

# NORWEGIAN HUMAN RIGHTS FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2019



DIRECT SUPPORT TO  
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS





*We believe that the **seeds of change** planted by grantees every day will result in a robust and forceful defense for **future generations**.*



*The struggle for land and environmental rights in Thailand – NHRF partner Assembly of the Poor. (Photo: Mónica Orjulea/NHRF).*

The Norwegian Human Rights Fund (NHRF) works to protect and promote human rights internationally through direct support to organizations working in the first line of defense for human rights. As part of its core identity, the NHRF strives to be a flexible donor, and in doing so has been able to take risks and support nascent initiatives that are targeted and smart - eliminating the use of intermediary links and time-consuming procedures for our grantee partners.

The NHRF is anchored in Norwegian civil society organizations and institutions that contribute strategically, professionally and financially to the NHRF's work, as well as serve on the NHRF Board. In 2019 the following organizations were members supporting the NHRF and serving on the Board: Amnesty International Norway, The Atlas Alliance, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, and Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations.

**Front page picture:** Young members of Red Sur Barranquilla at a meeting for the "With rights there is peace" initiative, supported by the NHRF. Photo: Red Sur Barranquilla/Richard Aguirre Guerra.

All photos in the report are by the NHRF or grantee organizations, unless otherwise accredited.

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<https://nhrf.no>

## INVESTING IN CHANGE, IN THE FUTURE

*Word from the Chair and the Executive Director*

**2019 will stand out as an important year for the Norwegian Human Rights Fund (NHRF) in terms of growth and development.** However, in the field of human rights we are witnessing disturbing signs and blatant actions of backlash. We have seen a challenging year with negative changes in the work environment for many of our grantees, with many of them having to risk their wellbeing, their security and even lives for the important work they do. They confront these challenges by continuing to work day-by-day to strengthen the roots of change. We believe that the seeds of change planted by grantees every day will result in a robust and forceful defense for future generations.

As this annual report demonstrates, our grantees and **local human rights defenders** are continuing to stand up and fight for a future of **equality and dignity** for all. For some, their work centers on ensuring that vulnerable workers have safe and dignified work environments, for others it's providing psychosocial support for families of the disappeared and seeking justice for victims of torture and others are leading movements for gender equality.

Establishing links, coordinating and collaborating on the local and national levels to create better working conditions for civil society and human rights defenders are crucial to strengthening the work and moving it forward. For this work, we support grantees who build networks and equip and empower defenders with the tools and skills needed for their work; who advocate for positive laws or the prevention of restrictive laws to protect or enable a thriving civil society; and others who provide relief, support and legal representation for human rights activists in cases of arbitrary arrests, detention or when they're facing threats.

Our grantees' work is interlinked and reinforcing; success in one struggle impacts and can lead to success in another. Their work is driven by

the needs on the ground and thus it comes in many forms, but the efforts to contribute to make positive and structural changes and the realization of human rights are shared by all.

In 2019, the Norwegian government led an adoption of a new resolution on **environmental human rights defenders** – a critically important response during one of the most dangerous and even deadly points in recent history for human rights defenders, especially those who fight for natural resources, the rights of indigenous peoples and against environmentally detrimental megaprojects. Our long-time partner, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, released a report on the gendered experiences of **women human rights defenders** and another highlighting **impunity for violations against human rights defenders**. Working together with our partners, we are able to see the reality of the dire situation for people on the front lines working for change, which leads us to seek to increase our support to and solidarity with their work.

During 2019, the NHRF created **strategic partnerships** that increased the financial base for the years to come. We know this will be indispensable for local and front-line human rights defenders and for investing in the realization of human rights for the most vulnerable and marginalized. With these increased resources and with support from our partners, we will continue to invest and sow seeds that we believe will lead to long-term positive change.

**John Peder Egenæs**

Chair of the Board  
Amnesty International Norway

**Sandra Petersen**

Executive Director  
The Norwegian Human Rights Fund (NHRF)

## ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019

**Expanding our work in Colombia:** The NHRF is increasing our support to civil society organizations in Colombia through a new strategic partnership with the Norwegian Embassy in Bogota. We are excited about the opportunities that will come through this partnership, among them being able to grow and strengthen our community of human rights actors and defenders on the ground. The partnership is new, but the NHRF will continue to support work against impunity and for access to justice for the victims and survivors of the armed conflict, protecting civic space and strengthening security of defenders, and focusing on issues involving land, natural resources and the environment. In the photo, we see Executive Director of the NHRF, Sandra Petersen, with the Norwegian Ambassador to Colombia, John Petter Opdahl (left), and Advising Minister, Hege Fisknes (right), after signing the new agreement.



### OTHER ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS:

**45** organizations in **15** countries were given new grants.

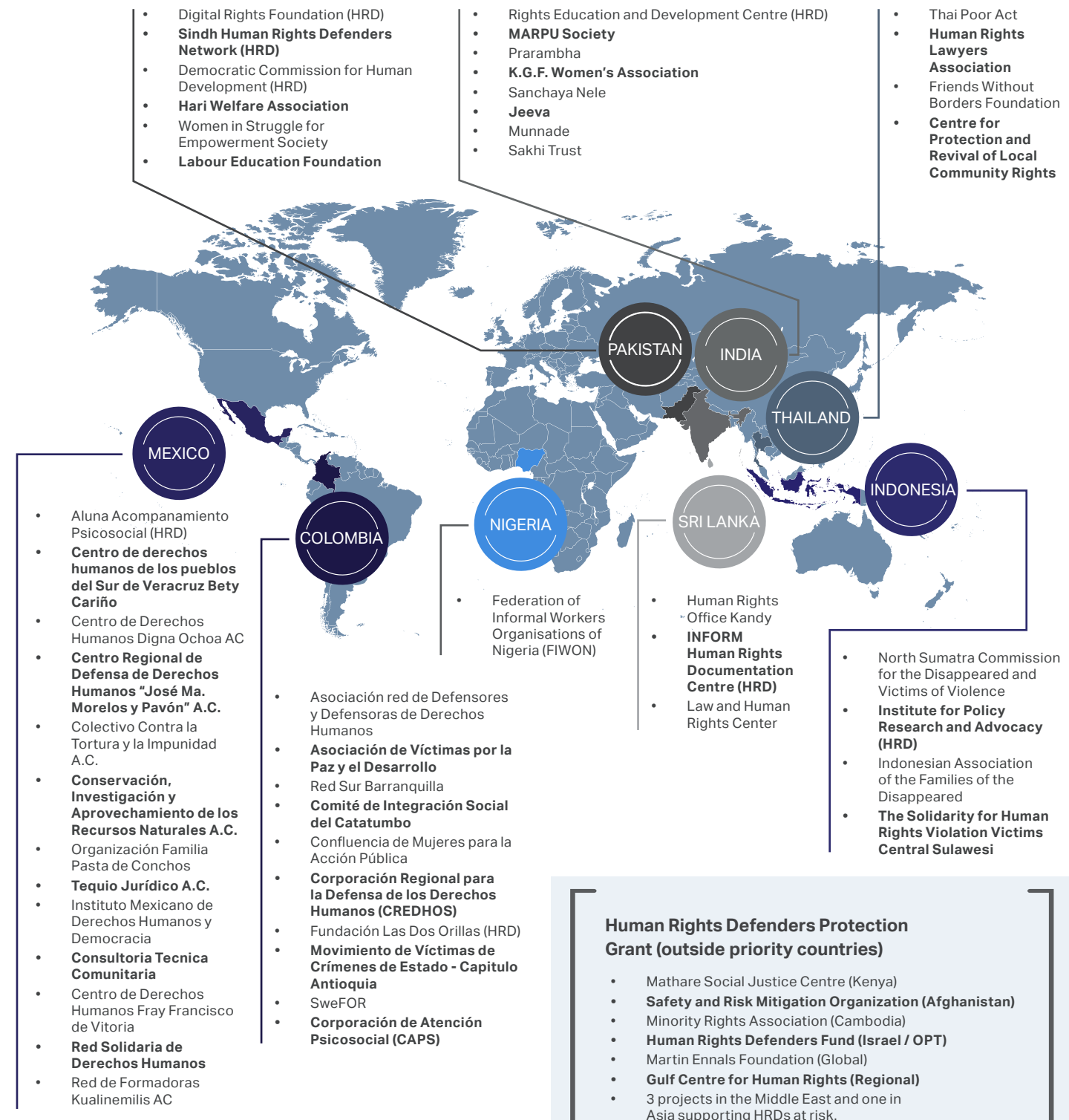
**155** Colombian human rights defenders received capacity building and special attention in protection and security.

**>>** We had calls for proposals for projects on land and environmental rights in Thailand, Indonesia, Mexico and Colombia. We also had calls for proposals for projects on workers' rights in India and Pakistan.

Our videos reached over **100 000** viewers through our social media channels.

**70** human rights defenders participated in our seminars for partners and grantees in India, Mexico, Colombia and Thailand.

## ONGOING AND SUPPORTED PROJECTS IN 2019<sup>1</sup>

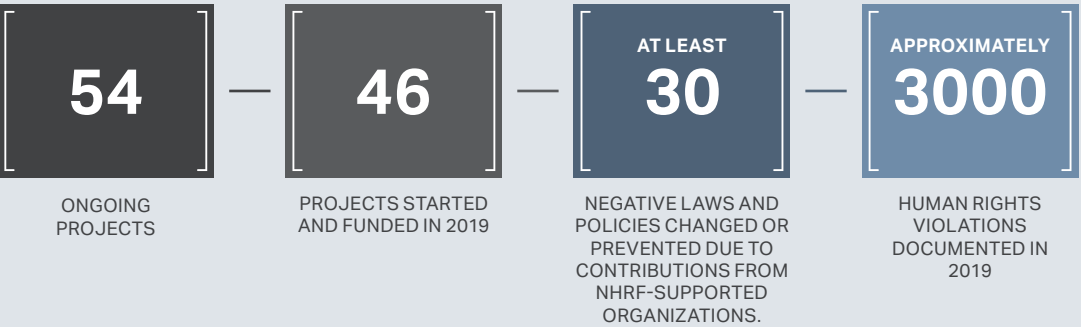


<sup>1</sup> The NHRF funds projects throughout the whole year. There are always more ongoing projects than those funded in a year.

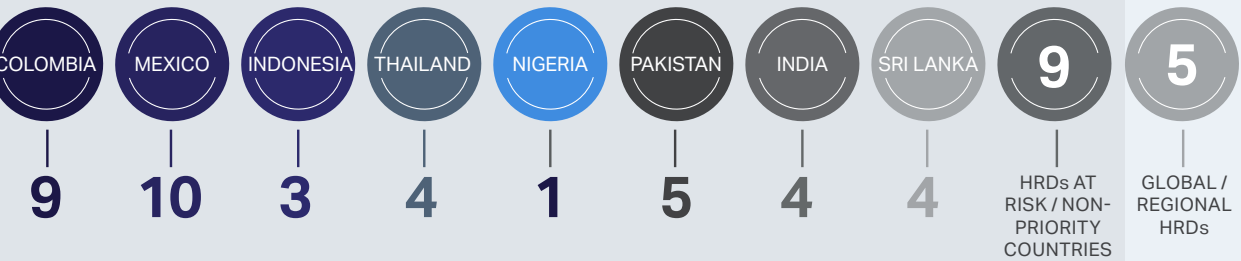


# 2019 AT A GLANCE

Sources for numbers and statistics presented throughout the annual report are the NHRF Annual Monitoring Survey<sup>2</sup> and aggregated data from project reports and NHRF monitoring processes.



## NUMBER OF PROJECTS PER COUNTRY



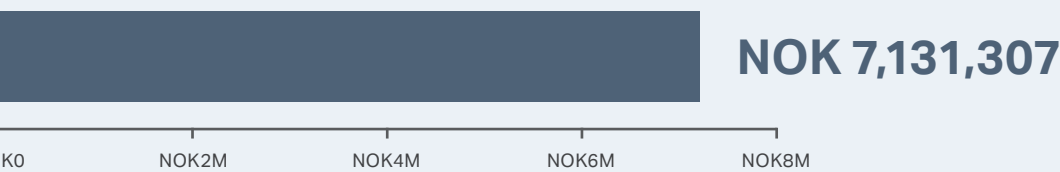
## FUNDING

HRDs at Risk projects and other strategic area projects

HRDs AT RISK



OTHER STRATEGIC AREAS

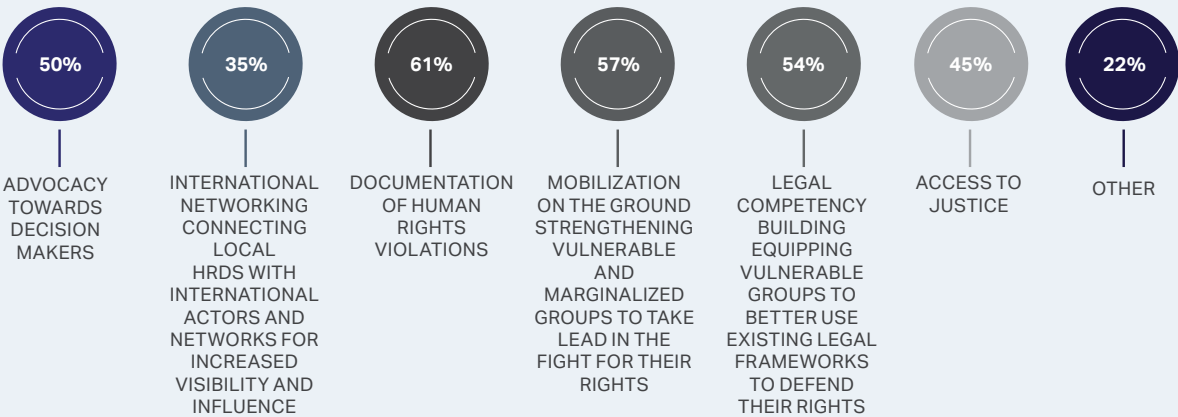


<sup>2</sup> The response rate for the Annual Monitoring Survey 2019 was 94%.

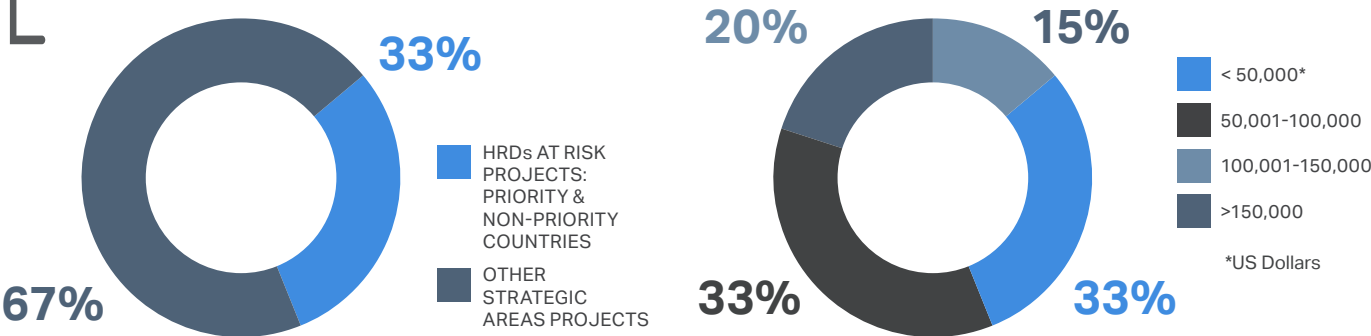
## METHODS USED IN SUPPORTED PROJECTS

(% of projects per method)

(Methods graph footnote: Numbers are based on the projects started and funded between 1st January 2019 and 31st December 2019)

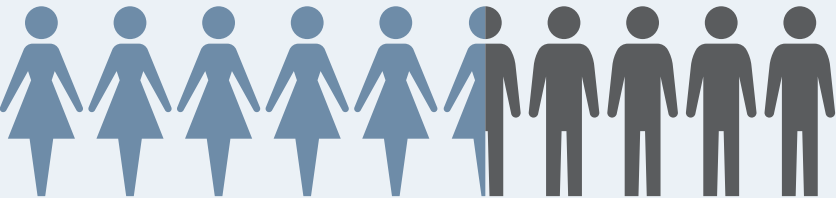


## Annual budget size for supported organizations



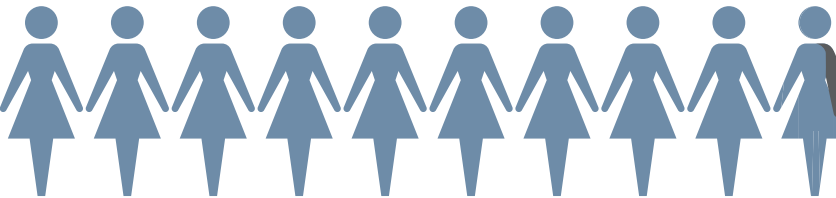
# 57%

WOMEN-LED ORGANIZATIONS



# 91%

ORGANIZATIONS WITH WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



# HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AT RISK

The NHRF sees all our grantees as human rights defenders, and we recognize that the situations they work in are vastly different and that each poses unique challenges and barriers to their work. According to our 2019 Human Rights Perception Index, 74% of our grantees report that the human rights situation in their country has deteriorated and 59% report that there are laws that restrict civil society in their country. These numbers illustrate just how critical it is to not only continue supporting human rights work but to increase it as well.

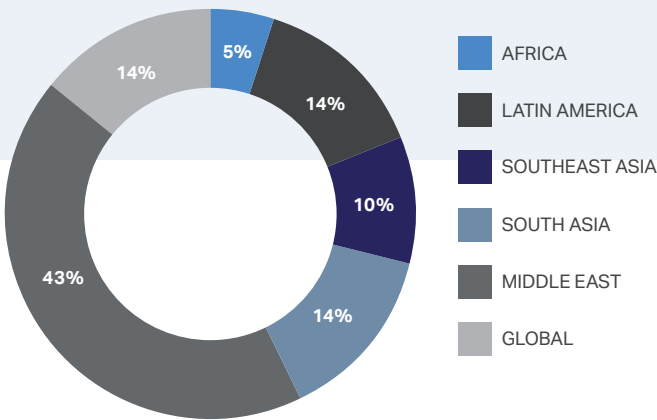
The NHRF supported 21 active HRDs at Risk projects in 2019 with a specific focus on **better working conditions** and protection of human rights defenders. The 21 projects were located in 4 of our priority countries, 7 non-priority countries, and 5 were global/regional initiatives.

## IN 2019:

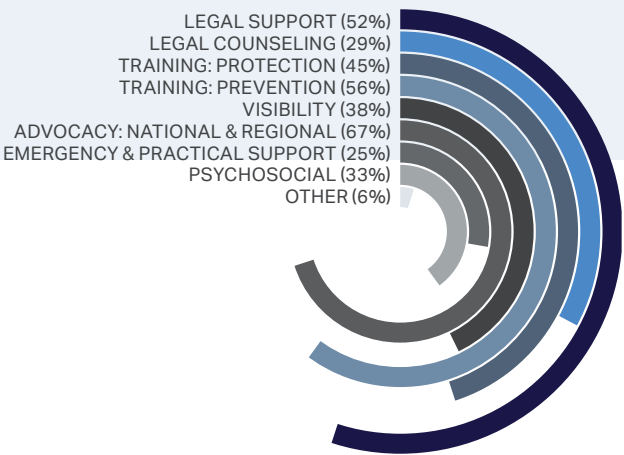
- **2292** cases were submitted to human rights mechanisms, including the UN, on behalf of human rights defenders and/or human rights groups
- Approximately **3053** W/HRDs were supported. **52% women and 48% men.**

*Numbers are from NHRF's Annual Monitoring Survey 2019.*

HRDS AT RISK: REGIONAL SUPPORT



TYPES OF SUPPORT TO HRDs AT RISK



## A few HRDs at Risk project highlights

The NHRF continued its support to three initiatives in Pakistan where national and regional human rights defenders' networks are growing and building resilience and capacities. From its 2019 report, **Digital Rights Foundation** highlighted that 25 HRDs received assistance from their helpline and 125 Human Rights Defenders were trained in digital security protection. The **Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network (SHRDN)** has implemented a project that incorporates elements of advocacy, specialized training for W/HRDs, and the provision of legal aid to victims of human rights violations.

In total, 120 W/HRDs participated in trainings with SHRDN and about 200 W/HRDs attended the Sindh Convention of Human Rights Defenders.

The **Human Rights Defenders Fund (HRDF)** in Israel is supporting W/HRDs through strategic litigation and representation. During their last supported project (2018 and 2019), the HRDF provided legal aid and representation and practical support to 185 HRDs. 96% of HRDs who received counsel and representation by the HRDF were released after only one hearing.



## Auto-protection and psychosocial attention for human rights defenders in Colombia

Due to the deteriorating situation for human rights defenders in Colombia, the NHRF has continued its partnership with SWEFOR to give on-site support to six grantee organizations, strengthening their capacity to manage their own protection and security. By initiating cooperation with the Centre for Psychosocial Attention (CAPS), we have expanded our work to include psychosocial support to defenders in 2019. Three organizations received training in psychological self-protection, and 430 individual consultations with human rights defenders were carried out.

*"With psychological self-protection we prepare to resist" (participant in a CAPS workshop). Photo: CAPS.*



## Global and regional support

In 2019, the NHRF supported a consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Michel Forst, with human rights defenders from the MENA region. They provided input for his report on impunity and human rights defenders presented at the 74th United Nations General Assembly in October.

NHRF supports the renowned Martin Ennals Awards, where each year ten international human rights organizations nominate a cohort of three human rights defenders. In 2019 those finalists were Eren Keskin from Turkey, Abdul Aziz Muhamat from Sudan, and Marino Cordoba from Colombia. The NHRF congratulates each and recognizes their dedication, hard work, and contribution as human rights defenders.

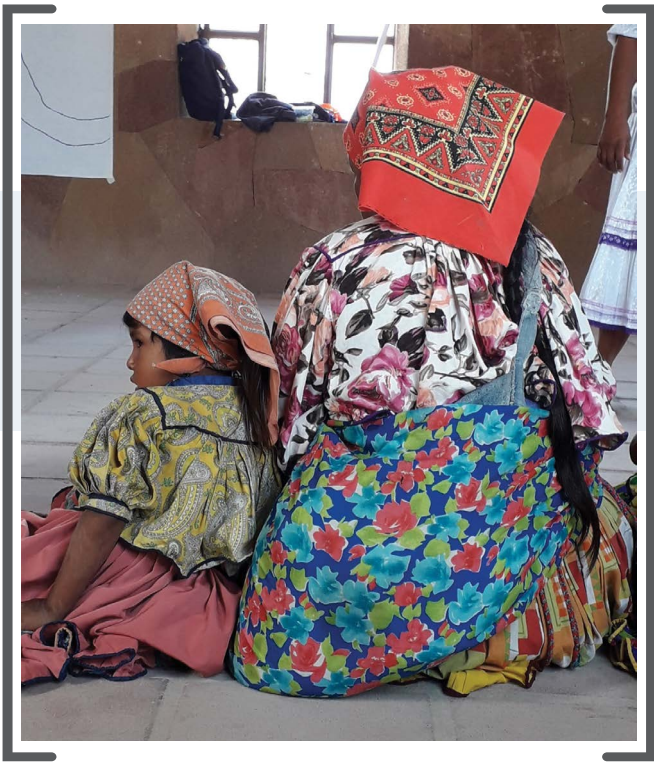
Abdul Aziz Muhamat, winner of the Martin Ennals Award in 2019. *(Photo: Martin Ennals Award)*



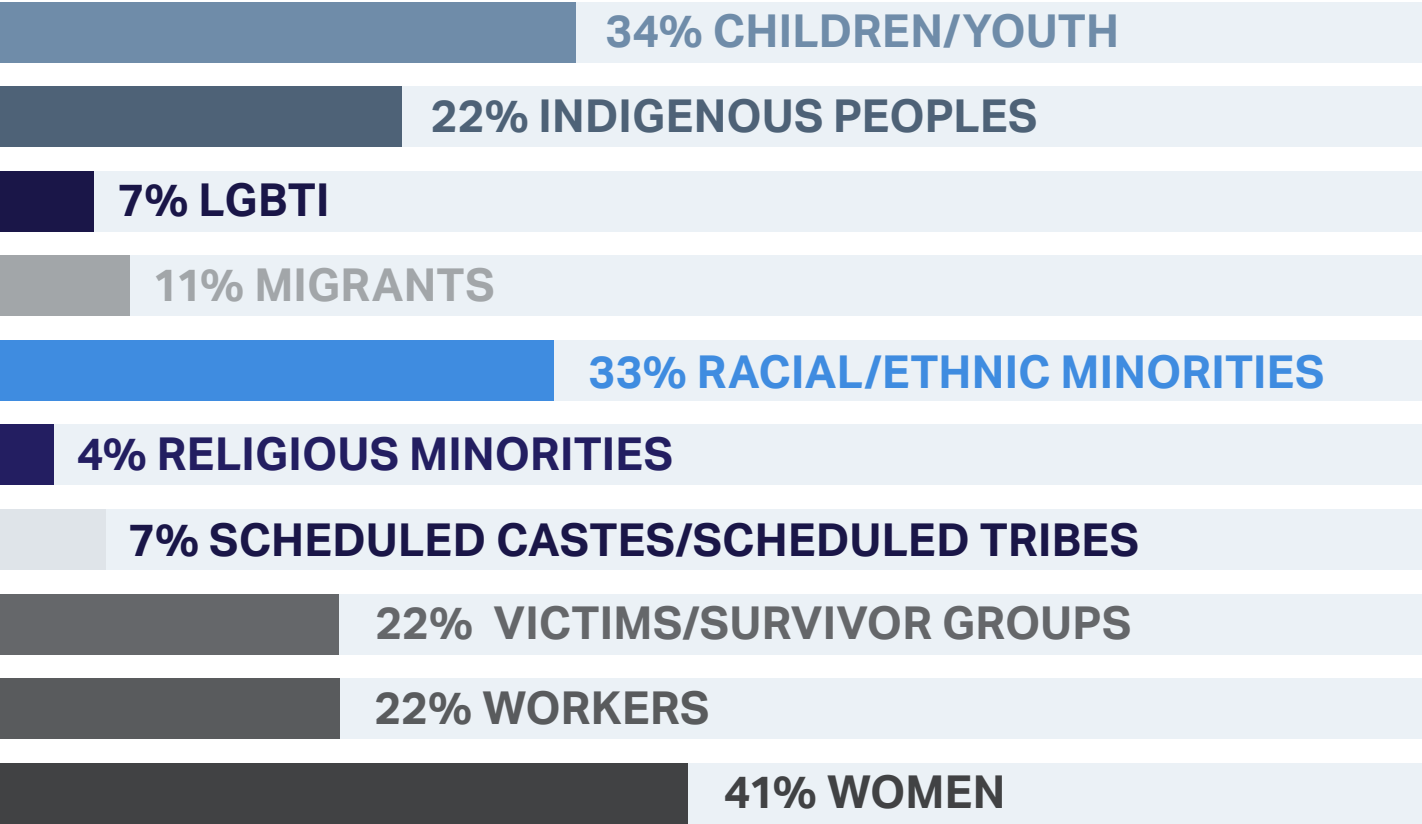
# WORK AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

Supporting marginalized groups to take the lead in their fight against discrimination is a core component of NHRF's work. The majority of our grantees work with groups that often face multiple forms of discrimination based on their gender, caste, sexual orientation, ethnicity and other diverse identities. In 2019, we increased our focus on land, environmental and workers' rights and the connection between them with targeted calls for proposals and other activities.

Right: Participants at a women's rights training organized by CONTEC. (Photo: CONTEC)



## AMONG THE MAIN TARGET GROUPS OF NHRF'S PROJECTS\*



\* The numbers are based on the projects started and funded between 1 Jan 2019 and 31 December 2019. Respondents were able to select multiple categories, and percentages may exceed 100%.

## Land and environmental rights

In 2019, the NHRF began supporting three new organizations in Mexico that are working on land and environmental rights. Consultoría Técnica Comunitaria, A.C. (CONTEC) works in the defense of four indigenous communities in Chihuahua, Mexico – a region impacted by large development plans for tourism and organized crime, which have led to disputes over land. The security situation in Chihuahua is highly challenging for human rights defenders, and CONTEC provides security and self-protection training for its staff and network. The NHRF also started supporting two networks of indigenous women defenders, one of them being Red de Formadoras Kualinemilis A.C. (Kualinemilis) in Puebla. In a context where there are high levels of violence against women and prospective megaprojects posing a threat to the rights of indigenous communities, Kualinimelis is training 30 women and young men to defend their land.

Businesses and governments have increased their attention to the area of business and human rights, and some initiatives are bringing them together to implement measures to counteract modern forms of slavery. According to The Global Slavery Index, nearly 8 million people (6/1000) were living in modern slavery in India in 2018, and approximately 3 million people (16/1000) in Pakistan. In response to this, the NHRF concluded a call for proposals in India and Pakistan with a focus on workers' rights and decent working conditions. In India the theme for the call for proposals was "Women at work", focusing on the experiences of women and girl workers.

In Pakistan, the NHRF supported the Labour Education Foundation, who has contributed to setting up a workers' committee to protect against bonded labor in the brick kiln industry, and provided training and legal education to over 100 brick kiln workers in Punjab. We also supported Women in Struggle for Empowerment to provide crucial outreach to vulnerable domestic workers in Punjab, helping them with social security registration, orientation around their rights, and advocating for the effective implementation of the newly passed Domestic Workers Act 2019.

Marginalized communities in India and Pakistan continue to face neglect, discrimination, violence and severe difficulties in obtaining justice. In 2019, the NHRF increased its focus on workers' rights, particularly on women and girl workers.



NHRF's support to the Hari Welfare Association has been important to the successful passing of the Women Agricultural Workers Act in the Sindh Provincial Assembly. The Act aims to end abuse and discrimination against women agricultural workers. (Photo: Hari Welfare Association)



**We are not criminals anymore:** After the Supreme Court of India decriminalized homosexuality in 2018, NHRF grantee, Jeeva, trained approximately 300 LGBTQI-workers for work life with knowledge on workers' rights and grievance redressal mechanisms.



**Marpu Society** in Andhra Pradesh, India, has secured legal papers for land ownership of 415 acres of land, that has been distributed to 326 landless Dalit agricultural workers. The picture shows tomatoes grown in the secured land. The NHRF Project Coordinator visited the land together with Fagforbundet and the Marpu team.



The NHRF is glad to have started a new partnership with the International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN), that works towards ending caste discrimination. The project the NHRF supports works with Dalit women and gender justice, equality and participation, and business and human rights – with a particular focus on vulnerable workers. Among their many activities in 2019, IDSN participated in the UN Business and Human Rights Forum.



# WORK AGAINST IMPUNITY AND FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The NHRF prioritizes work aimed at ensuring full and equal access to justice, recognizing justice as the key component to combating impunity.

Most organizations funded in this strategic area exist to serve marginalized communities and to actively work against their discrimination. Many work to seek justice and protection for indigenous communities that are vulnerable to the exploitation of extractive industries and other land and environmental abuses. The organizations use methods such as documenting human rights violations, promoting the visibility and empowerment of discriminated groups, preserving memories so future generations will not forget and repeat the violations, and providing free legal assistance to ensure equal access to justice.

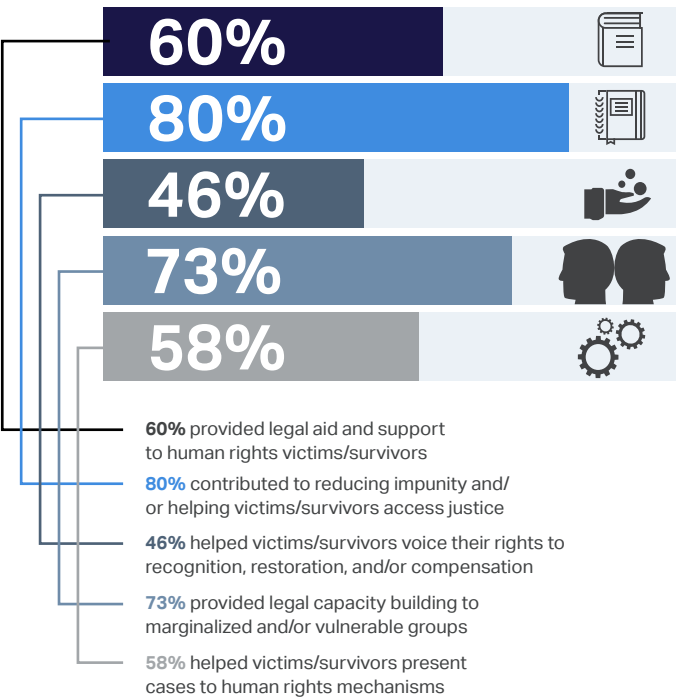


Nunca más! – Never again! (Photo: Red Sur Barranquilla)

## LONG-TERM SUPPORT IN COLOMBIA

In Colombia, the NHRF continued our 30 years of support to victims of the armed conflict in their struggle for truth, justice, reparation and no repetition. Now, in 2020, we are excited to have the opportunity to start significantly scaling up our work to support civil society working for peace. We prioritize support to projects and grassroots organizations that mobilize victims and survivors in areas severely impacted by the armed conflict. The country is in the middle of a challenged peace process, facing a deteriorating human rights situation, an intensification of the continued armed conflict, and widespread killings of human rights defenders. But the human rights movement continues to grow and plays a fundamental role for the future of the country. NHRF supported eight human rights organizations and their work for access to justice for victims and survivors within the Colombian transitional justice system, established as a part of the 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC guerilla group. With six reports, together with testimonies and methodological and organizational support, grantees contributed to and participated in the work of the Colombian Truth Commission, the Special Peace Jurisdiction and the Search Unit for Disappeared People. But the fight against impunity also continues within the ordinary justice system. NHRF-supported grantees handled and supported 824 legal cases, representing and accompanying 4800 victims of human rights violations. They also documented 1023 human rights violations.

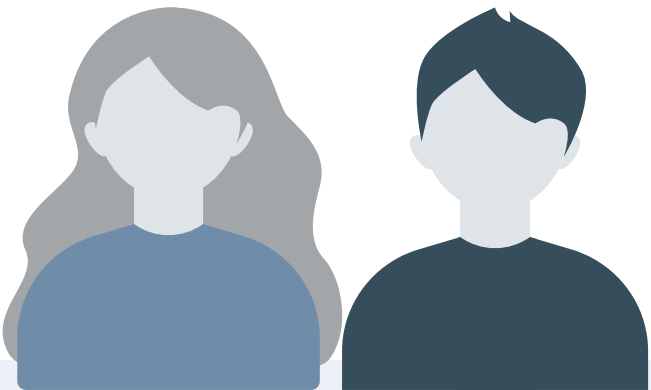
## OUT OF NHRF'S GRANTEEES THAT WERE SUPPORTED IN 2019:\*



## BREAKDOWN FOR LEGAL AID AND SUPPORT

**1137 WOMEN**  
**1464 MEN**  
**402 YOUTH**

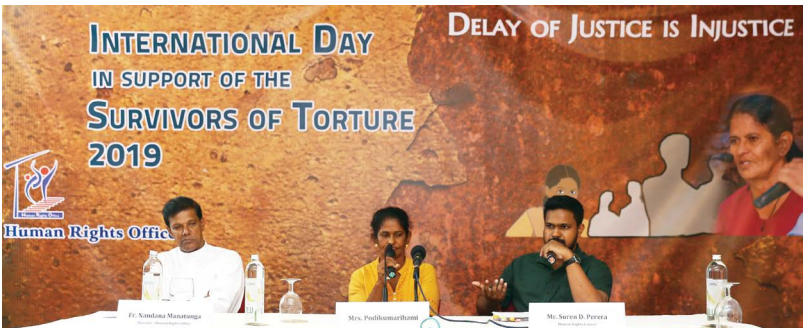
\*Numbers are from NHRF's Annual Monitoring Survey 2019.



## SUPPORTING REFORM AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN SRI LANKA

Human Rights Office in Kandy (HRO), Sri Lanka, focuses on access to justice for prisoners with fabricated charges, who are detained without trial or are awaiting trial, or who have experienced other human rights violations while detained. They work directly with victims/survivors and engage with many stakeholders on different levels. HRO not only helps prisoners gain access to justice, but also works to reform the justice system to help restore society's confidence in its impartiality and capacity.

In 2019, HRO documented 97 cases of torture, illegal arrest, medical negligence, unlawful detention, police harassment, and arrest with fabricated charges and provided legal support to 88 victims. They conduct strong and influential advocacy that has led to several victories, such as the Ministry of Justice and Judicial Services Commission taking steps to expedite cases that have been pending for more than 10 years. In addition to their strong legal support/aid and strategic advocacy work, they facilitate a psycho-therapeutic art program for prisoners called "Healing through Art". This program helps participants through cathartic expression. In 2019, this program was facilitated for male prisoners serving on death row.



The Director of HRO (left) and torture survivor, H.M. Podikumarihami, (center) narrating her torture incident to the media at the International Day in Support of Survivors of Torture. (Photo: HRO)



# NETWORK AND ACTIVITIES // SNAPSHOTS

1.



**1. The situation for environmental human rights defenders has been described as a “global crisis”, and threats and attacks are increasing at an alarming rate.** On March 21st, the NHRF, in cooperation with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, invited a panel to reflect on what can be done to address these issues.

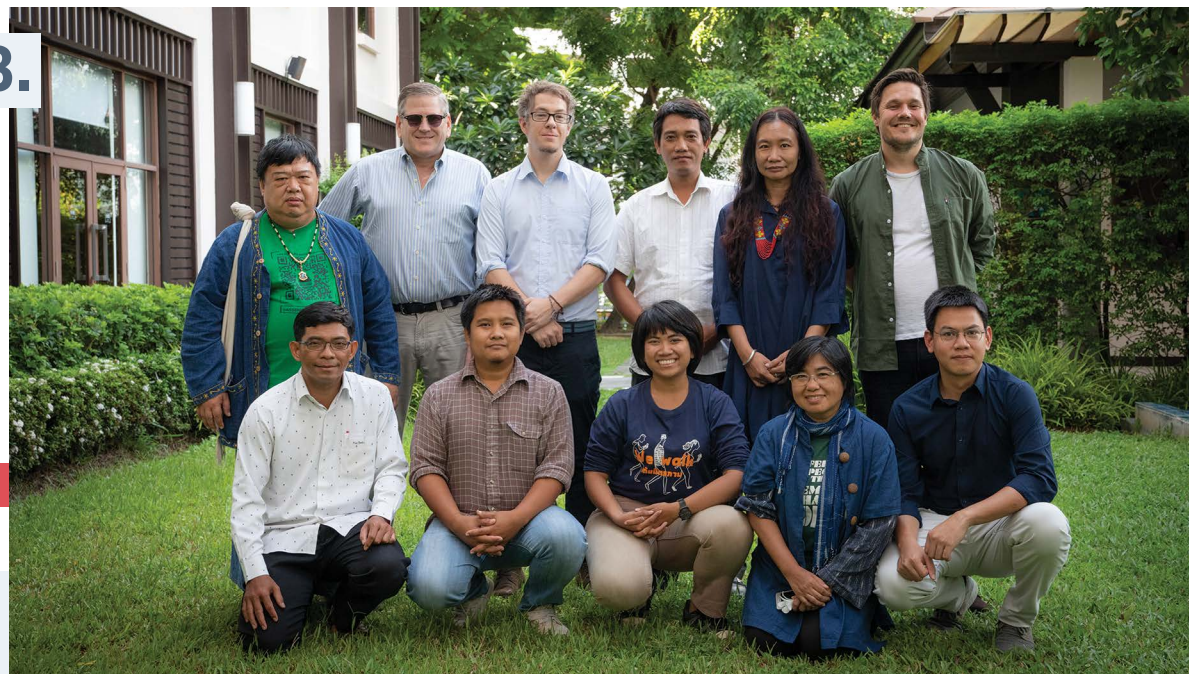
The panel, left to right: Moderator, Jemima García-Godos (University of Oslo and member of NHRF advisory board), human rights defender, Anne Lapapan Supamanta (Assembly of the Poor), Jørgen Hanson (Hydro), Erling Hoem (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and Phil Bloomer (on screen) (Business and Human Rights Resource Center). (Photo: Mónica Orjuela/NHRF)

2.



**2. Norwegian State Secretary, Jens Frølich Holte, visited Mexico and met with many of the local human rights organizations supported by the NHRF.** The organizations addressed the critical situation for human rights defenders and journalists, as well as concerns about the practice of torture and the development of megaprojects at the expense of indigenous peoples' rights (Photo: Royal Norwegian Embassy in Mexico).

3.



**3.** For the first time, the NHRF organized a seminar for grantee partners in Thailand in June 2019. (Photo: Mónica Orjuela/NHRF)

4.



5.



**6. Colombia Forum:** The NHRF co-organized the sixth installment of the Together for peace in Colombia conference in Oslo. The event was co-organized with the Norwegian Colombia Forum, a network of Norwegian Civil Society organizations coordinating joint advocacy and communication efforts to support the work for human rights and peace in Colombia. (Photo Mónica Orjuela/Health and Human Rights Info) **7. Human rights defenders** sharing experiences, learning from each other and building partnerships at the NHRF grantee partner seminar in Mexico City in October.

**9. Cooperation with Fagforbundet (Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees):** In 2019, the NHRF initiated a new and exciting partnership with the Norwegian trade union, Fagforbundet. Many joint activities that fostered learning between our two organizations were organized. Among them were the NHRF's consultant for Pakistan participating in Fagforbundet's youth conference in June and a joint trip to India where Fagforbundet met with several grantee partners and attended the annual seminar in Bangalore, India. We look forward to developing this cooperation even further in 2020!

NHRF's Executive Director, Sandra Petersen, Fagforbundet's President, Mette Nord, and NHRF consultant, Zulfiqar Shah.

6.



7.



8.



9.





# COMMUNICATIONS

In 2019, the NHRF continued our efforts to strengthen communication by integrating it into our strategy to promote and protect the rights of marginalized and vulnerable people through the support to frontline human rights defenders. Solidarity, awareness raising and creating narratives that acknowledge and support human rights defenders are essential in all aspects of our communication.

Increased activity and reach on social media; establishing a monthly email newsletter; regularly publishing articles, interviews and blog posts with our grantees and other network members on our webpage; organizing public events and seminars; and writing op-eds *all contributed to our communications goals.*



**Audiovisual communication:** NHRF Communication Consultant, Monica Orjuela, during a field visit to Friends Without Borders in Mae Sot, Thailand. (Photo: Friends Without Borders Foundation)

**Top right: I Defend Rights** is a joint initiative with Memria that aims to collect and disseminate stories of human rights defenders all over the world, celebrate them as essential agents of change and foster global narratives that support their work. So far over 280 human rights defenders have contributed by sharing their stories, and we look forward to taking the project to new heights in 2020.



**HUMAN International Documentary Film Festival:** The NHRF, together with Health and Human Rights Info (HHRI), initiated a cooperation with the HUMAN International Documentary Film Festival in Oslo, co-hosting a screening of the movie *Ciro y Yo* (Ciro and me) followed by a panel debate on the peace process and human rights situation in Colombia. Marino Cordoba, a 2019 finalist for the NHRF-supported Martin Ennals Award, spoke together with Norway’s Special Representative to the Colombian Peace Process, Dag Nagoda. The panel was moderated by Nora Sveaass, Chairwoman of HHRI and member of the NHRF advisory board. (Photo: Mónica Orjuela/NHRF)

# HUMAN RIGHTS PERCEPTION INDEX



The NHRF Human Rights Perception Index (HRPI) measures the perception of the human rights situation on the ground among NHRF-supported local grassroots organizations. In 2017, the first annual HRPI survey was sent to NHRF grantees to ask about their perceptions of the current human rights situation in their local contexts. The second annual survey was sent in 2018 and showed a slight increase in improved perceptions of the human rights situation. Our third survey was sent in 2019 and the results reveal how quickly situations can shift in the complex contexts where our grantees work.

From 2017 to 2019, we see a 10 % spike in the perception of deterioration of the human rights

situation in our grantees’ countries, and an 7% increase in the deterioration in their local area (a 15% increase from 2018 at 48 % to 2019 at 64 %). Changes in laws and/or policies that affect civil society has increased from 2018-2019 but decreased significantly from 2017 (2017 at 72% and 2019 at 59%). But our grantees are remaining optimistic despite a challenging year for human rights work. In 2019, 89% are optimistic about the ability to continue carrying out their human rights work.

**PHOTO ABOVE:** The Pakistani women-led organization Women in Struggle for Empowerment (WISE) works for social justice and women's empowerment in Pakistan. Among their activities, they identify female domestic workers and help them register to access social security. Pictured here is Saima, a beneficiary of WISE's activities. (Photo: WISE)

	No, it remains the same	Yes, it has improved	Yes, it has deteriorated
Has the overall human rights situation in your country changed during the course of 2019?	24%	2%	74%
Has the human rights situation in your local area (city, state, province etc.) changed during the course of 2019?	30%	7%	63%

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Are there laws in your country that restrict civil society organizations' work and are not in line with your country's human rights obligations?	59%	30%	11%
Have there been any changes in laws and/or policies in your country during the course of 2019 that affect civil society organizations' possibilities to carry out their work?	59%	24%	17%
Are you optimistic about the possibilities for your organization to continue your human rights work in 2020?	89%	2%	9%



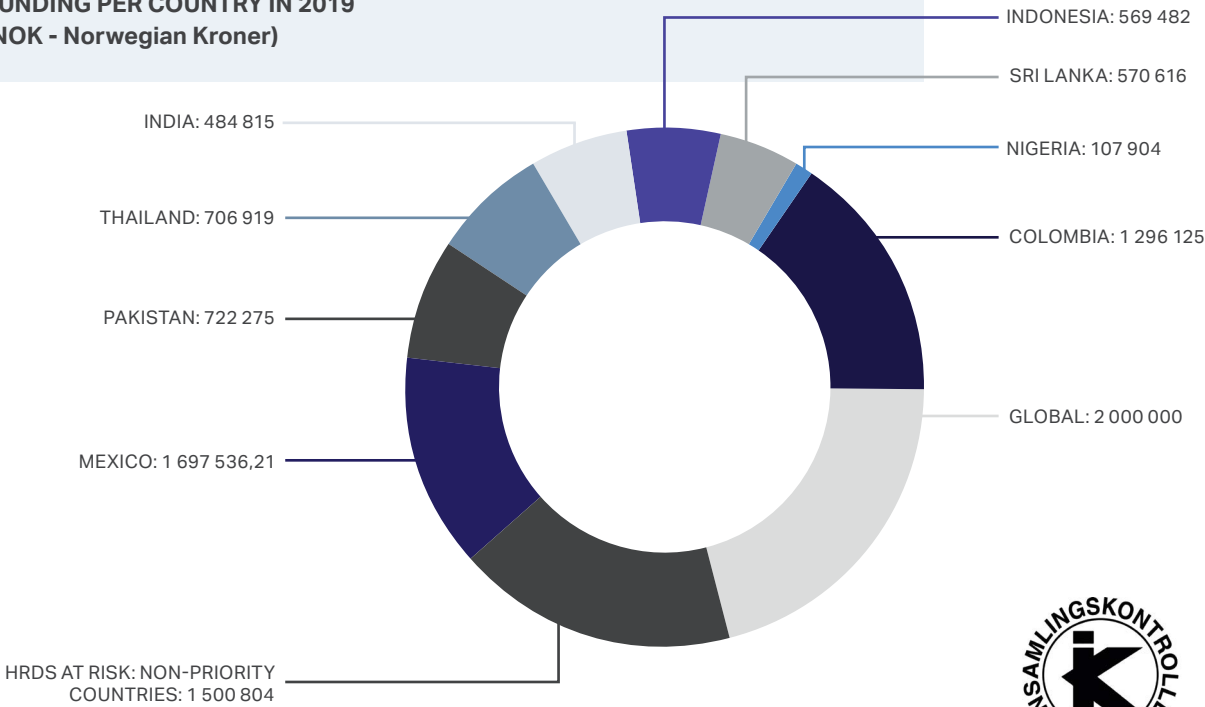
# ACCOUNTS

The NHRF has been supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since its founding. The Ministry provides core support through framework agreements that provide for the majority of the NHRF budget. The remaining budget in 2019 was provided by funds from the NHRF member organizations and other donations. The NHRF would like to thank our donors, such as Fagforbundet and Jamette and Sverres Hjelpesfond, for their generous support. We will continue to work with our owners and new partners and to seek new partnerships to increase our support to local human rights defenders on the ground in the year to come.

Accounts in 2019	USD	NOK
Total income	1 628 016	14 293 002
From members and non-earmarked funds	155 136	1 362 000
From government	1 327 938	11 658 500
Other income	144 942	1 272 502
Total expenses	1 595 205	14 004 943
Total program cost	1 550 537	13 612 782
For grants	1 099 246	9 650 721
Communication/report	16 738	146 947
Personnel cost incl. audit and account	325 699	2 859 438
For follow-up, capacity building, seminars, strategy, travels incl. external evaluation	108 854	955 676
Other:		
Office cost and database	36 056	316 554
Fundraising	8 612	75 607

(Exchange rate: 8,7794 USD average 2019)

## FUNDING PER COUNTRY IN 2019 (NOK - Norwegian Kroner)



# ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

## THE SECRETARIAT

In 2019, the NHRF had a team in Oslo consisting of Executive Director, Sandra Petersen, and Project Coordinators, Halvard Hjermundrud and Kristin Storaker Skutlaberg. Mateo Corales and Scott Sandvik joined us as Project Coordinators at the end of the year. Financial Management: Bjørg Haugstulen – Accountant and Einar Wengen – Controller. Additionally, we worked with resource persons in consultancy positions to support other key areas of our work. Communications: Mónica Orjuela Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL): Sarah McMains. We also continued our internship program with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights and had the privilege of hosting two interns from the Centre's master's program. The NHRF wishes to thank the interns that contributed in 2019: Mateo Corrales Hoyos and Emma Verngård. During the year, the NHRF expanded its MEL work and started the process of developing a Theory of Change, among other processes. The year 2020 will be the final year of the current NHRF strategy, and the Theory of Change will guide the work into a new strategy from 2021.

## THE BOARD

The Board consists of one representative from each of the five member organizations. Members of the Board in 2019 and presently are as follows:

- Amnesty International Norway: John Peder Egenæs, Chair of the Board (deputy board member Sidsel Stanmore Andersen)
- The Atlas Alliance: Morten Eriksen (deputy board member Andrew Kroglund)
- Norwegian Centre for Human Rights: Peris Sean Jones (deputy board member Knut D. Asplund)
- Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions: Siri Relling (deputy board member Morten Hovda). Change as of September 2019 to: Aina Østreng (deputy board member Magnus Holtfodt)
- Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations: Guro Almås (deputy board member Einar Tjelle)

## THE ADVISORY BOARD

2019 was a year that brought many opportunities to engage with our advisory board, both in Norway and in our prioritized countries. We would like to thank the members for their support and cooperation:

- Mary Lawlor – Founder of Front Line Defenders
- Phil Robertson – Human Rights Watch
- Jemima García-Godos – University of Oslo
- Gerald Staberock – World Organization Against Torture
- Nora Sveaass – Health and Human Rights Info and University of Oslo
- Miloon Kothari – former United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing

## NHRF CONSULTANTS

We want to thank our local consultants for their important work and direct contributions to NHRF's work, both on the ground and in Oslo. Special appreciation goes to Mathews Philips in India and Agnieszka Raczynska in Mexico, who ended their respective five and four years of work with the NHRF. They have enriched our work in both countries, and it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with both. We are delighted to welcome Anita Cheria, who started in May 2019 as the new consultant in India and Alexandra Jiménez, who started in January 2020 as our new consultant in Mexico. Both Anita Cheria (India) and Zulfiqar Shah (Pakistan) visited Oslo for planning and external meetings.

- PAKISTAN: Zulfiqar Shah
- COLOMBIA: Mildrey Corrales
- INDIA: Mathews Philip and Anita Cheria (as of May 2019)
- MEXICO: Agnieszka Raczynska and Alexandra Jiménez (as of January 2020)



**PHOTOS: TOP:** The Secretariat; **2ND FROM TOP:** The NHRF Board (Photo: Mónica Orjuela/NHRF); **2ND FROM BOTTOM:** Phil Robertson, Deputy Asia Director at Human Rights Watch, visited the secretariat in Oslo in the spring and gave a lecture on Thailand at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights. Robertson's advice to those who want to support defenders in Thailand is to continue providing financial support as well as to pressure the international community to be more outspoken against the harmful practices of Thai military rule (Phil Robertson (right), together with Project Manager, Gisle Kvanvig, and Head of Department, Gentian Zyberi, from the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights; **BOTTOM:** Consultant in India, Anita Cheria, with Advisor, Hans Kristian Stenestø, from Fagforbundet (Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees) during her visit to Oslo in November 2019.





*“...It is also great that NHRF present itself as a human rights organization and not just a donor. This makes grantees feel they are working “together” with NHRF rather than just receiving money.”*

– Pornsuk Koetsawang, Director of Friends Without Borders Foundation

Photo: Mónica Orjuela/NHRF