

THE **FUND**
FOR **GLOBAL**
HUMAN
RIGHTS



CREATING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH CRISIS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021





OUR MISSION

The Fund for Global Human Rights equips grassroots activists across the globe with the financial and strategic support they need to improve lives, mobilize movements, and build a better future for their communities.



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WELCOME FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

Over the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed deeply rooted inequalities across the globe. Billions have been left without access to basic necessities or government support. In that absence, frontline activists stepped in to ensure their communities were not left behind—while also advocating for better systems that would prevent their communities from being vulnerable in the first place.

For some, this meant preventing authoritarian officials from instituting laws that would restrict personal liberties well beyond the pandemic. For others, it entailed rapidly sourcing food, protective equipment, or oxygen tanks when overwhelmed healthcare systems or traditional aid failed. For many, it meant doing both while continuing to keep staff and volunteers safe.

These efforts are remarkable yet unsurprising. Time and time again, the activists we support have demonstrated courage and creativity in times of crisis, working to find innovative solutions that meet their community's greatest needs and protect their fundamental rights. That's why our model was designed to offer the flexible funding, skills-building opportunities, and connections that activists need to solve problems and transform lives.

Last year, the creativity and tenacity of the activists we support deepened our own resolve to strengthen and innovate for their benefit. We piloted an initiative where local leaders led decision making about which organizations to fund in their communities. We established the COVID-19 Grassroots Justice Fund to raise and deliver \$1 million to grassroots groups developing both immediate solutions and long-term rebuilding plans. And we looked inward at our culture and practices, taking critical steps toward realizing our promise as a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

As 2020–21 showed us all, the world can change in an instant. But because of you—our community of supporters—we can continue to learn, grow, and adapt. Thank you for trusting us and investing in the bold activists we support. Together, we are providing determined communities the tools they need to stand strong, weather enormous challenges, and secure the rights they deserve.

With gratitude and well wishes,

Regan E. Ralph
President and CEO





PUTTING OUR VALUES INTO PRACTICE

As an international organization founded on feminist principles, the Fund for Global Human Rights is committed to creating and sustaining a work environment that enables all staff to thrive in their diversities. This requires a real commitment to challenging discrimination and bias, including around race, gender expression and identity, sexual orientation, class, caste, ability, and linguistic background.

Over the past year, the staff and leadership of the Fund developed a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Action plan so that our systems and practices truly embody this commitment and encourage a culture of self-reflection and learning. We have also adopted or revised policies to better reflect our values, including Standards of Conduct, a Code of Ethics, an Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, and Standard Operating Procedures for Complaints.

Our goal in these efforts is to create a work community that enables all staff to thrive in their diversities and to be seen, heard, and valued. The Fund, we believe, is at its best when we value all voices, nurture creative ideas, engage constructively with conflict, and appreciate one another.

Through our ongoing work, and particularly our DEI Action Plan, we expect to:

- **Deepen our commitment to and demonstration of shared and diverse leadership;**
- **Institute accountability and transparency standards for the organization that are actionable and measurable;**
- **Demonstrate equity across the lifespan of the employee;**
- **Move to a learning and appreciation mindset;**
- **Diversify partners and advisors; and**
- **Continue to interrogate ourselves to ensure that that we are living our values internally as we fight for justice and human rights in the world.**

While we've set and already met some of these goals, we know that this work must be persistent as we strive to fully embody our pursuit of dignity, equality, and justice. We are grateful for the time, insights, and efforts of our staff in creating a workplace centered on respect for and empowerment of all.



THE YEAR IN IMPACT



We delivered more than **\$14 million** in critical support to **328 grassroots** activists and groups in **51 countries**.

23% went to COVID-19 emergency support.

42% of groups we support are focused on women's rights.

27% promoted Indigenous and rural communities' rights and the environment.

20% worked to protect civic space and activists' lives.

Of **140 grantee organizations** we surveyed, **100%** were able to carry on working during the pandemic.

Nearly **half** expanded their work in response to COVID-19.

GRANTEE VICTORIES:

Mobilizing more than **10,000** people in **Morocco** to halt a bill that exploited the pandemic to restrict freedom of expression

Leading youth protests and organizing around sexual violence in **Liberia**, resulting in a **\$4 million** government commitment supporting prevention efforts and survivors

Winning a case at West Africa's top court that ordered the government of **Guinea** to pay **\$463,000** in damages for 21 villagers who were killed, injured, or arrested protesting a mining project in 2012

Providing sufficient evidence for the International Criminal Court's prosecutor to recommend an investigation into state-sanctioned murders committed during the **Philippines'** "war on drugs"

Securing government recognition and more than **\$6.8 million** in pandemic relief for sex workers and their families in Maharashtra, **India**

Winning an order for 6 former military officers in **Guatemala** to stand trial in the Diario Militar case for the kidnapping, forced disappearance, and murder of 183 people in the 1980s.



HELPING ACTIVISTS FACE CHALLENGES OLD & NEW

The Fund was created with a singular vision—to deliver the resources that activists need most to take on critical human rights struggles. Today, this means **equipping activists to counter threats to their lives and work, ensure activism can thrive, and secure justice for colleagues who have been arrested or killed.**

Today, activists need this support more than ever as authoritarian governments and leaders consolidate power by closing civic space and targeting activists for retribution: In 2020, more than 300 activists were murdered worldwide. Among the groups we support, two-thirds experienced a rise in criminalization of civil liberties or restrictions on their freedom of expression.

Our support fueled a momentous victory: In **Honduras**, the Fund has staunchly supported Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Indígenas Populares (Civic Council of Popular Indigenous Organizations or COPINH) as they pursue justice for the murder of their founder, environmental leader Berta Cáceres. Despite the pandemic and numerous irregularities, COPINH—in partnership with several other groups we support—made sure that the trial of one of the perpetrators of the assassination proceeded in 2020. In July 2021, a former military intelligence officer and head of a hydroelectric company was convicted of homicide—a rare guilty verdict for the murder of a human rights defender.

Earlier in the year, our first COVID-19 emergency grant was awarded to Spaces for Change (S4C), a grassroots watchdog organization in **Nigeria**. In collaboration with fellow members of the Action Group on Free Civic Space, they launched a free hotline that provided legal assistance to more than 100 people whose rights were violated during the country's COVID-19 lockdown. When Nigerians took to the streets to protest police brutality with the #ENDSARS movement, [S4C was there](#), documenting violence and retaliation against activists and police brutality survivors. S4C also secured a critical win toward protecting activism, partnering with the government to examine how anti-terror finance laws are misused to immobilize activists.

Throughout the year, we also helped groups continue to change perceptions of activism—a key strategy for creating societies where activists' work and lives are valued. In the **Philippines**, Active Vista provided much-needed safe spaces for students to explore democracy, voter empowerment, and community organizing, including at seven universities. Through discussions, online forums, and art, 5,000 Filipino youth gained skills to mobilize peers and envision themselves as nation-builders capable of developing economic, security, and health solutions.



WINS FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

More than 40 percent of our grantees have a primary focus on promoting women's rights. **The pandemic made the Fund's support for groups driving gender equality even more critical.**

In partnership with local women-led groups in **Myanmar** and Canadian human rights organization Inter Pares, we researched and [published a report](#) on the need for more feminist funding in Myanmar and throughout the global human rights movement. One of the leading women's rights groups in the country, the Fund-supported Karen Women's Organization, also led significant COVID-19 humanitarian efforts along the Thai-Myanmar border, bringing food, translated materials, and health supplies to Karen people in internal displacement camps.

Lockdown measures in **Uganda** were so restrictive that nearly all public and private transport was banned. Yet, anti-violence group Center for Domestic Violence Prevention connected more than 300 women experiencing abuse with critical health and legal services. They also took to the airwaves,

bringing domestic violence preventative education into people's homes through television and radio programs.

After unjustly spending a decade in prison in **El Salvador**, Sara Rogel was released thanks to the advocacy and legal efforts of Agrupación and Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho (Foundation for Studies for the Application of Law or FESPAD). Sara had been sentenced to 30 years in jail after experiencing a miscarriage and being accused of inducing an abortion, which is banned in El Salvador. She is one of more than 150 women and girls prosecuted under the ban since 1998, but this victory sets an important legal precedent in the country.





NEW WAYS OF WORKING FOR MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

Migrants have been one of the most vulnerable populations during the pandemic—often living without access to sanitation and health infrastructure while facing greater barriers to international mobility. **For the migrants' rights groups the Fund supports, COVID-19 has ushered in new, urgent needs and innovative ways to address them.**

More than 700,000 migrants, mostly from sub-Saharan Africa, live in **Morocco**. Groups such as El Amane, which runs radio shows focused on migrant women's rights, began producing COVID-19-related radio programs and distributing food baskets, clothing, and medicine to more than 200 migrant women. This required El Amane to forge new connections within the migrant communities—relationships they now can build on to expand services.

Similarly, Association Lumière sur l'Émigration Clandestine au Maghreb (Light on Irregular Migration in the Maghreb Association, or ALECMA), a migrant-led group, worked to immediately expand their network of community leaders in Morocco, helping them better identify and respond to the daily challenges migrants face in accessing basic health, education, and other services. ALECMA leveraged these new connections to provide hygiene kits, food, and translated

COVID-19 prevention information. As more needs arose, they forged partnerships with other Fund-supported groups, like GADEM, to successfully mitigate evictions when migrants could not pay rent.

The pandemic also led the Fund to expand our migrants' rights support to new countries and organizations that are tackling both gaps in humanitarian response and existing inequalities. Seven emergency grants were committed to groups in Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, and Turkey with the aim of (1) providing critical support to often-neglected communities and (2) sharing learning and opportunities to support the strong and innovative partnerships needed to fully address migration crises. A powerful example is Mobile Info Team, located beside the border fence between **Greece** and North Macedonia, which developed accurate, up-to-date information for thousands of [asylum seekers and refugees stuck in camps](#) and provided legal aid and follow-up for particularly vulnerable cases.





SHARING POWER WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

A pillar of the Fund's approach is to identify activists with a clear vision of change for their communities. Then, we provide the critical supports they need. By asking communities affected by inequality or injustice to decide what and whom to fund—called participatory grant-making—we can help shift power to the people we serve.

For two years, we've partnered with Purposeful, a feminist movement-building hub for young women, to pilot a participatory grant-making initiative in **Sierra Leone** aimed at promoting youth leadership.

In the first phase of the initiative, a panel of youth leaders selected 10 projects to fund. They included:

[Mirror Africa](#), an educational media group dedicated to supporting girls' rights, went virtual by creating short films about girls' lives during the pandemic and brought violence-prevention programs to 400 girls when schools reopened.

Pekin to Pekin Tok for Human Rights and National Development, an education-focused group, developed radio programs and brochures that shared information about COVID-19 as well as the prevention of child labor and child marriage, building on lessons learned from the 2014 Ebola outbreak.

[Girls Behind the Lens](#), a photo agency founded by young women, trained girls in photojournalism and brought clean water and soap to communities to help curb the spread of COVID-19.

We also enlisted an external organization to evaluate the initiative, and [released a report](#) summarizing the lessons learned and recommendations for fully inviting communities to the decision-making table.





OUR SUPPORTERS

In a year of uncertainty, the steadfast backing of our community meant we could continue to provide the best support possible to activists across the globe. Your generosity powered life-saving action and incredible social change. Thank you to each and every one of our donors.

YOU MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD TO LIVE WITH DIGNITY, EQUALITY, AND JUSTICE.

Here, we recognize key institutional supporters who backed our work this year:

- THE 11TH HOUR PROJECT
- APPLE INC.
- BLUE OAK FOUNDATION
- CHANNEL FOUNDATION
- CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION
- COMIC RELIEF
- DOROTHEA HAUS ROSS FOUNDATION
- EUROPEAN COMMISSION
- FORD FOUNDATION
- FOUNDATION FOR A JUST SOCIETY
- INDEPENDENT FRANCHISE PARTNERS (IFP)
- THE JACOB & HILDA BLAUSTEIN FOUNDATION
- KOREA INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY (KOICA)
- THE LIBRA FOUNDATION
- LUMINATE
- THE MORIAH FUND
- OAK FOUNDATION
- OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS
- OVERBROOK FOUNDATION
- ROCKEFELLER BROTHERS FUND
- SCHOONER FOUNDATION
- SIGRID RAUSING TRUST
- STANLEY THOMAS JOHNSON FOUNDATION
- THE SUMMIT FOUNDATION
- SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY (SIDA)
- TRELLIS CHARITABLE FUND
- WE TRUST
- WELLSPRING PHILANTHROPIC FUND
- WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION



OUR FINANCIALS



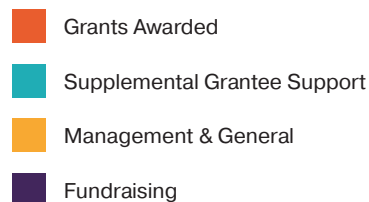
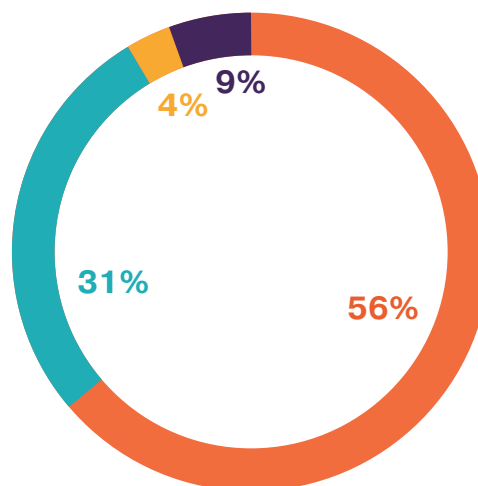
Integrity is a core value at the Fund. It's reflected in how we work daily as we seed critical support to courageous activists and honor our generous supporters by applying their gifts strategically.

Below are financial highlights from this year. View our full financials [here](#).

We work hard to maximize every donation we receive:
87% of every dollar goes toward our programmatic work.

SUPPORT AND REVENUES	2021
Contributions	
Institutional Contributions	\$16,392,619
Individual Contributions	\$1,436,701
Investment Income	\$464,279
Total Support and Revenues	\$18,293,599
EXPENSES	
Program Services	
Grants Awarded	\$9,091,068
Other Program Expenses	\$5,120,961
Total Program Services	\$14,212,029
Management and General	\$685,841
Fundraising	\$1,418,027
Total Expenses	\$16,315,897
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (Unrestricted)	\$1,977,702
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS - Beginning of Year	\$2,554,323
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS - End of Year	\$4,532,025
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (With Restriction)	\$1,047,073
RESTRICTED NET ASSETS - Beginning of Year	\$16,975,856
RESTRICTED NET ASSETS - End of Year	\$18,022,929
TOTAL NET ASSETS - End of Year	\$22,554,954

FY 2020-21 EXPENSES BREAKDOWN



* Supplemental grantee support includes technical assistance, physical and digital security, and convenings for knowledge sharing and strategy setting.



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