective for this programme is to strengthen policy influence and advocacy engagements at the global, African, sub regional, and national levels for HRDs' safety.

Better policy reform and advocacy engagements at the United Nations Human Rights Council

DefendDefenders sustained its advocacy engagements during the 46th, 47th and 48th sessions of the UN HRC. At the HRC 46, DefendDefenders led on drafting a joint civil society letter calling for the extension of the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan (CHRSS). Additionally, five **oral statements** were submitted, and in partnership with *International Service for Human Rights*, an online side event was conducted leading to adoption of **two resolutions** i.e. the resolution sponsored by Cameroon focusing on technical assistance and the extension of the mandate of the CHRSS. DefendDefenders also delivered **a statement** on the conflict situation in Tigray region, to keep the HRC informed of the situation. Joint Statements, letters and a side event were also organised to urge the HRC to take action on Algeria for the relentless crackdown on fundamental freedoms.

At the 47th Session, DefendDefenders urged states to adopt a resolution that requested the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to report on Tigray, Ethiopia, and advocated for a resolutions on Eritrea aimed at renewing the UN Special Rapporteur's mandate. Alongside other international NGOs, DefendDefenders helped secure **a resolution on Ethiopia** calling for an end to all human rights violations in the Tigray region and the speedy withdrawal of troops exacerbating the conflict. Additionally, DefendDefenders together with other partners assisted in securing **a resolution** extending the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Eritrea.

DefendDefenders also participated in the 48th session of the HRC and submitted **10 oral statements** on Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia. Furthermore, DefendDefenders called for continued scrutiny of Sudan's human rights situation ahead of the HRC48. As the HRC48 entered its third week with no resolution in sight, on 28th September, DefendDefenders warned that the country's transition was still too fragile and the military's relationship with civilian authorities still too fractious to be let off the Council's agenda.

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) took note of DefendDefenders' quadrennial report, meaning that we will continue to engage and participate as an officially accredited NGO in UN work. As our final act at the HRC48, DefendDefenders together with partners successfully pushed for the holding of a special (emergency) session of the HRC on Ethiopia, which was held on 17 December 2021. As we highlighted, after the adoption of resolution S-33/1, the establishment of an independent international investigation is a welcome step to address the human rights dimensions of the conflict, as violations by all parties have been reported.

A total of six HRDs - two from Burundi, two from South Sudan, one from Rwanda and one from Somalia were supported to participate in the online sessions of the UN HRC.

HRC46	HRC47	HRC48
1 Joint civil letter on South Sudan	2 Press releases	1 Opinion piece
5 Oral statements	5 Oral statements	3 Letters
1 Opinion piece	1 Opinion piece	10 Oral statements
1 Online side event	1 Side event	3 Resolutions adopted
1 Press release	1 Letter	2 Press releases
1 Resolution adopted	1 Resolution adopted	

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

DefendDefenders supported a total of 25 HRDs to attend the 68th ordinary session of the ACHPR, virtually, from 14 April - 4 May 2021. We submitted a bi-annual report: *ACHPR68: Updates from East and Horn of Africa (October-April 2021)*, which focused on the freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly, and association. Additionally, DefendDefenders delivered **four oral statements** on respective thematic issues during the session. In partnership with South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network, AfricanDefenders and DefendDefenders organised a side event during the session on the role of the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan in advancing human rights, peace, and accountability.

ACHPR68 SIDE EVENT

Role of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan in advancing human rights, peace, and accountability

Register at: africandefenders.org/achpr68-side-event-south-sudan/

30 April
10:00-11:30am
CAT
(11am EAT)

Moderator



Japhet Biagon
Amnesty International



Beny Gideon Mabor
Commissioner South Sudan
Human Rights Commission



Nicolas Agostini
DefendDefenders
Representative to the United Nations



Justice Ajonye Perpetua
Deputy Chairperson B.O.D
South Sudan Law Society





DefendDefenders supported 53 HRDs to participate at the 69th session. DefendDefenders also **submitted a bi-annual report to the commission's secretariat** on the human rights situation in the East and Horn of Africa sub-region, as well as concrete recommendations to improve the specific situations. In partnership with South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network, DefendDefenders **convened a hybrid side event on the margins of the ordinary session** to reflect on the country situation, and the role of relevant stakeholders towards promotion of human rights, rule of law and democracy. The event also reflected on **resolution 428** adopted by the ACHPR on the human rights situation in South Sudan to assess the concerns expressed

therein, like the lack of operationalisation of Chapter V institutions of the revitalised peace agreement. The event convened diplomatic missions based in Juba, representatives of government authorities and HRDs. Recommendations were developed and adopted to improve the country's human rights situation.

Oral Submissions submitted at the ACHPR 68 and ACHPR 69

ACHPR 68

1. Statement on the report of the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons and People with Disabilities.
2. Statement on the state of human rights in Africa.
3. Statement on the report of the Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Internally Displaced Persons and Migrants in Africa.
4. Statement on the report of the Working Group on Extractive Industries, Environment and human rights violations in Africa.

ACHPR 69

1. Statement on the report of the Special Rapporteur on HRDs and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa during both sessions and Freedom of Association.
2. Statement on the report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women.
3. Statement on the report of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa.

Other Advocacy Engagements conducted in 2021



- Urging the Algerian government to end the repression of HRDs targeted for exercising their fundamental freedoms and to repeal policies criminalising legitimate human rights work.
- Urging the Togolese government to cease attacks against civil society and calling on ACHPR to urge Togo to comply with its legal obligations under international and African human rights instruments.
- Calling for the Nigerian government to drop all charges against five HRDs who were arrested for taking part in a peaceful assembly.



- Urged the Ugandan authorities to ensure that civil society actors promoting fundamental rights can freely exercise their rights following the suspension of 54 non-governmental organisations.
- Urged Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to adopt a human rights-centered holistic response in interventions in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique and called for compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights.



- Civil society consultation on a broad picture of the legal landscape in which HRDs operate in Burkina-Faso especially the implementation of law 039 (2017) on the protection of HRDs in Burkina-Faso.
- Supported 44 HRDs to engage with the *UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association*, Clément Voule, in a hybrid consultation in Tunis in partnership with the Tunisian League for Human rights.
- Together with the *UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls (UNWG -DAW)*, AfricanDefenders organized a virtual consultation with African young activists in preparation for the *thematic report of the UN WGDW on girls' and young women's activism*, to be presented at the 50th session of the UNHRC in June 2022.



- Invited by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) to give a presentation on the crisis in Tigray and AfricanDefenders' contribution towards mitigating the problem to the External relations (REX) section of the EESC on the geopolitics of migration.



- Hassan Shire participated in *the high-level event on the global action plan on HRDs and civic space* organised by the *Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions*. Hassan shared relevant experiences and developments in protecting and promoting HRDs and civic space in Africa. The event featured high-level speakers, including Ilze Brands Kehris, Assistant Secretary-General from UN Human Rights, Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator, and EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Eamon Gilmore.



- DefendDefenders supported acclaimed Burundian HRD, Pierre Claver Mbonimpa of Association Burundaise pour la Protection des Droits Humains et des Personnes Detenues (APRODH) to meet with some officials and catholic church representatives in Budapest. The purpose of the mission was to advocate for the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Burundi, the repatriation of refugees, the fight against impunity and the restoration of the rule of law. Representatives of APRODH and OLUCOME traveled to Geneva when the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Burundi presented its latest report, taking the opportunity to meet with different stakeholders.

Engagements with Regional Economic Communities

East African Community (EAC)

A mission was conducted to Tanzania to reinforce dialogue with the EAC aimed at identifying avenues for evidence-based advocacy, collaboration, and strategic litigation. Meetings were held with David Michael Onen, Principal Political Affairs Officer, EAC, Morris Tayebwa, Children and Youth Expert, EAC, Nouhou Madani Diallo, Deputy Registrar, African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Pan Africa Lawyers Union (PALU). Discussions centered on *the report on freedom of movement of exiled HRDs in Uganda* to inform the EAC on the on-going policy making process on management of refugee issues, follow-up on cases submitted to the East African Court of Justice, the development of a strategic litigation plan and discussions on the judicial persecution of HRDs and attacks on civic space in Africa.



Fig 9: Engagements at the East African Community conducted by DefendDefenders team in 2021.

HRD work, visibility, and protection amplified

DefendDefenders enhanced the visibility of 12 HRDs (10 women, one male and one HRD organisation) through monthly profiles for their outstanding work in the sub-region, and to shine light on the challenges faced while protecting and promoting human rights.

January - Chantal Mutamuriza

Burundi

"It is unacceptable that this has been going on for six years. Burundi is a forgotten crisis, it's the least-funded humanitarian crisis in the world. The government says the situation has changed, but it hasn't. Some refugees go back and get killed or raped."



February - Sandra Aceng

Uganda

"Why are you so loud and outspoken as a woman? When will you get married? How will you take care of your family if the authorities come for you? These kinds of questions make me feel uncomfortable, they make me wonder if I am doing the right thing."



March - Elrudia Abdalla Hussein

Sudan

"I see things getting better around me. It's easier to be in touch with friends and family back in Darfur. That gives me hope. Seeing the impact that we make in our community pushes me to continue, despite the difficulties. And when I start something, I finish it!"



April - Ocen Ivan Kenneth

Uganda

"I believe that current protection measures for human rights defenders in Uganda are insufficient. Particularly protection offered from the government mechanisms towards human right defenders is insufficient. A mechanism needs to be created and developed. People working on other protection mechanisms for human rights defenders should truly to address the different vulnerabilities for male and female human rights defenders."



May - Jaqueline Mutere

Kenya

"I was sexually violated, conceived and had a child. It is the path of dealing with the trauma, working, and walking through the pain, and surviving the experience that inspired the initiation of the community-based organisation."



June - Ana Taban

SouthSudan

"We questioned why we were putting ourselves through this situation again. We also realised we had a certain influence as artists, and thought, how do we make good use of our influence to help our country?"



July - Mariam Nakibuuka

Uganda

"She was passionate about human rights, about making the world a better place for all human beings. She did what she did not because she studied about it – even when she had studied law at university, or because it was a job, but because the passion for justice was something ingrained in her. Watching her go about her work, you got a sense that this was something she believed in, and that in DefendDefenders, she had gotten the perfect platform to release her energy and passion."



August - Dibaabe Bache

Ethiopia

"Disabled women face several challenges. First, socially, they're discriminated against because of the enduring negative attitude towards people with disabilities (PWDs). This extends to state institutions where PWDs are perceived as receivers of charity and not like any other people entitled to necessary social services from the state or full protection of the law."



September - Hassan Chichi Dawla

Sudan

"Many of the challenges refugees face are due to ignorance of their rights and freedoms. So, they live in constant fear of the unknown, and any person can take advantage of that to abuse them. So we try to restore their confidence by making them aware of their rights."



October - Olivier Rubana

Tanzania

"We have been able to secure a specialised gender desk within the police structure in the city of Dar es Salaam, with which we now engage to secure bail for sex workers or members working on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity whenever they get arrested."



November - Fadwo Hassan Jimale

Somalia/Somaliland

"I desire to see a world where women and girls are free and safe to enjoy their full rights, challenge practices and norms that continually disenfranchise them, apply for and get granted gainful employment, in order to improve their livelihoods, their households as well as their entire communities," she says."



December - Anny Kapenga

DRC, WHRD living in exile

"Violence was denying our people settled livelihoods and destabilising families. Whenever anyone spoke out against it, they were witch-hunted. The women who dared to speak out against it would either be raped to silence them, or the militias would target young activists to sleep with them and then publish them on social media to discredit them and ruin their families"



Research and Publications

DefendDefenders launched a report- *An unfinished revolution: situation of women human rights defenders in Sudan* at our annual flagship event *Claiming Spaces* on 6th December 2021 at Silver Springs Hotel, Kampala. The report assesses the situation of HRDs including WHRDs post the 2019 Sudanese revolution and highlights concrete recommendations to improve their situation. It focuses on WHRDs because of their significant role in the Revolution, and the gender inequalities that characterised the transitional period in the aftermath of the fall of Bashir's regime and the signing of the power-sharing agreement in 2019.

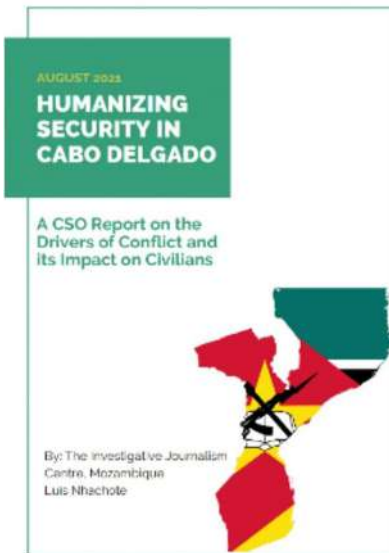


Fig 10: DefendDefenders' Executive Director, Hassan Shire and Sweden's ambassador to Uganda, Maria Hakansson, flanked by Congolese human rights defender Ann Kapenga and other DefendDefenders' staff launch the report on Sudan.

In September 2021, DefendDefenders commissioned research on HRDs with disabilities working in conflict areas in Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan. This research aims to understand the impact of conflict on HRDs with disabilities, to assess the barriers they face in accessing essential assistance and protection, and to examine the human rights violations and abuses that they face. The research will also make concrete recommendations to address gaps in law, policy, and practice. It will be launched in April 2022.

AfricanDefenders conducted research on the state of the right to protest in the East and Horn of Africa and West Africa. The research focused on trends, good practices and lessons learnt in relation to protests. It mapped out protest movements, allies and protection mechanisms. Online validation workshops with experts were held including with the *United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association*, Clément Voule, and with other protest movements actors. Aside from discussing the findings, the panelists also gave a contextual update on the state of the right to protest in their specific countries.





Together with the Center for Investigative Journalism, Centro Para Democracia e Desenvolvimento (CDD) and other CSOs, African Defenders conducted joint research on the conflict in Cabo Delgado Mozambique. This was part of a joint campaign to bring visibility and create awareness on the conflict. The report: *"Humanizing Security in Cabo Delgado: A CSO Report on the Drivers of Conflict and its impact"* was launched virtually, translated into Portuguese and shared with the ACHPR Special Rapporteur on Mozambique.

Other Internal assessments conducted to inform programming are:
- Joint research studies on the Sahel region: These were assessments of the situation of HRDs and state of civic space in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.
- Assessment in DRC: African Defenders conducted an assessment of the situation of HRDs in the province of South Kivu (DRC).

In 2021, African Defenders recorded 277 instances of human rights violations across the continent that informed advocacy initiatives. The most violated human right was the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly, as noted in Algeria, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and South Africa.

Below is the breakdown of the 277 instances of human rights violations



Strengthened strategic impact litigation in order to achieve effective reforms, formulation and implementation of international standards

AfricanDefenders supported HRDs and provided legal assistance to individual HRDs from Zimbabwe, Zambia and Cameroon on three cases at national level. Further, a strategic litigation partnership with Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU) Litigation Center South Africa & CAV-IB was formed that brings together 12 HRD Lawyers to provide legal assistance to HRDs.

AfricanDefenders organised an UHC Coordinators meeting in Kampala. As part of the engagements, the coordinators participated in a brainstorming session to discuss development of a strategic litigation strategy, alongside members of DefendDefenders management team. Additionally, a series of meetings were held to discuss possible collab-

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR HRDS

DefendDefenders' capacity building goal is to improve the capacity of sub-regional networks and national coalitions, organisations and individual HRDs to effectively do their work, and to respond to and mitigate imminent risks and threats. In line with the goal, we contributed to strengthened technical and organisational capacity of the sub-regional networks and national coalitions and increased capacity of HRDs and their organisations to effectively respond and mitigate imminent risks.

Outcome 3.1: Strengthened technical and organisational capacity of the sub-regional networks

To strengthen capacity of national coalitions, DefendDefenders held a 3-day workshop for 40 protection officers & HRDs (21 female and 19 male) from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Ethiopia and Burundi to share best practices on protection case management, protection strategies and intervention, and improving resilience of HRDs given the unprecedented occurrences of covid19 and the related effects on mental health and well-being.

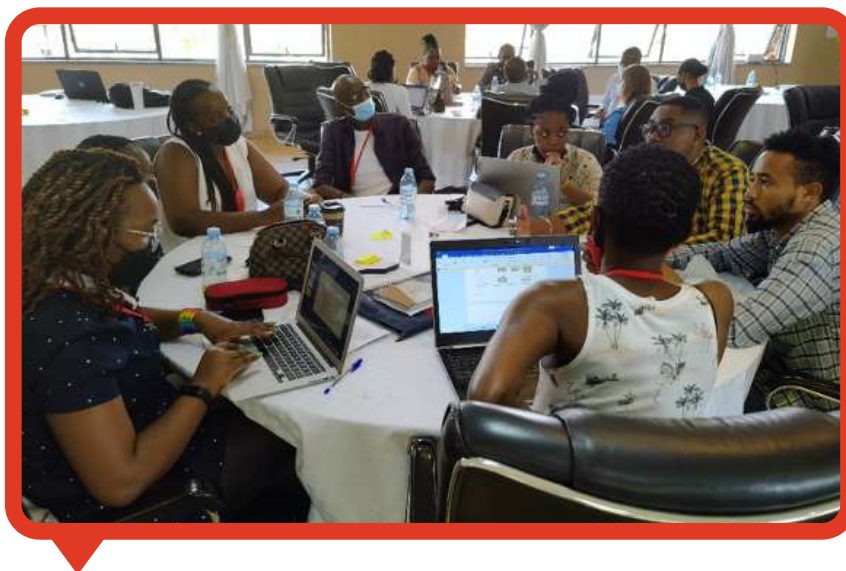


Fig 14: Protection officers from national coalitions around the region attend the regional protection officers' workshop held at Speke Resort, Munyonyo, Uganda, on 11 November 2021.

DefendDefenders' convened a National CSO Stakeholders Forum on the UPR process. Following submission of the 23 thematic stakeholder reports ahead of Uganda's UPR, DefendDefenders and the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders-Uganda organized an in-country pre-session and diplomatic missions roundtable discussion attended by 116 HRDs (60 Males, 52 Females, two PWDs and two working on sexual orientation and gender identity issues (SOGI). The engagement discussed tracking progress on recommendations in Uganda's UPR.



Fig 15: Participants at Uganda Civil Society National Stakeholders Forum on the Universal Periodic Review on 22 November 2021 at Kabira Country Club Hotel, Kampala, Uganda.

In partnership with the United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on Ethiopia, DefendDefenders supported the East African Women's Human Rights Defenders Network(EAWHRDN) to convene an annual general meeting in Tanzania, attended by 29 WHRDs. The meeting agreed that DefendDefenders will support the Network for another year and mentor another organisation to take over the role.



Fig 16: Participants at the East African Women's Human Rights Defenders Network on 1 December 2021 at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

DefendDefenders in partnership with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights -Ethiopia and Ethiopia Human Rights Defenders Centre(EHRDC) launched the Ethiopia Women Human Rights Defenders Network(EWHRDN) on 30th September, 2021. During the same meeting, 32 WHRDs (29 female and 3 male) were trained on UN and AU mechanisms. The EHRDC is the secretariat for the EWHRDN.

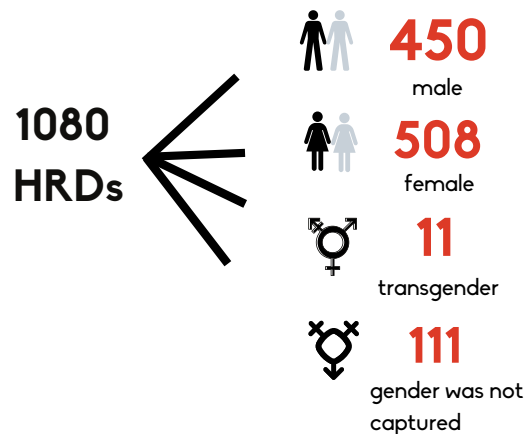


Participants at the launch of the Ethiopia Women Human Rights Defenders Network on 30th September 2021 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

DefendDefenders contributed to resilience and organisational capacity enhancement of national coalitions in Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali through provision of tailored institutional support. This was based on the results of the needs and capacity assessment of the national coalitions and study of the general situation of HRDs, and state of civic space in the Sahel.

Increased capacity of HRDs and their organisations to effectively respond to and mitigate imminent risks

DefendDefenders enhanced capacity for 1080 HRDs. These reported an improvement in the level of knowledge, skills and competences in physical security, digital security, resource mobilisation, well being and UPR mechanisms as summarised in the table below. The HRDs' capacity building events focused on end user capacity and training of trainers to enhance the pool of expert trainers in the region.



Capacity Area	Males	Females	Transgender	Other	Total
Resource Mobilisation	17	13	-	-	30
Safety, Security and Wellbeing	-	-	-	100	100
UPR Mechanisms	89	69	2	1	161
Tactical Tools for HRDs	38	47	-	-	85
Physical Security Trainings	169	159	9	-	337
Digital Security Trainings	62	120	-	-	182
Mentorship to Junior Auditors	-	-	-	7	7
Safe Sister Security program	-	42	-	-	42
Ttaala	75	75	-	3	136
Total	450	508	11	111	1080

HRDs reported an improvement in security plan development; creation, collection and reporting violations using kobo tool box; and the ability to effectively analyse and manage threats and risks. Digitally, capacity changes included the use of Malware bytes, Kaspersky anti-virus, computer hygiene, social media account security, phishing, self-doxing and encryption through the multitude of technology programs including Safe Sister and Ttaala. HRDs were trained using both online programs and physical trainings including the annual week-long, DefendDefenders flagship event, Claiming Spaces: Tactical Tools for HRDs.



Fig 18: Participants at a training in physical and digital security in Masaka, Uganda



Fig 20: Mentoring a junior auditor in Uganda on techniques to improve IT security controls of the IT infrastructure



Fig 19: Participants at the training on risk assessment for women lawyers and paralegals on 22 -26 March 2021 at Sanctum Hotel and Apartments, Entebbe, Uganda.



Fig 21: WHRDs attending the 7th Annual Human Rights Defenders Academy on 22 November 2021 in Nairobi, Kenya



Fig 22: Participants at the Annual flagship event, Claiming spaces: Tactical Tools for HRDs on 6 December 2021 at Silver Springs Hotel, Bugolobi, Uganda.

DefendDefenders contributed to HRD **digital security awareness** by hosting a security clinic on the sidelines of the claiming spaces event where a total 19 HRDs received support (13 Female and Six Male). We extended IT technical support to 34 HRDs from 6 organisations on website issues, laptop, phone set-up and email management through DefendDefenders IT helpdesk (website, email, whatsapp and Signal) where HRDs report IT security incidents and request for support. DefendDefenders enhanced HRD digital safety through security audits and fix-up support for 14 organisations (five in Uganda, four Sudan, One in Somaliland, three from Ethiopia and one from Kenya). We also provided equipment including laptops, hard drives, software in form of antivirus and licenses, windows operating application; technical support such as website redesign and onsite training in digital security for 11 organisations.



Fig 23: Feminature Uganda - Arua receiving equipment for fix-up support.

ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

DefendDefenders sought to strengthen its institutional capacity to deliver efficient protection mechanisms for HRDs in the region as well as enhancing compliance to internal systems and processes as elaborated below

4.1 Increased compliance, efficiency, and effectiveness resulting from consistent application and consolidation of systems, and processes

This led to a review and approval of six policies namely the Personnel Policy, ICT Policy, Anti-Corruption Policy, Financial Policy, Procurement Policy and Security Policy. Effective policies and procedures are living documents that must grow and adapt with regulations, technology and organisational best practices.

4.2 Improved financial management systems and practices, better financial stewardship, and operational efficiency

This was attained by migrating from desktop quick books to quick books online in order to continue working remotely especially during covid 19 lockdown. DefendDefenders also adopted online banking to ease transactions and reduce the risk of exposing staff and other stakeholders to the virus.

4.3 Improved risk management systems, and timely risk detection and mitigation

The organisation continued to undertake internal audit by DMO and partners and an external audit by Deloitte Uganda as a risk detection and mitigation mechanism. Further, an updated risk register was generated and used in monitoring risks based on severity, mitigating actions, contingent actions and specified individuals responsible for each risk.

4.4 Strengthened governance, leadership, and organisational oversight

DefendDefenders maintained a strong governance structure with the Board providing oversight to management operations. The Board remained committed to the work of the organisation and engaged in quarterly reviews and feedback, annual board meeting, development partners meeting, and participated in the strategy evaluation.

4.5 A motivated, engaged, and performing workforce

DefendDefenders rolled out a new staff performance management tool supported by People Brand House. The aim is to develop and nurture performance and talent for its staff. In 2021, two staff members Karis Moses Oteba, Wellbeing Lead, and Nicolas Agostini, Representative to the United Nations were recognised for achieving outstanding performance.



Fig 24: L-R: Karis Moses Oteba, Well-being Lead and Nicolas Agostini, Representative to the United Nations receive certificates for outstanding performance from Hassan Shire,

4.6 A diversified and sustainable resource envelop.

DefendDefenders continued to be accountable to development partners through provision of financial and narrative reports including externally audited reports. We maintained support from several partners and donors to advance the protection agenda for HRDs including:

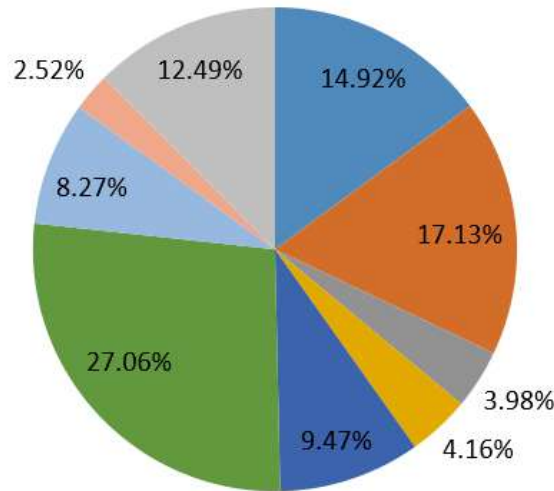
1. Austria Development Agency
2. Belgium Development Cooperation - Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation
3. Brot fur die Welt (Bread for the World)
4. Center for Digital Resilience
5. European Instrument for Human Rights and Democracy (supporting various projects in East and Horn of Africa sub-region)
6. Internews
7. Internews (Greater Internet Freedom)
8. Irish Embassy in Uganda
9. Kingdom of Netherlands Embassy in South Sudan
10. Kingdom of Netherlands Embassy in Uganda
11. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland
12. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands through SCC Alliance
13. National Endowment for Democracy
14. Open Society Foundation
15. Open Society Initiatives for Eastern Africa
16. Royal Norwegian Embassy in Uganda
17. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Africa regional project led by CIVICUS)
18. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (core funding for East and Horn of Africa)

Financial Summary

	UGX	Percentage expenditure to income
Total Income 2021	28,759,768,063	
Capacity Building	4,289,837,672	14.92%
Protection and Security Management	4,927,730,068	17.13%
Advocacy and Research	1,143,711,490	3.98%
ICT (Technology and Human Rights Program)	1,195,311,642	4.16%
AfricanDefenders	2,724,373,300	9.47%
Organisation Dev'p/Admin costs	7,781,644,265	27.06%
Special Program Great Lakes	2,378,910,936	8.27%

Forex Loss	725,723,777	2.52%
Surplus for the year	3,592,524,913	12.49%
		100.00%

DefendDefenders Income and expenditure summary year ending 31st December 2021



DefendDefenders hosted a **hybrid development partners meeting** that brought together development partners both in person and virtually to be kept abreast with the growth, adaptation, successes, and challenges faced by the organisation. This is a key dialogue in the maintenance and improvement of donor relations. Funding for DefendDefenders is jointly provided by different funding partners for a stronger programming and sustainability.



Fig 25: Hybrid Development partners meeting on 18 October 2021 at Mestil Hotel and Residences, Kampala, Uganda

4.7 Strong M&E system with better programme quality, efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, learning, and innovation

Strengthened program quality through development of baselines and theories of change, monitoring, follow up and evaluation of DefendDefenders program. We conducted four reflection and learning events for DefendDefenders staff and partners on International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), programme quality and reporting, and knowledge management for a total of 33 individuals (18 males, 15 female) from Uganda, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan and Burundi.

Feedback from monitoring, evaluation and follow ups was integrated into planning, developing new proposals and programmes, and rolling out security plans for 11 organisations. DefendDefenders conducted an end of strategic plan 2016-2020 evaluation to assess the performance and impact of its work and propose recommendations for corrective action. A new results framework for DefendDefenders strategy 2021-2025 was finalised and rolled out to guide structured alignment of programs, monitoring, evaluation, learning and knowledge management.

4.8 Improved profiling, visibility as a major player in the HRD sphere, innovative communication and collaboration with stakeholders.

This was achieved through development and dissemination of 12 monthly newsletters to stakeholders, networks and partners. DefendDefenders maintained its online presence on various social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and You Tube.

As a result, our social media presence and following continued to grow as illustrated below



from DefendDefenders and AfricanDefenders

Social media platform	Defenddefenders	AfricanDefenders	Total
Twitter	2300	695	2995
Instagram	420	-	420
Facebook	800	250	1050
LinkedIn	-	45	45
Total	3520	990	4510

In 2021, DefendDefenders together with AfricanDefenders hosted and participated in several on-line campaigns such as: International Women’s Day (IWD); International Youth Day; International Democracy Day; International Peace Day; Universal Access to Information Day; World Press Freedom Day; The UN International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples; World Mental Day; Africa Human Rights Day; 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence, among others. On IWD, a campaign about women human rights defenders was launched dubbed **#StandWithWHRDs**, highlighting their work, challenges they face, and their protection needs. The campaign featured 8 short videos that were posted on You Tube and our other social media platforms.



Fig 26: International Women’s Day Campaign: highlighted the impact and challenges faced by WHRDs in their line of work.



Fig 27: #StandwithWHRDs - <https://defenddefenders.org/whrd-protection-brochure/>



Fig 28: #Resilience4Peace: Human Rights Defenders working in conflict areas- <https://africandefenders.org/resilience4peace/>



Fig 29: Statement highlighting challenges faced by exiled and refugee HRDs on World refugee Day.



Fig 30: #KnowYourRights campaign aimed at disseminating the core principles of the ACHPR Guidelines on the freedom of assembly



Fig 32: A statement emphasizing the necessity of the African Union to reflect an aspiration 5 of its agenda 2063: An African with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared value and ethnic relation to conflict.



Fig 33: Joint online solidarity campaign with Atrocities Watch and other organisations that created awareness on violations against women and WHRDs by warring parties in Tigray.

4.9 Better organisational management

DefendDefenders strengthened the oversight role of its Board through continued engagement with quarterly board flash reports and reviewing of new and updated organisational policies. Further, the Board bid farewell to its previous chairperson, Dr. Livingstone Ssewanyana, with an appreciation for his service. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to accord the same pleasantries to Dorothe Appels in 2021.

CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Challenges faced by HRDs

1. The instability within the region, like the conflict in Ethiopia and the military coup in Sudan which exposed HRDs to violations and risks from state actors. The right to freedom of expression was also curtailed as internet was shut down in these countries in addition to increased attacks on journalists characterised by arrests and intimidation.
2. Limited access to a safe working space for HRDs in exile to continue their work. The **Floribert Chebeya Resource Centre** remained closed as a result of Covid 19 yet it would have been a useful resource for HRDs with equipment, books, and a stable internet connection available to enable them continue their work in a safe and secure environment..
3. Covid 19 pandemic control measures increased governments' repression and illegitimate use of force. By restricting movement and gatherings, the control measures reduced the operating space for peace builders.
4. HRDs witnessed a steep drop in international aid.
5. HRDs were forced to adapt and rely increasingly on digital technologies due to restrictions brought on by the pandemic. Unfortunately not many HRDs have the capacity to invest in good digital technologies and equipment.

Challenges encountered by DefendDefenders

1. Covid- 19 pandemic restricted travel within the region and as a result some of the planned activities like engagements at the HRC and ACHPR remained online while trainings could not be rolled out across some of the countries.
2. Monitoring the rate of implementation of resolutions passed by the HRC and ACHPR remained quite difficult due to travel restrictions.
3. Overwhelming demand for protection interventions arising from the brutal attacks on civic space yet the financial resources available could cater for only a specific number of HRDs.

Lessons learned

1. The investment and acquisition of quality internet and online equipment is vital for continued operations in a more constrained environment. DefendDefenders will continue to innovate and utilise online tools to support virtual engagements to improve project implementation. This will enable program delivery, monitoring, follow-up and corrective action.
2. The pool of trainers cultivated through previous activities, proved invaluable resourceful, in helping with in-country trainings due to travel restrictions which became pronounced due to COVID-19. DefendDefenders will continue to strengthen the capacity of sub-regional networks, national coalitions and HRD organisations to continue to deliver protection and security support especially in a restricted environment.

Recommendations for 2022

With increasing costs of operations, strategic investments need to be made in the quality of internet and online equipment as well as HRD wellbeing and resourcing resilience. The effects of COVID-19 have changed the mode of work, requiring more virtual/online interactions. These have brought about stress and mental health challenges to individuals as well as organisations.

CONCLUSION

Amidst growing repression and shrinking civic space for different human rights organisations, HRDs and other activists, HRDs will continue to be at risk as they struggle to defend human rights and freedoms. DefendDefenders will continue to enhance the safety and capacity of HRDs and their organisations for greater resilience and effective fulfilment of their mandates. In 2022, we shall continue to invest in systems and processes that support quality programming, learning, resource mobilisation and well being.

BOARD MEMBERS



Fig 34: Board of Directors meeting on 19 October, 2021 at DefendDefenders' offices.

Ms Sophie Kyagulanyi – Chairperson

Ms Sophie Kyagulanyi is a Ugandan National living in Uganda and is currently working with Oxfam. She was previously a Governance, Research and Policy Analyst at Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE). She has been an active human rights defender in Uganda, and is the new Chairperson of the Board of Directors and one of the founding members of DefendDefenders.

Dr. Zahara Nampewo -Treasurer

Dr. Zahara Nampewo is a legal and human rights practitioner and academician with 20 years' experience in the private, public and non-profit sectors. Dr. Nampewo is a Lecturer and Director of the Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC) at the Makerere university School of Law. She has work experience in Uganda, Liberia and the United Kingdom with brief working missions in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi. She has published professional papers on a range of subjects including sexuality, decentralisation and access to justice. She is a board chairperson of the Uganda Lawyers for Human Rights (ULHR), a young NGO advocating for human rights of marginalized groups. She is also a board member for the African Centre for Media Excellence (ACME) and an incisive member of the Association of Uganda Women Lawyers (FIDA-U).

Mr David Kaggwa - Secretary

Mr. David Kaggwa is an Advocate of the High Court of Uganda and is the Secretary to the Board and a Partner at Kaggwa and Associates. Mr. Kaggwa brings legal skills including advising the board on legal matters on registration and tax returns, volunteering his skills to HRDs in exile and helping them obtain refugee status under the Ugandan legal system, among others. Mr. David Kaggwa resides in Uganda, Kampala.

Ms Faiza Jamal Mohamed - Member

Ms Mohamed is a Djibouti national and the Executive Director of the Pan African organisation -Equality Now, where she is responsible for the implementation of Equality Now's work and representation of the organisation in Africa. Since 2001 she has overseen the Fund for Grassroots Activism to end female genital mutilation, channeling over 1.8 Million US Dollars to 30 organisation in Africa. Ms Mohamed has extensive experience in working the East and Horn of Africa region, and has previously worked with the United Nations Population Fund-(UNFPA), Oxfam NOVIB, amongst others. She is a member of the African Union Women's Committee (AUWC). Ms. Faiza resides in Nairobi, Kenya.

Mr Vital Nshimirimana – Member

Vital Nshimirimana is a Burundian human rights lawyer. He joined the judiciary in 2004 and became an active member of the Union of Magistrates, going on to chair it in 2009. With his fellow magistrates, he focused on exposing the lack of judicial independence and the wide-ranging consequences this can have. He registered with the Burundi Bar association in June 2013. During his time as a lawyer he prosecuted high profile cases, including two cases at the East African Court of Justice. In 2017, Vital was elected as the chairperson of the EHAHRD-Net, a position that he will hold until 2022.

Mr Hassan Shire – Ex Officio and Executive Director Of Defenddefenders

Mr. Hassan Shire is the Executive Director of DefendDefenders, a position he has held since 2005, steering the organisation through its growth over the years. He is a human rights defender from Somalia, with over 15 years of experience working in the region. He is also currently the Coordinator of African Human Rights Defenders Project at York University, Centre for Refugee Studies since 2003. He holds an MA in Economics and has authored and published numerous human rights reports. In 1996 he was the founder and co-director of the internationally recognized Somali human rights organisation - the Dr. Ismail Jumale Human Rights Centre in Mogadishu, Somalia which to date continues to play a vital role in reporting about human rights violations and campaigning for an end to the lawlessness in the country.

AFRICANDEFENDERS AND DEFENDEFENDERS TEAM



Fig 35: DefendDefenders staff retreat 2021

MEET OUR TEAM IN 2021

Executive Director

Hassan Shire

Director of Programs and Administration

Memory Bandera

PAHRD-Net Coordinator

Joseph Bikanda

Technology Program Manager

Mark Kiggundu

Advocacy, Research and Communications Manager

Estella Kabachwezi

Great Lakes Project Coordinator

Jérémie Nkunzimana

Senior Finance Manager

Alex Lukoye

Senior Protection and Security Management Manager

Tabitha Netuwa

Monitoring and Evaluation Expert

Stanley Wobusobozi

Executive Assistant

Susan Ibale

Representative to the United Nations

Nicolas Agostini

Logistics Officer

Bernard Arinaitwe

System Administrator Associate

Donatien Niyongendako

Communications Officer

Ivan Rugambwa

Senior Protection Associate

Janvier Hakizimana

Driver

Kakuru Julius

Driver

Ambrose Katwesigye

Finance Officer

Rebecca Kisaakye

Capacity Building Officer

Majid Maali

Research Officer

Fatuma Hersi

Protection Officer

Brian Butamuzi

ICT Assistant

Immaculate Nabwire

Ttaala Lead

Daphne Nakabugo

Welfare Assistant

Shamim Nakato

Project Officer

Jeremie Nkunzimana

Administrative Assistant

Zainab Nakato

Capacity Building Assistant

Anne Nakiyingi

Programs Associate

Melissa Kagimu-Mukasa

Finance Officer

Jane Ngabirano

ICT Assistant

Donatien Niyongendako

M&E Associate

Juliet E Namayanja

Protection Officer

Leon Kokolulema-Nsika

Office Messenger

Raphael Kateu Okudo

Finance Officer

Nyamutono Proscovia Ititu

Protection Officer

Karis Moses Oteba

Technology Fellow

Angela Lucia

Communications Associate– AfricanDefenders

Gentrix Barasa

Programs Officer

Dee Werter

Programs Officer – AfricanDefenders

Flora Stevens

Programs Officer

Rosabella Ntanzi

Programs Officer – AfricanDefenders

Walda Keza Shaka

IT Incident Lead

Samuel Eibu

Technology Program Associate

Joshua Ssengozi

Thanks to the fellows, interns, and volunteers who supported us in 2021: Denise Kwizera, Abdikhani Hassan, Esther Asimiire, Daphine Katabanga, Sharon Nabisawa, Rebecca Kabagimu



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