



# WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2018

# CAMPAIGN REPORT



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*Write for Rights 2018 – Campaign report*

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*Cover photo: Members and supporters of Amnesty Togo take part in activities for Write for Rights on Human Rights Day, 10 December 2018. The event celebrated the campaign and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights © Amnesty International*

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<sup>1</sup> Amal Fathy was added as a case to support the work of International Members – as she received over 100,000 actions we have included her case for review.

## WRITE FOR RIGHTS (W4R) 2018 – SOME FACTS

Letters change lives. Write for Rights, our global letter writing campaign, proves it.

Sixteen years ago, Write for Rights was a small venture, today it's the world's biggest human rights event. Every December, supporters across the globe write hundreds of thousands of letters, send thousands of solidarity cards, sign thousands of petitions and many other kinds of action – all calling for justice for those whose basic human rights are being attacked. And every year, real positive change takes place because of those letters and actions: People wrongfully imprisoned are released, torturers are brought to justice and people in prison are treated more humanely. **Here are some facts about W4R 2018:**

At least... **5,912,113**<sup>2</sup>

### ACTIONS WORLDWIDE



<sup>2</sup> 'Actions' are defined any form of correspondence that goes from an activist to either the target for the case and/or the individual/group or their

## NUMBER OF ACTIONS BY CASE

CASE	COUNTRY	ESTIMATED # OF ACTIONS
ATENA DAEMI	IRAN	707,305
MARIELLE FRANCO	BRAZIL	562,936
NONHLE MBUTHUMA	SOUTH AFRICA	520,726
GERALDINE CHACON	VENZUELA	514,968
NAWAL BENAISSA	MOROCCO	405,092
VITALINA KOVAL	UKRAINE	394,864
PAVITRI MANJHI	INDIA	359,951
GULZAR DUISHENOVA	KYRGYZSTAN	275,214
SENGWER INDIGENOUS PEOPLE	KENYA	257,410
AMAL FATHY <sup>3</sup>	EGYPT	102,855
ME NAM <sup>4</sup>	VIETNAM	44,008

These numbers are based on data reported by participating Amnesty Sections<sup>5</sup> as well as information collected on digital actions taken by individuals based in countries where Amnesty does not have a presence. Not all Sections were able to share their data, and some were not able to collate accurate or complete numbers. There are likely many more actions taken around the world without us being able to track them. You will notice that total number of actions for each of the global cases does not correspond with the global total of actions recorded for Write for Rights 2018. This is because the list above does not include the many extra cases Sections add to their campaigns, mainly because they are relevant to their audiences locally. Additionally, there is always a large number of actions for which Sections are not able to provide a breakdown by case – these are not included above.

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representative. These can include petition signatures, letters, emails, tweets, SMS, post cards, drawings – as long as it is sent (physically or digitally) to the target and/or the individual/group.

<sup>3</sup> Amal Fathy was added as a case to support the work of Amnesty International Members – as she received over 100,000 actions we have included her case for review.

<sup>4</sup> Mi Nam was released in October 2018 and global campaigning on her case was no longer needed – this is why her number of actions seems proportionally low.

<sup>5</sup> Where we refer to Sections, we are talking about Amnesty International's entities in different countries, which can include Sections, Structures and/or National Offices.

# HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

## SENGWER INDIGENOUS PEOPLE – KENYA

The Sengwer Indigenous community have been under constant threat of, and been subjected to, forced evictions from the Embobut Forest since the 1980s.

This is in violation of the community's rights to adequate housing and their rights as an Indigenous people to their ancestral land. During forced evictions between 2017 and 2019, Kenya Forest Service (KFS) officers used excessive force and violence resulting in death, injuries and destruction of property. The most recent forced eviction by KFS was on 20 November 2018. Some 15 KFS officers entered the



forest, fired live bullets, burned six houses, stole milk and intimidated the son of a community elder.

Nevertheless, there have been positive developments in the case. **Elias Kimayo**, a human rights defender from the Sengwer community, was invited to participate in a round table discussion that included representatives of the European Union (EU) and the Kenyan government. This is part of the ongoing discussions

set to ensure that the EU-funded Water Towers Protection Programme in Embobut Forest resumes. The EU suspended funding to the project in January 2018 after the killing of a Sengwer community member. The EU has indicated that it will only resume funding if there are firm commitments from the Kenyan government to fully comply with human rights standards, including stopping forced evictions and respecting the rights of the Sengwer indigenous community.

The Sengwer community actively participated in the campaign. They were involved in reviewing and approving campaign materials, key messages and all photos to be used. Some community members, including human rights defenders, mobilised others within the community to sign petitions. They collected about 600 signatures.

Amnesty International Kenya (AI Kenya) received about 3,210 solidarity cards and letters on behalf of the community. This first batch of solidarity letters was delivered to the community at the beginning of January 2019. During this visit, AI Kenya also delivered a training on human rights standards to activists in the Sengwer community. In the same month, an independent film-maker visited the community, and through contacts received from Amnesty International, filmed members of the community. Amnesty International will be working with the filmmaker to produce a short video from the trip.

Here is a message from the Sengwer Indigenous Community who were grateful to Amnesty International for campaigning on their case:

***“We would like to thank Amnesty for the work they have done especially on the Write for Rights campaign. We are so thankful to Amnesty International. We would like to thank Lavender, Naomi, Chris and the entire team for exposing the ills, for exposing the problems and the challenges the Sengwer community underwent. God bless Amnesty, God bless Sengwer as we seek for justice.”***

The second batch of solidarity letters will be delivered by the end of March 2019. Within the same month, the team (in consultation with the community) has identified 21 March, the International Day of Forests, as a potential hook for the handover of petitions to the authorities. The details of the handover are still being ironed out and will be shared as soon as possible

Throughout the campaign Amnesty Kenya has engaged local groups and organisations in mobilising around the case. The Student Consortium of Human Right Association Kenya (SCOHRA-Kenya) used the annual Intervarsity Human Rights Debate Championship to engage students from different Kenyan universities on the case and get them to sign petitions. Mathare Social Justice Centre, a local grassroots movement also supported the campaign by mobilising Kenyans to sign petitions. As a result of mobilisation around the case in Kenya, there has been a noted increase in the number of supporters for Amnesty Kenya. There was a total of 3,080 new supporters; 2,510 with contact information and 570 without contact information.

Even though there has been no direct government response to the campaign, continued campaigning and advocacy are important to ensure the case objectives are met. The community deserve to have their rights respected.



Women from the Sengwer Indigenous community look at solidarity cards sent to them from around the world as part of the Write for Rights 2018 campaign. Embobut Forest, Kenya © Amnesty International

## NONHLE MBUTHUMA – SOUTH AFRICA



Nonhle Mbuthuma is a human rights defender from the Amadiba Community in South Africa and a spokesperson of the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC). She has been vocal in her opposition to a titanium mining licence being awarded to an Australian company against the wishes of her community. As a result, she has been threatened, intimidated and harassed mainly by police and unknown people.

Nonhle was teargassed by police on 23 September 2018 as she and other community members staged a peaceful protest outside a meeting venue in Xolobeni. They had been denied access to a meeting

organised by the Minister of Mineral Resources to discuss the proposed mining activity in the area. Nonhle had to be taken to a hospital for treatment.

Nonhle and her community got temporary reprieve when Judge AC Basson of the North Gauteng High Court ruled in favour of the community's right to say no. In the 22 November 2018 decision, the judge ruled that the South African government cannot issue a license for proposed titanium mining on the Wild Coast without the full, prior and informed consent of the indigenous communities in the area.

This court ruling has not deterred the Minister of Mineral Resources, Gwede Mantashe from continuing to push for mining on the community land as he announced that he would be leading an appeal against the decision. The Department for Mineral Resources (DMR) on 13 December 2018, filed an application for leave to appeal the court decision. In its application, DMR argued that Judge Basson erred in her application of the law with respect to the interpretation of the Interim Protection of the Informal Rights Land Act 1996 (IPIRLA) and the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Development Act of 2002. The DMR also argues that Judge Basson erred in finding that awarding a mining license by the Minister is a deprivation of the Applicants' rights with respect to IPIRLA. As the DMR waits for an appeal hearing date, the court decision granting Nonhle's community the right to say no has been suspended.

Further, on 16 January 2019, the Minister announced that the DMR would be conducting a survey to determine whether the community was in favour of the mining or not. The results of such a survey would be against the communities' full consent. More than 200 members from the five villages of Pondoland including Xolobeni had been invited for this meeting with the Minister at Xolobeni Sports Grounds.

Nonhle was involved in various facets of the Write for Rights campaign. She participated in events hosted by Amnesty offices including Norway and South Africa. She will be participating in additional events hosted by Amnesty Australia and Sweden in 2019. Nonhle was one of the women human rights defenders invited to attend the Human Rights Defenders World Summit held in Paris in October 2018. She also took up several media interviews on International Human Rights Day, 10 December 2018. The case received good media coverage in South Africa on radio, online, tv and newspapers including on; Radio 786, Radio Islam International, eNCA News, SABC, SAFM, The Sunday Times, The Citizen newspaper, Tonight with Jane Dutton, Smile FM, North-West FM, TimesLive and Voice of the Cape. Some global media outlets also picked up the case including; BBC World Service, ARD Germany, Irish Times and Metro.

Amnesty International has made several visits to Xolobeni since the beginning of the campaign. A team from the International Secretariat accompanied by a team from Amnesty International South Africa (AISA) visited the community to film a short video that was published as part of Write for Rights. Staff from the Amnesty International Regional office in Johannesburg and AISA visited Xolobeni between 9 and 12 December 2018. This was a fact-finding mission aimed at meeting with the community to share information on the Write for Rights campaign and also hear their concerns on the proposed mining activities. After speaking with the community, the team established that it was important to continue with the campaign focusing on Nonhle's safety and the communities' right to say no.



Nonhle Mbuthuma and a community member receive solidarity letters from Amnesty International South Africa  
© Amnesty International South Africa

On the 13 January 2019, AISA visited the community to deliver more than 1, 000 solidarity letters. The community were shocked to learn that people globally from China to France, knew about their case and were standing in solidarity with them and Nonhle. During the same visit, Mark Konrad, a Canadian activist, who had collected over 200 solidarity letters also did a handover. Nonhle and more than 40 community members including elders were at this handover held at Komhulu (the Great Place). Solidarity letters continue to arrive in South Africa and the team will be planning another delivery to the community in March 2019.



***“I want to thank Amnesty globally, the support they gave us is amazing and it makes a lot of difference. The thousands of letters we have received shows that this struggle is not just about us, that we are not alone. It shows that the earth is important and not only in Africa because we have received letters from Germany, Sweden, Norway, and France and they want peace at the end of the day because without land there is no peace.” – Nonhle Mbuthuma***



Nonhle Mbuthuma reading a Write for Rights solidarity letter © Amnesty International South Africa.

The Amnesty Kenya team is planning a handover of petitions to President Cyril Ramaphosa and/or the Minister for Mineral Resources. A date for the handover is yet to be set.

The campaign had several highlights. It was well received by the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), especially the global attention on the case. Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), is a group which brings together individuals from the five villages in Pondoland to campaign against the mining project. Amnesty International has worked and continues to work closely with Nonhle and the ACC.

The Write for Rights campaign led to an increase in Amnesty South Africa’s supporters by 3,048. They will be working on a supporter journey to turn some of these supporters into members. ASIA also registered 5,104 actions in 2018 an increase from 576 actions in 2017.

A good example of collaboration between Amnesty offices, was Amnesty International UK’s global day of Twitter action on 11 December 2018. The action was aimed at calling on President Ramaphosa to guarantee Nonhle’s safety.

Nonhle remains at risk of threats and harassment as the Minister and the DMR are determined to see the start of titanium mining in the Amadiba community. Despite there being no official government response to the campaign thus far, Amnesty is confident that continued global pressure will yield positive results in terms of increased protection for Nonhle and the respect for her community’s right to say no to mining on their land.

## MARIELLE FRANCO – BRAZIL



***“Our body that speaks, our colour that speaks, our race that speaks, our gender that speaks”*** Marielle Franco on 14 March 2018 during the debate with young black women, just before she was killed

On 14 March 2018, Marielle Franco, a 38-year-old human rights defender and council woman, was shot dead in Rio de Janeiro while she was returning from a debate with a group of young black women. Anderson Pedro Gomes, 39, her driver, was also killed in the attack.

Born in Maré, a favela in northern Rio de Janeiro, Marielle was a tireless human rights defender in that city, where she lived for most of her life. Marielle ran for councillor of the Municipal Chamber of Rio de Janeiro for the first time in

2016. She was elected with the fifth-highest votes. Her popularity was rooted in her life experience as a black bisexual woman, single parent who came from the favelas. Marielle stood out for denouncing human rights violations, especially against black youth, women and LGBTI people. She also worked against abuses committed by the security forces, including extrajudicial executions. Marielle’s case embodies the intersectional nature of human rights violations and highlights the substantial risk faced by those who dare to fight for human rights.

Brazil is one of the countries with highest number of killings of human rights defenders (HRDs) in the world, with at least 70 HRDs killed in 2017. Threats and attacks against human rights defenders in Brazil are pervasive and there is a pattern of lack of investigation of such murders. Because of the high visibility of her work and the official position she occupied, Marielle’s killing represents an unprecedented attack against all those who defend human rights, specially the rights of women, LGBTI, black people and Rio de Janeiro’s favelas.

The goal of the campaign was to get the Brazilian authorities to ensure an immediate, thorough, impartial and independent investigation, to bring to justice all of those involved – both material and intellectual authors. Activists around the world sent and signed over half a million petitions to the Brazilian President and the Governor of Rio de Janeiro State.

Marielle’s family were actively involved in the design of the campaign strategy, and participated in several activities held by Amnesty Brazil, Amnesty Sections, in Brazil, across the Americas, and in Europe. These included meetings with activists, interviews for publication, press articles, social media videos and conferences among others.

The Amnesty movement mobilized 21,000 solidarity actions worldwide. Marielle’s family directly received thousands of solidarity messages, via email and letters, and others were sent to the Amnesty Brazil office.



*Marielle’s partner Monica Benício at AIUK © Amnesty International*

Marielle's family really appreciates the work Amnesty is doing on Marielle's investigation, being one of the leading organizations claiming for an adequate, independent and impartial investigation.

Marielle's family also participated in a number of advocacy and media opportunities either organized by Amnesty International or by other organizations. Each month, Amnesty Brazil organized a press conference in the anniversary of her killing with participation of Marielle's relatives. Marielle's family gave interviews with sections and media outlets and participated in several meetings with Amnesty activists. They often expressed how thankful they are with Amnesty for being the organization that keeps talking about the issue in Brazil and in other countries.

On 10 December 2018, Marielle Franco's partner Monica Benício received solidarity letters written by supporters during the "Todo Mundo Tem Direitos" action at the re-painting of the graffiti wall in honour to Marielle, which was vandalized on 14 November 2018. Amnesty Brazil also gave Monica a picture of a big banner with Marielle's face in front of the City Hall, where she worked as a council woman.



Monica Benício reading solidarity letters © Amnesty International

Significant social media actions took place, including commemorate her monthly and 6-month anniversary in September 2018. Social media action across the region was shared via the regional Americas [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

Geraldine Chacon, the Venezuela Write for Rights case and prisoner of conscious also sent Monica a solidarity message.

The campaign for Marielle is known to human rights activists, other individuals and civil society organizations as well as media, which usually gives a good coverage to the public actions that Amnesty does on the case. The case was well received by many civil society organizations in the country, as well as by those who understand the gravity of an assassination of a council woman elected and in the exercise of her mandate.

Several campaigning materials were created for this campaign: videos, materials for social media, off-line actions, Human Rights Education materials, digital mobilization strategies by local groups and graffiti actions by local groups, among others. This creative material engaged diverse audiences on Twitter, web, Facebook and Instagram.

The Governor of Rio de Janeiro State, who is one of the main targets of the actions, echoed the last two press conferences organized by Amnesty Brazil, in which we demanded the Governor to receive Amnesty Brazil and Marielle's family and make a public commitment to do the investigation. The governor publicly stated that he will meet with Amnesty and Marielle's family, even though this has not happened yet.

On 14 March 2019, which marks the 1-year anniversary of the killing of Marielle, Amnesty will deliver the over half a million petitions collected worldwide to the targets. We will continue working on the case of Marielle Franco and we will review the strategy to decide the orientation that Amnesty Brazil's work on the case will follow after the 1-year anniversary of her killing.

## GERALDINE CHACON – VENZUELA



*“I’ve campaigned for Write for Rights cases before. I never imagined I’d be on the other side of the campaign. I have no words to thank all that Amnesty has done for me” – Geraldine Chacon*

Geraldine Chacon, 25, is a passionate and dedicated young activist. She has spent years helping to improve people’s lives by educating people in some of the most impoverished areas of Venezuela, about their rights.

This human rights defender and Amnesty International member was detained on 1 February 2018, when armed officials of the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service showed

up at her home and threw her behind bars. She spent four months not knowing how long she would spend locked up in terrible conditions, incommunicado and with severely limited access to food and water. She was never charged with any crimes but was conditionally released on 2 April.

The ultimate goal of the campaign was to get the Venezuelan government to close the case against Geraldine, and for her to be free unconditionally, including removal of any limitations to leave Venezuela.

Activists around the world sent and signed nearly half a million petitions to Tarek William Saab, the Venezuelan Attorney General, urging him to close the case against Geraldine without any restrictions to her personal liberty and integrity. Given his leadership position in the government agency which holds the power of public prosecution, public and direct pressure was applied through communications to authorities via email and public messaging on social media and other outlets like press articles.

Geraldine’s case is an example of many activists and human rights defenders repressed by Venezuelan authorities. Pressure on such cases continues to be needed.

**“A letter has the power to turn a bad day into a happy day.”  
Geraldine Chacón**



Geraldine participated in many activities held by Amnesty Sections, within and beyond the Americas region, including e-meetings with activists, interviews for publication, press articles, social media videos, and others.

Our solidarity objective was fully met. Geraldine and her mother, Natividad, received thousands of solidarity messages, mostly via email, and more than 29,000 solidarity actions worldwide. They stated that the support they received through these messages helped them push through hard emotional moments and expressed how each message injected hope and joy into their lives.

**“When the mobile bell rings, I know it is a letter.” Said a smiling Geraldine Chacón**

Geraldine and her mother also received more than 14,000 solidarity letters sent through to the Lima Amnesty Regional Office. These were forwarded to the Amnesty Venezuela office where Geraldine will pick them up.

Significant social media actions took place, including to celebrate her birthday on the 25<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Geraldine personally thanked all the activists who took place on global and regional actions through a number of video messages.



Social media action across the region was shared via the regional Americas [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. Geraldine sent a thank you message (still from video, above right) to all those who sent her happy birthday good wishes.

## PAVITRI MANJHI – INDIA



***“Our lives are dependent on our land and forest and we will fight for our rights. We are struggling, we are fighting for our land and we will continue to fight for the same” – Pavitri Manjhi***

Pavitri Manjhi is part of an Adivasi (Indigenous) community in Chhattisgarh state who are allegedly being forced to sell their land to make way for two private power plants. As a village leader, Pavitri was instrumental in mobilizing Adivasi communities and setting up a community group, “Adivasi Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Sangarsh” that leads local actions against the alleged unlawful dispossession of their land by the two private companies.

Under her leadership the affected villagers have filed approximately 100 civil cases against the companies seeking restoration of land. In June 2017, with support from Amnesty International India, Pavitri and other activists organized the mass filing of 98 criminal complaints under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, a special law to protect Dalit and Adivasi rights, at the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Special Police Station in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh.

The local police recorded their statements but refused to register a First Information Report (FIR), the first step in a criminal investigation, saying they first needed to conduct a ‘preliminary inquiry’ into the complaints. Following the enquiry, the police said they could not register FIRs because the villagers had already filed civil cases. However, according to Indian law, an affected person has access to both civil and criminal remedies.

Since Pavitri and the villagers started asserting their constitutional rights to access justice, she has faced continued threats, harassment and intimidation from local ‘strongmen’ who are trying to force her to withdraw the complaints filed by her and Adivasi villagers. The campaign for Pavitri called upon the Chhattisgarh State Police authorities a) to investigate complaints of harassment of Pavitri and Adivasi villagers and protect them from harassment, and b) to investigate complaints of unlawful dispossession of land.

The Government of India has responded to some of the appeals. AI France received a response from the Indian Embassy in France. It was a copy of a letter from the Superintendent of Police, Raigarh to the State Human Rights Commission, Chhattisgarh, stating that the police had conducted an enquiry and found no evidence of harassment and intimidation.

Recently, Amnesty Switzerland received another response. The Indian Ministry of Tribal affairs has forwarded Urgent action appeals to the National Commission of Scheduled Tribes, who in turn have directed it to the Superintendent of Police, Raigarh, seeking information on the status of the enquiry and actions the police have taken to provide safety and security to Pavitri and the villagers.

After the Superintendent of police received these letters from the National Commission of Scheduled Tribes, Pavitri says the local police have reached out to her. Pavitri told AI India that she had been assured by the police that they would protect her from any future instances of harassment. She also said that harassment by police and company officials has reduced considerably in the last few months. This could be attributed to the campaign, which resulted in several government agencies directing the state police to ensure Pavitri’s security.

In parallel to Amnesty's Write for Rights campaign, Pavitri and the local community continued their activism. In spite of the threats and harassment they encountered, they explored various legal remedies available to them. On 16 October, after waiting for over a year for police to launch an investigation into their criminal complaints, Adivasi villagers appealed to the Superintendent of Police, Raigarh, to register FIRs based on their complaints regarding the dispossession of their land.

Recently, the Adivasi Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Sangarsh also appealed to the District Collector of Raigarh to transfer their civil complaints to a different district court. They alleged that the official who was hearing their cases had earlier himself been involved in alleged fraudulent registration of the sale of Adivasi lands. They have also asked for the civil proceedings, which have been pending for three years, to be expedited.

Schools, colleges and Amnesty Volunteers in India joined the Write for Rights campaign to mobilize support for Pavitri and Adivasi villager. A letter-writing marathon was conducted in 7 colleges, along with a seminar on the land rights of Adivasi communities. Over 10,000 children and youth volunteers wrote solidarity letters and sent appeals to the Chhattisgarh police. It is evident from the letters that the story of Pavitri has inspired many of them.

In the digital space, 12 young women spread the word about Pavitri's story on Instagram in their own words and encouraged their followers to write solidarity letters to Pavitri Manjhi. 1,079 people took action as a result.

Amnesty also raised these issues at the World Human Rights Defenders Forum in Paris, France on 29-31, October 2018. Although Pavitri could not participate due of the lack of travel documents, Degree Prasad Chouhan, a human rights defender and co convener of the Adivasi Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Sangarsh participated in the forum and highlighted the plight of Adivasi communities ***"It was good to meet other human rights defenders and other likeminded people. At the forum, people listened to what I had to say. It was good to be heard, and going forward, I hope that this issue gets further picked up by the international community,"*** he said.

According to Degree Chouhan, Pavitri received 2,000 solidarity letters by post and at least 500 emails from outside India. ***"The many letters keep us motivated. They make us feel that our issue is not geographically isolated. The world-wide support is encouraging."***

Pavitri says she feels happy to have received expressions of solidarity from across the globe for her cause and determined to continue her struggle. Although incidents of harassment have come down, her struggle to reclaim Adivasi lands is still on. And she says the community will continue to fight until they get justice.

Following state elections in Chhattisgarh, the Adivasi Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Sangarsh is planning to appeal to the new elected Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. In association with AI India, they will submit Write for Rights letters to the Chief Minister and seek investigation into the complaints of unlawful dispossession of Adivasi lands.

There will be also a follow-up action undertaken with the Superintendent of police and the Director General of Police, Chhattisgarh, seeking registration of FIRs on their criminal complaints and prompt and thorough investigations.

Asmita Basu, Programmes Director of Amnesty India pointed out:

***"It is unfortunate that the Chhattisgarh police have failed to look into the allegations made by the Adivasi villagers and refused to register FIRs on their complaints. These Adivasi men and women have a constitutional right to access justice, which has been denied for far too long. They are facing grave human rights abuse and it is the duty of the police to protect them and prosecute those who are responsible for the wrongful dispossession of their land."***

## ME NAM – VIETNAM



Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh (Mother Mushroom) was released on 16 October 2018 after 2 years in prison. She and her family went to the US on the same day and they are now living a new life. Mother Mushroom's release was the result of the tireless campaign contributed by many organizations, including Amnesty International. The most important contribution to the release of Mother Mushroom was international exposure. Her name was not forgotten, her case was mentioned all around the world, and people across the globe demanded for her freedom, this forced the Vietnamese government to release her under an agreement that she would have to go into exile.

After arriving in the US, Mother Mushroom said that she will continue to campaign for human rights and freedom for Vietnamese people back home. She is now going around the US, meeting with the Vietnamese diaspora and asking them to campaign for human rights and freedom in Vietnam.

Even though the Vietnamese government released Mother Mushroom before we officially launched the Write for Rights campaign, we did work very closely with Mother Mushroom's family during the preparation period. The family benefitted greatly from the process and being a part of something that provided hope. Every time we contacted them or did things like send the photographer to their house, they told us how thankful they were that Mother Mushroom was now a part of Amnesty, they said that our support was really very meaningful to them.

The family participated in the campaign from the beginning when, we approached them to get their consent. We then worked with them on the security analysis, to ensure they were comfortable with the plan and involved in the decision-making process. We presented our ideas to them and asked for their comments, until we both agreed on what would we do. We also let them decide when and how our photographer could come to their house. We showed our respect to the family and trusted their judgment, in return they valued our help and entirely trusted our work.

Quotation from Mother Mushroom when she arrived at the US:

***"Thanks for all the efforts of our Vietnamese who live inside and outside and especially Amnesty International and other organizations. It's not just about the freedom for myself and my family. It will be for all the Vietnamese. I think I have a lot of things to fight in the future".***

Due to the security concern, supporters were told to send letters to Amnesty International Southeast Asia and the Pacific office in Bangkok, Thailand which means Mother Mushroom and her family did not receive the solidarity letters when they were in Vietnam. The team will send all the letters to the US, so she can see them.

Since Mother Mushroom is now free, we will continue to work on the cases of other prisoners of conscience in Vietnam. There are currently more than a hundred prisoners of conscience (POCs) in Vietnam, and the jailing of POCs is a systematic problem in the country.



## GULZAR DUISHENOVA – KYRGYZSTAN



***“Ten years ago, I had no dreams and now I’ve lost count of the many things I want to achieve. I want to learn to drive a car, I want my sons to go to university, I want to improve the quality of my translations and I want to keep taking dance classes. And I want everyone in Kyrgyzstan to lead an active life and have dreams about their future. Everyone. With no exceptions!”*** - Gulzar Duisheva, December 2018

20 December, Kyrgyzstan’s Parliament passed in first reading a law on the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). On 14 March, the President signed the ratification of the CRPD into law paving the road to the effective inclusion of hundreds of thousands living with disabilities in the social and economic life of Kyrgyzstan.

This fantastic outcome has been the result of years of hard-work by disability rights defenders in Kyrgyzstan, including Gulzar. Kyrgyzstan was one of three former Soviet countries that hadn’t ratified the Convention (the others, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). It soon became clear that an international push was crucial to amplify the voice of Kyrgyzstani disability rights campaigners. Amnesty International was honoured to join them and has been collaborating closely with local women disability rights defenders at every stage of the process. Highlighting Gulzar’s human rights actions during Write for Rights and making the ratification of the CRPD that main focus of the campaign has been a key part of this and all the international support has undoubtedly contributed to make the ratification process move forward.

Gulzar’s path to becoming a defender of women’s rights and disability rights was a long one. In 2002, she lost mobility in her legs in a road accident involving a drunk driver and a year after, she became a widow, losing the love of her life and her main support. It wasn’t until 2007 that she got in contact with other persons with disabilities and met other women that were campaigning for disability rights.

Gulzar’s approach to disability rights was particularly interesting in the context of this year’s campaign, because she has always focused on the specific impact discrimination has on women and girls. She dares to talk about difficult issues as lack of access to health services for women with disabilities in a society where women are not meant to speak out and persons with disabilities are labelled as “invalids” and “diseased”. Gulzar’s stance is extremely brave.



The collaboration with Gulzar during Write for Rights was an absolute joy. She made space in her tight schedule, as a mother of two, working as a translator, campaigning for disability rights and taking dance classes, to participate in Write for Rights activities.

An activist in Thailand writes a letter for Gulzar © Amnesty International Thailand

Gulzar's role in the creation of the Write for Rights video was crucial in conveying a message of positivity and hope and in challenging prejudices and misconceptions. During Write for Rights Gulzar gave interviews, talks and in October, she participated in the historic Human Rights Defenders World Summit in Paris.

Gulzar told us how the solidarity messages received were an amazing support. She explained that she has grown as a human rights defender and reinforced her alliances. The fight to end to years of discrimination will not be over with the ratification of the CRPD: the authorities must allocate the necessary resources, set an implementation timeline and persons with disabilities must be at the front and centre of any action that the government takes to implement the Convention. The first big step in the right direction has been finally taken and Gulzar and other disability rights defenders are here to stay.



Gulzar's son helps his mother to her wheelchair © Svetlana Zelenskaya/Amnesty International

## VITALINA KOVAL – UKRAINE



Vitalina Koval is a relentless defender of women's rights and LGBTI rights from Uzhgorod, Ukraine. On 8 March 2018, six members of the far-right group "Karpatska Sich" targeted a peaceful International Women's Day rally she organised in Uzhgorod. They threw red paint on Vitalina and other participants, causing chemical burns to Vitalina's eyes. Vitalina and others filed complaints with the police, but there was little hope justice would be served without international pressure.

Attacks by groups like "Karpatska Sich" on human rights defenders, activists and minorities is not unusual in Ukraine and they are rarely investigated, creating a climate of impunity that emboldens these groups. Vitalina's International Women's Day march was also disrupted in 2017. Members of "Karpatska Sich" seized and damaged participants' placards and verbally assaulted Vitalina and other participants. On both occasions, the authorities failed to protect participants.

The campaign in support of Vitalina and other human rights defenders in Ukraine has been a fantastic example of active participation and collaboration, and the role of Amnesty Ukraine has been instrumental. Vitalina and colleagues in Amnesty Ukraine have been working closely together each step of the way. She has been part of devising the campaigning strategy; creating different outputs; she has participated in speaker's tours around Europe visiting the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Slovakia, Austria, Finland, Portugal and other countries. She also participated in the Human Rights Defenders World Summit in October, a historic gathering in Paris of human rights defenders from across all corners of the world. Vitalina told us that one of the highlights in terms of advocacy were the meetings with European Union official in Brussels.

During Write for Rights 2018, almost 400,000 actions were taken around the world urging the authorities to ensure Vitalina and other human rights activists in Ukraine can exercise their right to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression free from further attacks or intimidation; and that perpetrators of the attack against Vitalina are brought to justice and that the discriminatory motive of the attack is taken into account during the investigation.

International pressure soon started to yield results. An investigation into the attack suffered by Vitalina in 2018 was finally initiated and started moving forward. We were positively surprised to learn that a substantial amount of case materials were letters from Amnesty's activists in support of Vitalina. In December we learned that the hate motive is now being considered as part of the investigation that is still ongoing at the time of writing. These are excellent news in a context where similar cases are rarely investigated.

Vitalina also received thousands of solidarity messages. She told us that she has **"...never felt so much support in my life"** and how the expression of solidarity from around the world was overwhelming. She also explained that participating in Write for Rights campaigning activities in different countries has given her the opportunity to meet lots of wonderful people and how this experience is making her feel much more confident in her activism. Vitalina was particularly moved by the meetings she had with school children, that she found especially inspiring.

After Write for Rights Vitalina decided that with the support of Amnesty and her allies she was going to organise a new International Women's Day rally in Uzhgorod on 8 March 2019. The risk of renewed attacks by far-right groups was very real and Vitalina and Amnesty Ukraine started working together on a

strategy to ensure participants could exercise their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly safely and without fear of attacks. The strategy included working with the media to give visibility to the event, engaging with the authorities to ensure protection was provided, working with participants to be prepared and mitigate any risks... but in order to be successful Vitalina also needed renewed international support. Therefore, building on the platform that Write for Rights had provided, we launched a call for international solidarity, invited colleagues from other Amnesty section to ensure international presence – as we knew the authorities care a lot about their international image – and an Urgent Action was issued calling on the authorities to fulfil their obligations this time around and protect the rally.

On 19 February, the Director of Amnesty Ukraine Oksana Pokalchuk and Amnesty’s Senior Director Colm O’Cuanachain met with eight senior representatives of the Ministry of Interior to discuss Vitalina’s case in the context of the spike of violence by far-right groups in Ukraine and to urge the authorities to take the security of the upcoming 8 March rally seriously this year. They also delivered a letter from Amnesty’s Secretary General Kumi Naidoo conveying the support received by Vitalina globally during Write for Rights.

The 2018 International Women’s Day rally in Uzhgorod was dedicated to the women’s rights movement in Ukraine and inspired by The First Wreath almanac published in Ukraine in 1887 by feminist writers and philanthropists, Natalia Kobrynska and Olena Pchilka. Preparations were frantic and Vitalina and colleagues from Amnesty Ukraine were joined by colleagues from Amnesty USA and Amnesty Sweden, who ensured international presence. The press conference ahead of the event was a success and an additional opportunity to show to the authorities that the world was watching.

Despite reports of far-right groups presence in Uzhgorod and that they openly sated their intention to attack and disrupt, the rally could go ahead and was well protected by the police. The event was an immense success and a genuine celebration.

A year on, the fight for justice for the attack suffered by Vitalina is not over, but progress has been made; the investigation is ongoing and taking the hate motive behind the attack into consideration. Human rights defenders like Vitalina are facing great challenges in Ukraine, especially those defending LGBTI rights and women’s rights, but with the successful rally on 8 March, Vitalina and her allies have shown their determination and created an important precedent. Once again, we have proved the power of international solidarity and support to bring human rights change.



Vitalina speaking at press conference in Uzhgorod, Ukraine on 7th March 2019 © Amnesty International

## ATENA DAEMI – IRAN



Campaigning on Atena's case inside Iran was challenging given that contact with Amnesty International has been cited as "evidence" of national security offences against human rights defenders.

Despite this, the campaign had a regional and international reach, and was a major source of moral support for Atena and her family. The global mobilization on Atena's case is likely to have pressured the Iranian authorities to grant Atena access to some of the medical care she requires.

In a letter she wrote from prison, Atena thanked all those who mobilized for her case:

***"Many thanks for selecting me as one of 10 human rights defenders worldwide as part of Amnesty International's Write for Rights. I am wholeheartedly grateful to Amnesty International and all people around the world who have showered me with compassion and kindness and spared no effort in supporting me."***

Though solidarity messages were not received directly by either Atena or her family in Iran, the team shared some of the solidarity cards and messages on Amnesty's social media accounts, which was extremely well received by Atena, her family and friends – it kept them feeling strong. The team is also producing a video that will be released in March 2019 ahead of Atena's birthday on 27 March, which will feature all the beautiful and touching cards that Atena received.

Due to heavy restrictions on the freedom of the press in Iran, it was not expected that local Iranian media cover or echo the Write for Rights campaign. However, both Atena's case and the Write for Rights campaign at large were covered by Persian-language media outside Iran, which have a broad reach inside the country. Write for Rights and Atena's case were also endorsed by several Iranian human rights activists, including Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi, who demonstrated her solidarity with the Write for Rights campaign for Atena Daemi and other WHRDs around the world by making a video of support.

We believe that the international pressure had translated into positive effects on the case of Atena. Though Atena remains imprisoned, she has been granted access to some of the specialized medical care she required outside of prison, including dental exams and surgery. We are hopeful that her increased exposure as a result of the W4R campaign will compel the authorities to provide her with the ongoing medical care that she needs, including periodic scans.

## NAWAL BENAÏSSA – MOROCCO



Amnesty's work on Nawal Benaïssa's case greatly contributed to increasing international visibility on Nawal's activism as well as the Hirak el Rif movement<sup>6</sup> at large. On many occasions, Nawal has thanked Amnesty International's members and the Moroccan Amnesty section specifically, for their interest in her cause and their solidarity towards the peaceful Hirak el Rif movement. However, despite a worldwide mobilization on her case, the appeals court in Al Hoceïma upheld the conviction of Nawal, confirming her 10-month suspended prison sentence with a fine. Moreover, according to Nawal, Moroccan authorities are still harassing her, and she believes that they will continue to harass her and all those who stand up and fight for their rights.

Although the campaign has not yet achieved its objectives, Nawal Benaïssa believes that Amnesty's work on her case has empowered her and consolidated her determination to keep defending human rights in her community. She describes the impact of international solidarity on her life:

***"Amnesty International's adoption of my case, and through me all 78 activists, has been like a beacon of light in my way, the light that had been extinguished by the injustices of the state. I now feel I have family everywhere in the world"***

Nawal believes that Amnesty International has provided her, and through her all Hirak women and activists, with an authentic, credible and wider international platform to speak the truth about Hirak demands and unveil human rights violations in Rif.

In moments when Nawal felt weakened by the continuous harassments and threats from authorities, she says that the thousands of letters she received from people around the world have revived her will and perseverance to defend human rights in her region, as well as her trust in herself and belief in her cause. Nawal has kept a big box in her house containing thousands of letters from all over the world. Though she did not finish reading all the letters yet, Nawal said that it makes her believe in humanity every time she sees the letters and the support shown through them to all human rights defenders all over the world.

***"I can't describe my feelings, it's amazing and indescribable to feel that someone feels your pain and suffering without knowing you personally".***

The Amnesty Morocco team and section have worked closely with Nawal while developing the campaign strategy to take into consideration any concerns she may have. During the campaign, Nawal participated in several events held by AI Morocco and spoke about her activism and what she has been experiencing. She was also invited to attend other events organized by AI France and AI Italy to speak about her experience. Nawal felt empowered through those activities and she appreciated the support she received during those events.

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<sup>6</sup> Hirak Rif or The Rif Movement is a popular mass protest movement that has taken place in the Berber-speaking Rif region in northern Morocco between October 2016 and June 2017.

The campaign on Nawal’s case was also welcomed by some prominent local civil society organizations (CSOs), such as the Moroccan Association of Human Rights (AMDH) and other women organizations. These CSOs played an instrumental role in mobilizing for Nawal’s case. While the Moroccan public opinion was somehow divided on Hirak El Rif in general, the Moroccan human rights activist community felt inspired and empowered by the campaign. In fact, according to AI Morocco, their members really appreciated meeting with Nawal and that inspired them to continue in their activism.



Nawal Benaiss speaking at an event at AI Morocco © Amnesty International

## AMAL FATHY – EGYPT



The Write for Rights campaign on Amal Fathy has positively contributed in achieving Amal Fathy's conditional release. On 18 December 2018, the Cairo criminal court ordered Amal Fathy's release on probation after accepting her appeal against her pre-trial detention.

It is believed that Amnesty has played an important role in publicizing the case and gaining international support for Amal's conditional release.

The worldwide wave of mobilization and support around the case, was also integral for moral support for Amal during these challenging times. Amal and her family received solidarity messages directly and expressed their gratitude to the Amnesty team and supporters, as the letters were very emotionally comforting and empowering.

As the security concerns were many, the team worked closely with Amal's family in planning the campaign. The family's concerns and insights were taken into consideration, to minimize the risks and optimize the chances of success. Amal's husband, Mohamad Lofty, a prominent human rights defender also targeted by the authorities, played a key role in shaping the design and implementation of the campaign.

Despite the increasingly restrictive environment on media in Egypt, some local media outlets covered the Write for Rights campaign on Amal. Additionally, several Arab and International media outlets with a large following in Egypt, also covered the campaign, such as the [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#), [AJ+ Arabic](#), and [The New Arab](#) to name a few.

The widespread media coverage helped considerably in making the story reach the Egyptian public opinion, and hence pressuring the Egyptian authorities. While government supporters perceived the campaign as a form of foreign intervention and an attack on the Egyptian government, Egyptian civil society largely welcomed the campaign. Indeed, Egyptian human rights groups as well as segments of the Egyptian society positively reacted to the campaign, and publicly supported it

Despite the massive mobilization on the case, the authorities reacted timidly to the campaign. Their response to appeals sent by Amnesty's sections, were limited to rejecting the claims that the detention of Amal is arbitrary and instead argued that it stems from an independent judicial process.

Amal's freedom remains temporary and conditional, as she still must report to a police station on a regular basis and faces another trial where she risks being sentenced to prison. The Egypt team will continue to campaign on Amal's case, until Amal is unconditionally free and all charges and convictions against her are overturned.



## WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2018 – ACTIVITIES AROUND THE WORLD

### ALGERIA

**46,546 Total Actions**  
**5,785 Estimated Participants**

As part of the W4R, nearly 30 activities were organized in 10 Wilayas (provinces); with various actions (signature stands, conferences, solidarity actions etc.). The Section was creative in the organization of activities which resulted in vast variety. There was as a beautiful letter writing workshop, spaces for debate (“Tea, Talk, Films” screening), Some initiatives were launched during previous editions of the campaign and were continued in 2018, such as the advocacy competition (youth debate club) and the concert "Sing for Rights". The Section also saw greater autonomy in the preparation and realization of these by our youth leaders.

12 activities were conducted, in collaboration with local associations and also local authorities, "strengthen the work of collaboration with local associations" is an objective that was set during the elaboration of the guidelines of the growth and activism 2016-2019



Supporters and members of Amnesty International Algeria take part in events for Write for Rights 2018, December 2018.  
© Amnesty International

## ARGENTINA

**18,177 Total Actions**  
**27,481 Estimated Participants**

In 2018 the Argentina Section used lots of different strategies to get people involved in the campaign. This growth strategy was very positive. It focused on the cases that had the most appeal in the Argentine context, such as Marielle Franco, Geraldine Chacón and the local case of "Pañuelos verdes", about abortion rights defenders who were attacked.

Most effort was dedicated to digital channels, with a focus on Facebook. The Section concentrated on digital influencers to generate engagement. They incorporated the web platform "Marathon Builder" with information about the cases to achieve leads and incorporate new members.

On 10 December the Section held a public event to raise awareness about the role of women human rights defenders. It was the first time the section held an event of this kind. The Section also installed an Amnesty stand with details on the campaign and a mailbox for people to post their letters. The stand proved very popular.

Human Rights Education workshops were held in different schools for students to join the campaign. In addition, they conducted workshops with participatory methodologies for young people in the section, who became actively involved and wrote their own letters, inspiring other young people to join.



Public action by Amnesty International Argentina  
© Amnesty International/Nadia Fusco/Demian Marchi

## AUSTRALIA

**173,227 Total Actions**  
**58,076 Estimated Participants**

The Section had its most successful W4R campaign ever, with over 173,000 actions (all with contact details) taken, in an impressive show of people power. Almost 95,000 of these came from 'supplementary' cases we selected in addition to the global 10. About 58,000 people took part, with an estimated 20,000 being new to AI Australia. The leading offline activity, a collaboration between Amnesty and artist Nick Cave held at a Sydney art gallery, resulted in national television coverage. Around Australia, 54 action groups stepped up their creativity and organised 84 events, including music festivals, letter writing marathons and partnership events with community organisations.

Parliamentarians took part in W4R at a meeting of the Amnesty International Parliamentary Group, and 17 grassroots action groups engaged with their local members.

The Section successfully integrated fundraising and mobilisation during the campaign. Facebook advertising was used to promote online actions where the step-up was a financial ask. This generated 9,033 signatures on petitions, secured 300 cash donations raising \$15,000 as well as 21 regular donors, reaching an audience of about 10 million. The best performing cases were also promoted through outdoor advertisements reaching about 600,000 people. In addition, 10,000 actions were taken as part of an Iranian HRD field marketing appeal, generating 8,795 calleable leads and 387 new donors. In a follow-up call to action takers about Atena Daemi, 50 people became regular donors.

Marielle Franco and Geraldine Chacon's cases were the top digital performers. Both had compelling portraits/imagery which drove strong results.

Media coverage of Write for Rights events and the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reached a potential audience of 550,000.



Participants write letters as part of a collaboration between Amnesty International, art gallery Carriageworks, and Nick Cave on Human Rights Day, 10 December 2019. © Amnesty International Australia

## AUSTRIA

**32,020 Total Actions**  
**13,005 Estimated Participants**

Local amnesty groups organised 31 events around the country. More than 3,300 school pupils participated, among other activities, drawing approximately 1,400 birthday cards for Geraldine Chacón. Highlights this year included a school competition, motivating the students to write as many letters as possible or to be as creative as they could. Furthermore, we introduced new Write 4 Rights packages to reach out to different target groups, e.g. special W4R packages for elderly people, for families or for students. The packages were well received, and we earned lots of positive feedback and will continue to use them in 2019. Also, for the first time we asked companies to participate, with their employees.

## BELGIUM (VL)

**139,965 Total Actions**

To kick off the campaign the Section organised a twelve-hour event, filled with live music, hand massages, drinks and food. Teodora del Carmen Vasquez and Yecenia Armenta (two former W4R cases) and current case Vitalina Koval joined our event as guests. They reminded everyone that letters really do change lives. The Section also did some media and advocacy work with them and organized two ‘meet and greet’ with local activists. The Section created action booklets which people could order for free to organise a letter-writing marathon at their home, with more than 700 people ordering a booklet (an increase of more than 30% to last year). The Section were active on social media to promote petitions and created two videos with Vitalina to raise awareness on social media (for new and already known audiences).

The Section also ran an amazing prison project in which letter writing sessions were held in more than 15 prisons in Flanders. They run an outreach project in which partner organisations were asked to help spread the message of the W4R campaign which resulted in the active participation of the LGBTI community and one of the biggest women organisations in Belgium. The Section also got help from celebrities to help spread their message online.

The Section invested in research to see who their W4R activists are: new or existing activists in order to reframe/rethink (if necessary) our strategy for growth and sustainability in the next years to come.

Our campaign was covered on local and national TV and radio (interviews with Teodora and Vitalina).



Write for Rights kick-off event in Antwerp, Belgium. © Sammy Van Cauteren

## **BELGIUM (FR)**

**204,579 Total Actions**

The Section organized marathons during public events organized by local groups, associations and youth movements. During the campaign the Section coordinated with the UDHR 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and invited people to join activities, talking about how we can all better comply with human rights, even on the local level. There was great media cover of the whole event. The Section almost doubled the number of off-line actions, compared to 2017.

The 2018 campaign ended with cards and letters for nine of the cases being taken to the nine relevant embassies. Some of which accepted the cards, including Morocco and Ukraine.

The French speaking Section collaborated with the Dutch speaking section and this will continue even more so in 2019.

## **BENIN**

**156,905 Total Actions**  
**145,000 Estimated Participants**

In 2018 the Section improved their total number of actions, as well as the number of local groups that participated and the overall number of people involved with us. To achieve this, the Section selected cases that worked well with their operational plan and the national context. The local relevance of the cases encouraged the involvement of more than 57% of our groups.

The many actions and activities were shared on our social media pages thanks to a team of young online activist members. Via this online element of campaigning, the Section gained nearly 1,000 new social media followers and registered more than fifty new members.

The Section organized a marathon running event to launch the campaign – this has proved to be a popular campaign in the middle of the campaign! Our members and volunteers went onto the streets, into schools and churches; collaborated with football, handball and other sports teams, etc. An Amnesty Benin group designed a video spot that was broadcast on social media to promote the campaign and call for action.

In 2019 the Section are hoping to strengthen their social platforms; their presence in school and university environments and the ability and skills for our members to be able to act.

## **BRAZIL**

**156,905 Total Actions**  
**145,000 Estimated Participants**

Amnesty International Brazil adopted a strategy that combined goals for online, offline mobilization and growth in the Write for Rights 2018. For the second consecutive year, they launched the campaign just before the 15th of October, National Teachers' Day, as it proved to be an excellent opportunity to widespread Human Rights Education guides. Over 1,400 people downloaded the activities guides, leaving their contacts and joining a specific supporters' journey.

The Section used the Marathon Builder for the third year, where supporters can sign the 10 global cases in one click, register an offline event (147 were registered) and download all cases' resources (posters, default letters, social media contents and HRE guides). Local activism groups carried out at least 7 activities in 4 states: São Paulo, Mato Grosso do Sul, Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. On December 10th, AI Brazil held their second version of the "Todos Mundo has rights" festival in a very central square in Rio de Janeiro. The event was attended by around 3,000 people and was attended by several nationally known artists and bands, who took part for free.

In 2019 the Section collected six times as many actions as in 2017!! The main reason for this increase was the digital marketing strategy, which used sponsored Facebook ads. In terms of results and costs per acquisition, it brought an excellent return, which motivated the Section to double the investment and amplify the target audiences.

The Section acquired 235 new supporters because of W4R actions, who became regular monthly donors following the campaign.



Amnesty Brazil Youth member (and his dog) from Salvador, at an event for the campaign © Shona Hamilton/Amnesty International

## **BURKINA FASO**

<b>20,369 Total Actions</b> <b>15,250 Estimated Participants</b>
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The Section's Write for Rights events were marked by the strengthening of the institutional partnership with the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Civic Promotion, all of whom helped to facilitate activities with schools and universities.

In 2018 AI Burkina trained 44 members on Individuals at Risk work, the W4R campaign and growth. This training took place from 24 to 25 October 2018 in Ouagadougou. More than 550 young students benefited from brief presentations on human rights and the UDHR. Student groups at the University of Ouagadougou worked with 800 students on human rights issues.

The Section implemented specific activities aimed to reach the largest number of people in Burkina Faso. Thus, 3 major groups of information and awareness-raising actions were organized via radio broadcasts, public conferences and stands organized in nearly 20 schools and 4 universities in different localities. More than 500 students attended the UDHR conference on 6 December at the Sciences and Health Institute (INSSA) in Bobo Dioulasso.

In collaboration with 14 schools in Ouagadougou and Koudougou, Amnesty Burkina organized a human rights advocacy competition and a drawing competition on human rights. These competitions aimed to promote effective ownership of the cardinal principles of human rights through the UDHR and the awareness-raising of young people on the promotion and defence of human rights. A total of 190 pupils took part directly to these competitions.

Sporting activities were used to mobilize people around the letter marathon in Ouahigouya. Called 'Football for Human Rights', a foot-ball competition was held six secondary schools in the city took part, with more than 3000 spectators at matches. During games and during breaks, members took the opportunity to collect signatures and inform people on human rights issues.

Members in Bobo Dioulasso organized a “Night of Human rights” in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the UDHR. They mobilized over 150 people and used storytelling, music, drama, film projection to raise awareness about human rights and the UDHR.



AI Burkina Faso youth members at a campaign training in Ouagadougou © Amnesty International Burkina Faso.

## CANADA (EN)

**54,928 Total Actions**

Amnesty Canada (English-speaking) worked on all the global cases, along with the case of Awad put forward by Amnesty USA. They offered letter-writing, solidarity letters, social media, petitions, and e-petitions all as possible actions. They also included three actions re-written for youth audiences (Venezuela, India, and Kyrgyzstan).

Write for Rights events were held in 272 communities across Canada, including in schools, workplaces, faith-based events, and public community events. 1,469 people participated as individuals, writing letters on their own, and a further 5,000 estimated participated in events.

The Section piloted a new organizing platform, ControlShift. The platform supported registration for the range of groups the Section support and allowed interested attendees to RSVP directly to events in their community. It also enabled event hosts to communicate directly with their attendees, increasing engagement. The platform received positive feedback and with training and support will further deepen engagement next year.

The Section produced a promotional video for Write for Rights in collaboration with a group of diverse influencers from the Greater Toronto Area. The video focused on the power of words in relation to Write for Rights and will be reusable as evergreen content in future years: [The Power of Words](#)

They also piloted a new peer-to-peer fundraising platform to allow our board and community members to engage in fundraising on Write for Rights cases. We will expand our use of this platform in the future.



Toronto staff: Amnesty staff in Toronto, Canada participate in Write for Rights over lunch on December 10, 2018 © Amnesty International Canada



## CANADA (FR)

**59,525 Total Actions**  
**8,585 Estimated Participants**

Amnesty Canada French speaking (FR) worked on ten cases during their 2018 Write for Rights campaign. These included the eight proposed by the International Secretariat, one proposed by the US section, AWAD, a human rights defender and refugee and the case of Amal Fathy in Egypt. Numerous activities and events involving music were organised, with many partners promoting and participating, including feminist organisations, community groups, and the major school board of the province of Québec. A special activity was also held in numerous libraries.



Activities at A Canada (FR) national office. © Amnesty International Canada

## CHILE

**Total Actions 3,537**  
**Estimated Participants 8,700**

In 2018 AI Chile carried out an innovative Write for Rights campaign, with original and creative cultural activities, combining massive outdoor activities with more intimate actions.

The Section partnered with *Colectivo Memorarte*, a collective of women who embroider Arpilleras (brightly coloured patchwork pictures) on issues related to human rights and memory. They taught people how to embroider on burlap, in memory of Marielle Franco and another in solidarity with Geraldine Chacón. The Section will send the patchwork pictures to their families. This partnership and activity allowed us to reach a completely new and diverse public.

The Section also organized a panel called “Voices of Women for Human Rights”, composed of four Chilean women human rights defenders (environment, LGBTI, student rights and Amnesty), after which there was folk music from a women’s music company.

The Section worked with schools to promote sexual and reproductive rights and spoke about the cases of Vitalina Koval and Marielle Franco, collecting letters of solidarity and petitions to the authorities. They also attended a massive festival celebrating sexual diversity, where they handed out information on the cases of these two defenders.

Finally, thanks to the extra funds of the IS, the Section closed the campaign with the Recital Ellas Cantan for Human Rights, in which two famous Chilean singers participated free of charge, which brought together a large audience of all ages. This coincided with the commemoration of International Migrants Day, establishing interesting alliances with organizations for the rights of migrants, and holding a joint activism day that also allowed us to reach a new, larger and multicultural public.



Activists take part in a Write for Rights event held by AI Chile. © Amnesty International Chile.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

48,451 Total Actions

No description provided.

## DENMARK

47,886 Total Actions

Write for Rights 2018 in Denmark was aimed at school children (age 12 - 17 years old). Around 220 teachers participated in the campaign from nearly 180 schools and 411 classes. Altogether around 8,500 students learned about Human Rights and the cases the Section had chosen. The Section provided educational materials in Danish for the teachers, explaining about the campaign, introducing them to the cases and explicitly telling them how to use Write for Rights in several subjects. The material also included exercises. The Section's survey to teachers indicates that around 70% use the educational materials. 80% of the teachers explain that the students get a higher knowledge of Human Rights and they are shown how they can act in favour of Human Rights.

They received 2,285 letters and cards with lovely words and paintings from the children, which have been sent to the relevant authorities and persons who have been abused.

**697 Total Actions**

## **EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS OFFICE (EIO)**

The EIO organized a W4R event at the European Parliament in Brussels on 20th November. The date was a little earlier than the official launching, as they took this opportunity on the margins of the Human Rights Week at the European Parliament and the NGO's Forum also taking place that week. This event was the primary focus on EU-level campaign activities and was accompanied by advocacy, outreach and awareness-raising work in the run-up to and around the event itself.

In preparation for this event, the EIO sent out invitations to MEPs and EU officials, informing them about the event and trying to convince them to attend.

Among other NGOs colleagues, EP employees, guests coming to their stand, they also had a few MEPs who showed solidarity that day: Julie Ward, Ernest Urtasun, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Elly Schlein, Bart Staes, Barbara Lochbihler, Jordi Solé or Soraya Post. Also, EP VP Dimitrios Papadimoulis supported the event by tweeting about it.

## **EAST ASIA REGIONAL OFFICE**

**1,576 Total Actions**

This year, the East Asia Regional Office relaunched Write for Rights under a different Chinese title. They worked with a transcreation consultant to create a title that is more culturally relevant to our audience.

Comprehensive social listening and lead generation testing on Facebook informed understanding of audience reaction to each case. They also produced their own videos for Atena and Geraldine.

Cases that generated the most actions are youth activist Geraldine, followed by death penalty activist Atena and women HRD Marielle. In total, there are 1,576 actions with 1,419 FB leads and 157 web signatures. Although FB leadcard proved more effective than driving traffic to website, petitions from website have better opt-in rates (83% vs 36%), perhaps suggesting that warm audience are readier to be ongoing supporters of our work. In terms of marketing, cost per lead is lowered by half when compared to last year, suggesting that they have been able to reach more relevant audience.

## **FINLAND**

**26,866 Total Actions**  
**16,808 Estimated Participants**

In 2018, Amnesty Finland focused on the cases of Vitalina Koval, Atena Daemi, Marielle Franco and Gulzar Duishenova. The section was able to more than double its actions comparing to the previous year. The section's goal - compared to previous years - was to emphasize offline activities over the online ones. The section managed to increase such activity by quite a margin; on online activities the section followed its new urgent action procedure and targeted new audiences.

Amnesty Finland produced human rights education materials for schools, and individual activists were encouraged to order action packages and campaign in their communities. Approximately 72 schools registered for the campaign with over 4,600 students participating. The number of actions in schools was over 1,500 (letters and solidarity cards). The teacher's manual was again produced in Finnish and Swedish and teachers were trained via webinars.

When it comes to offline activities, the section broke its own record by sending 86 material packages in addition to ten packages sent to public libraries. The aim was to test out and develop offline activities for the coming years which will have a larger role in the section's coming W4R's too.

During the campaign Vitalina Koval visited the section and met with state officials, students in secondary and upper-secondary schools as well as Sakris Kupila, who was featured in the campaign in 2017. Vitalina Koval gave a keynote speech in a seminar organized by AI Finland. The seminar discussed the impact of gender in human rights work. When campaigning for Gulzar Duishenova the section cooperated with a disabilities and development organisation as well as with an activist working on disability rights.

## FRANCE

**548,271 Total Actions**  
**88,000 Estimated number of participants**

2018 was a complicated year for Amnesty France. Many people were busy with other projects, such as the 70 anniversary of the UDHR and the Human Rights Defenders World Summit, which caused significant delays in this edition of the campaign. Nevertheless, the Section obtained positive and better results than in 2017. In quantitative terms, their messages reached more than 1,800,000 people. Despite a severe delay on sending materials to local and youth groups and the Yellow Vests protesters, the Section mobilized about 88,000 people and mobilized 256 activist groups.

The Section also welcomed Nawal Benaissa, who took part in a well-received speakers tour. Between all the activities Nawal took the time to meet with employees and volunteers, she participated in a public meeting held in partnership with the newspaper *Courrier International* and she conducted several interviews with high-quality media.

The Section diversified their outputs and events and the ways in which people could take part in the campaign. For example, they created three postcards for activists, original posters, a marathon of letters at *Sciences Po Paris University* in defence of Geraldine and a collaboration with a women's rights association to support Nawal. Lastly, they also diversified the advertising component, with contracts with *Spotify* and *ELLE magazine*, allowing them to target new audiences, while at the same time consolidating our partnership with the newspaper *Courrier International*.

## GERMANY

**530,792 Total Actions**  
**25,000 Estimated Participants**

Amnesty Germany's Write for Rights campaign started with a film screening of "The Girl Hirut" with about 250 kids and adolescents watching and taking part in the letter writing activities for the featured cases. Youth were the main contributors to the section's results. Close to half of all written letters and emails came from about 500 schools, which the Section produced education materials for.



Germany's voluntary activists (about 130 local groups took part) organised actions in German parliaments, town houses, libraries, universities, Christmas markets and other public places and encouraged people to sign letters – with appreciable increased results compared to the preceding years (77.200 for 9 cases).

Due to the more restricted data protection laws, which complicated the participation process, online actions decreased this year. The Section did however manage to grow the number of fans and followers on social media, especially Instagram.

Collage made of letters from the W4R campaign. © Amnesty International/Jan Petersmann

## GHANA

15,447 Total Actions

Amnesty International Ghana started their Write for Rights with a national launch on 16th November at Accra High School, in Accra. This is where their first Human Rights Friendly Schools project started. At the launch they collected over 1,000 signatures.

There are ten regions in Ghana and the Section divided their target across the 10 regions, according to the numerical strength. Their strategy was to fully engage their Human Rights Friendly Schools, Regional/Zonal Activism Centres and local Groups. The Section printed some letters and only had the students sign *after* they have read them and after they were briefed on the issues. This was done especially when the letter was directed at an official. In some instances, some people hand wrote letters when they had the time and the letter was directed at the activist were writing to.

The Section hyped the national launch on social media and there was also traditional media coverage of it. This served as a motivation for active participation of Regional/Zonal/School Coordinators and group leaders.

Youth activists were very involved, both at the National/Regional/Zonal, School and Group levels. The use of the Human Rights Friendly schools was by far the greatest tool for the Section and the campaign.



Activists at the launch event for Write for Rights in on 16th November, at Accra High School, Ghana © Amnesty International

## GREECE

323 Total Actions  
173 Estimated Participants

The campaign launched on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November with five cases. The most popular of which was Marielle Franco's case, with the most signed petitions and success on media/social media. This year the Section decided to combine the campaign with the Annual Marathon in Athens. The Marathon is a big event in which different people take part and support different causes. The Section invited people to take part in the Marathon and run for Amnesty International and Write for Rights – it turned out to be a considerable success with 173 people running. For every case they had an ambassador (a well-known person in Greece) who was running in their honour and it was a very special moment. They also had a stand with many informational leaflets, and petitions. The Section organized an event in Thessaloniki on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which they combined with the W4R campaign.

The Section organized an event with campaigners from Latin America, discussing Marielle's case and women's rights. More than 100 people took part and it was an enormous success. This year's W4R in Greece was mostly connected with women's issues, which had a massive impact. Through the Section's social media, they saw many women coming together and spreading awareness on the W4R cases. It was a good year for the event and the Section really enjoyed the entire process, trying to make a change.

## GUINEA

15,235 Total Actions

No description provided.

## HONG KONG

159 Total Actions

The second half of 2018 was an uneasy year for AI Hong Kong (AIHK). The section was facing a serious under staffing problems and all experienced campaigners had left the Section. Fortunately, with the support of regional office especially the line-up of SofarSounds Hong Kong with AIHK, the section was able to partner with SofarSounds Hong Kong to collaborate together for an offline activity of W4R in Hong Kong. In general, the event was quite successful. They had two gigs with SofarSounds and they had invited three female performing groups, which echoed the theme of women human rights defenders. AIHK set up a small booth for the W4R in the studio and posted all stories of the women human rights defenders on the walls.

The crossover of music and human rights was a great way to engage with the general public about the important work of Amnesty.

Apart from public work, it is very unfortunate that no schools were able to work with AIHK this year. The Section analysed that November and December was peak exam season for most of HK local schools. Teachers therefore were not able to work with us. The Section will think about other alternatives in 2019 so that they can engage more with local young people in middle and primary schools.

## HUNGARY

625 Total Actions

The Section held 17 events in five cities across Hungary.

## ICELAND

71,100 Total Actions

AI Iceland's Write for Rights was launched with the interactive installation event #LightUpTheDark, for the second time on Hallgrímskirkja, the largest church in Iceland. Portraits of some of the women human rights defenders were projected on the church's facade and signatures for the ten cases collected on iPads. When people had signed the petition, their name was projected on the church. The First Lady of Iceland launched the event and was the first to sign the petition.

AI Iceland collaborated with Iceland Public Bus company, Strætó, with printed artwork on the exterior of one of its buses. The artwork had a reference to the #LightUpTheDark concept and a call to action. Two staff members collected signatures on iPads from passengers. The bus ran by schedule all around Reykjavik city for the whole month of December.

AI Iceland collaborated with the University of Akureyri and hosted a conference on 10th December, on various aspects of human rights, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The President of Iceland was a special guest at the conference.

The youth group organised a poetry evening where ten young women read their poems and activists collected signatures.

AI Iceland's volunteers organised Write for Rights events in their hometowns and collected signatures. Two of Iceland's larger municipalities didn't however take part this year and that affected the number of signatures collected offline.

The competition Human Rights School of the Year, where schools around Iceland compete to collect the most signatures, was held again this year. Eleven colleges signed up for the competition as well as 13 elementary schools. The aim of the competition is not only to collect as many signatures as possible but also provide in depth HRE for the students.

AI Iceland launched a new Write for Rights website which proved to be a great success. They saw a 16% increase in users visiting the Amnesty website this year and a 33% increase of page views. Around 60,000 signatures were collected on the website alone.



Light up the dark event in Iceland and collaboration with Icelandic Bus company © Amnesty International

**12,859 Total Actions**  
**12,926 Estimated Participants**

**INDIA**

Amnesty International India worked on Write for Rights mainly through HRE with Schools and Colleges. Some of the very important W4Rs materials were translated into three regional languages (Hindi, Tamil and Telugu) and sent to schools. A series of letter writing marathons were held at colleges combined with seminar on the Land Rights of Adivasi communities. Over 10,000 Children and Youth volunteers wrote solidarity letters and sent appeals to the District General Police, Chhattisgarh. It is evident from the letters that the story of Pavitri inspired many of them.

In the digital space, 12 young women across India were active on Instagram and spread the word about Pavitri's story in their own words and encouraged their followers to take digital action and wrote solidarity letters to Pavitri Manjhi.

Unfortunately, due to the crack down on AI India office by the Indian government, the Section could not carry out many of their plans.

## INDONESIA

2,160 Total Actions

Events for Write for Rights was held in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Solo, Aceh, Cirebon, Purwokerto, Makassar, Kupang and dan Ambon.

In Aceh, with an organization called Rumoh Transparansi, the Section held a campus visit and coffee shop visit. In Cirebon, with an organization called SOFI Institute, the Section held a discussion about human right defenders. In Purwokerto, with an organization called Bhinneka Ceria, the Section held an event called “Malam Kebudayaan” which is a cultural night. In Kupang, with an organization called Bengkel APPEK, the Section held a road show to several university and organization in Kupang. In Makassar, with an organization called Korps Mahasiswa Ilmu Komunikasi or “KOSMIK”, the Section held a discussion, talk, and book fair. This event was held at the University Hasanuddin.



Supporters and members of Amnesty International Indonesia take part in events for Write for Rights 2018, December 2018.  
© Amnesty International



## IRELAND

12,999 Total Actions

The Write for Rights 2018 campaign was launched on the 25th of November, Women Human Rights Defenders Day and they strongly promoted during the 16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

Again in 2018 Amnesty Ireland collected actions on nine cases. They brought four cases at the U2 gigs in Dublin (Iran, Kenya, Brazil and Ukraine) and got people to sign for them.

There were several events held around the country, organised by local groups, most around the 10<sup>th</sup> of December and during the week before Christmas. They also held a letter writing breakfast at their office. All staff could join to have breakfast and write letters for all Write for Rights cases.

The Section had a massive increase of schools and colleges involved on the Campaign to compare to previous years, 27 in total.

The Section did very well offline as compared to online, the public were keen to sign petitions and get involved. They ran a fundraising appeal at the end of January, inviting members to support the organisation to cover the cost of the postage, by buying a stamp. They promoted all cases via social media ads, but unfortunately it didn't bring a lot of traffic. Two cases were promoted via the Pocket Protest SMS network. The main success in December was at a Christmas market in Dublin, where the Section doubled the number of signatures taken to compare to 2017.

As part of Write for Rights, the Brave global call to protect human rights defenders was highlighted and promoted online. Following Write for Rights, participants will be engaged with inspiring stories of human rights defenders, actions and events to continue their support and activism for human rights defenders.

## INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT EVENT - LONDON

1,800 Total Actions

The Write for Rights 2018 event at the International Secretariat coincided with the launch on 29 November, and it was a wonderful way to mark International Women Human Rights Defenders Day!

This year, besides counting with the support of our lovely colleague David Jenkins and the whole Individuals at Risk team, we also went digital, thanks to the Digital Campaigners, Rachael Mayo and Georgia Rigg and colleagues from the Global Supporter Engagement team, Samantha Thomas and Marta Lobo, who promoted online actions alongside our classic petitions.

A special highlight this year was a screening of some of the Write for Rights videos for staff members. Some of the video producers joined the screening to tell us more about how it was to visit Gulzar and Nonhle and her community, get to know them and learn about the challenges they face. A special thanks to Sara Petrai and Andrew Prior and to Selina Nelte for the photos.

Many colleagues came support Write for Rights, learn more about the women featured in this year's campaign, add their signatures and write letters of solidarity. And as it is a tradition, everyone enjoyed Sauro's cookies.

Event at the International Secretariat in London  
© Amnesty International

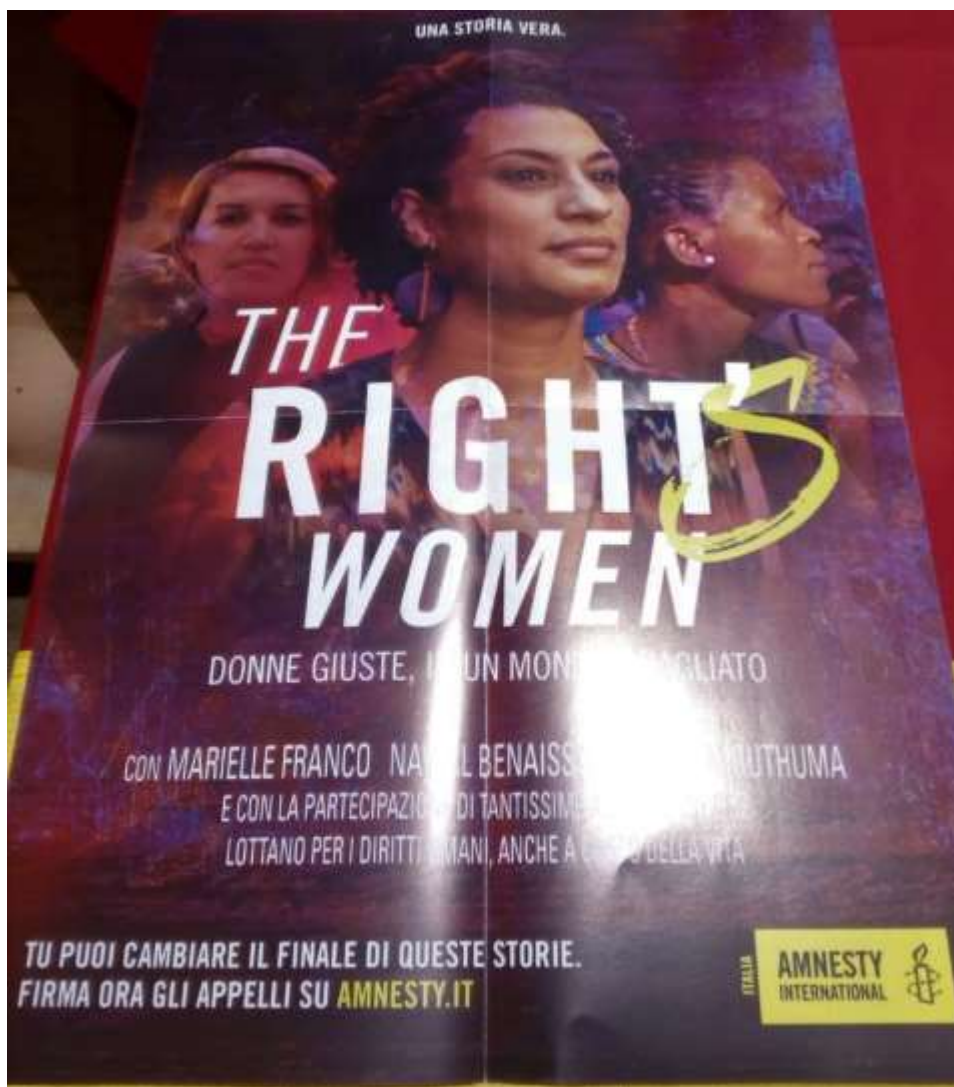


## ITALY

198,167 Total Actions  
1500 Estimated Participants

AI Italy launched W4R 2018 on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. They focused on six cases: Nonhle Mbuthuma, Nawal Benaissa, Marielle Franco, Daphne Caruana Galizia, Valquiria and her son Abel, Atena Daemi. They held several events around the country, organised by local groups - most of them around the 10th of December – and they also hosted Nawal Benaissa for a speaking tour in many towns.

With the schools they focused on Gulzar’s case and collected more than 1700 messages for her.



Poster for a Write for Rights event in Italy © Amnesty International Italy

## IVORY COAST

**35,623 Total Actions**  
**61,533 Estimated Participants**

The campaign started with a launch ceremony with activities on International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. After the launch, the Section mobilized their members and supporters to take action via local groups, schools, and on the streets.

During this period, they were visited by Diakhoumba Gassama, Africa Youth and Activism Coordinator. This gave the Section the opportunity to build Amnesty cote d'Ivoire's youth capacities in activism, which enabled youth to be more engaged in actions.

Amnesty Côte d'Ivoire held two exciting events: On Human Rights Day the Section gathered with other national NGOs to celebrate at one of the most famous place's in Abidjan (Figgayo). The second event was organised by a youth committee. They collected signatures, took action photos and targeted new audiences at Bassam beach, they had collected more 20,534 signatures and actions photos.

## JAPAN

**20,000 Total Actions**  
**15,000 Estimated Participants**

Amnesty International Japan had its most successful Write for Rights campaigns to date, with a total of 20,000 actions taken and 15,000 people taking part. They focused on schools and online actions this year, resulting in a 1.4 x uplift vs 2017.

The Section had four online petitions versus two in 2017, with Marielle and Vitalina proving to be most popular. The Section felt that the videos for these two cases were extremely good and there was uplift in the number of petitions when the videos were streamed.

Offline, most of the petitions came from direct mail actions as well as from supporters who read AI Japan's bi-monthly magazine. However, the gain vs 2017 came from a different place. The Section changed direction for offline events and focused on high school and university students, which proved to be quite successful. One school alone provided 1,300 signatures! The Section intends to extend this for 2019.

The Section also established new regular events to appeal to a more casual audience, such as a monthly pub quiz and an annual rock concert, where people were given the chance to sign petitions and take part in video and photo actions for their W4R18 cases. The Section plans to follow up with their main W4R18 cases and do some event with the HRDs in 2019, such as a conference with Vitalina via video call in May.

**6,456 Total Actions**

## **KENYA**

The write for rights campaign was launched on 15th November 2018 during an event discussing adequate housing rights vs the development agenda in Kenya. The Section set up a W4Rs desk where participants signed offline petitions for two cases, the Sengwer and Nonhle Mbuthuma. The online platform was also used, but not to a great extent because it was not the best method of obtaining supporter information.

Multiple writing events took place across the country where they gathered support from many activists. The activists organized their own letter writing events in schools, universities, social justice centres and communities. New members were also recruited during this campaign.

The Section collected more than 3,000 solidarity messages from across the world and the messages were shared with the Sengwer Indigenous people in a vibrant celebration. The community was so grateful for the help of Amnesty International. The story of the Sengwer was further featured in a local newspaper following the rigorous campaign, “minority Sengwer tribe vows to battle for forest land”.

**5,638 Total Actions**

## **LUXEMBOURG**

Write for Rights was launched in Luxembourg on the 29th of November, to mark International Women Human Rights Defenders Day. In collaboration with a local partner, the Section set up a public exhibition of the portraits of the W4R campaign.

Many events took place in Luxembourg to raise awareness about the stories of the brave women of the campaign: film screenings, conferences and a march on the 10th of December.

Alongside this, many activists organised their own letter writing events in their towns and neighbourhoods.

As in previous years, the Write for Rights campaign was a strong moment for schools and youth activists. The student’s actions account for nearly half of the collected actions.



10th December march and writing letter event in Luxembourg © Etienne GRIMEE

2,913 Total Actions

## MALAYSIA

Write for Rights is a great campaign to use with schools, as it carries least risk for teachers since it is all international cases. Unfortunately, educational institutions in Malaysia can be adversely affected by certain areas of work and it could threaten their license to operate. Therefore, the Section uses Write for Rights as a platform to engage with schools annually and they hope to improve their network with these schools. They also find that the campaign is excellent for recruiting members and supporters throughout the year. This year the Section focussed on a new method of running W4R this year by launching the W4R kit and they hope to make it even better next year.

The number of overall actions fell for AI Malaysia as compared to 2017, this is in part because of staff shortages and also because the Section chose to focus on schools and not online actions. The Section is in the midst of figuring out the best method of obtaining supporter information. The Section focussed predominantly on offline actions at physical events.

30,817 Total Actions

## MALI

Amnesty Mali more than tripled their action number compared to 2017.



Amnesty International Mali activists and supporters take part in the 2018 Write for Rights letter writing campaign, Mali, December 2018. © Amnesty International Mali

## MEXICO

8,569 Total Actions

Mexico had its best year for W4R in 2018. The Section had a national case about land rights defenders from Cuetzalan, Puebla. The campaign was particularly successful for the Section, as they created alliances with new key players and innovated their activities and were able to coordinate better. The Section had a much broader dimension to the campaign and were able to provide more accurate metrics for reporting.

A particular highlight was a film festival for human rights “Escribe, Cámara, Acción” (November 26-30), which was the main driver for the campaign. The Section partnered with key civil society organizations in the fields of culture and communication: Centro Histórico Foundation, Cold Press News and Mettgroup. They showed documentaries about land and territory activists, to show the serious problems they face and the risk they have to live with to protect the environment. The Section linked the Mexican case, with other similar cases in India, South Africa and Kenya.

The Section used tablets to collect digital signatures, this was a success and more attractive for the public. They also used audiovisual materials to promote and document the event. They collaborated closely with EDH and activism in their "Maratón de cartas" events at the Museum of Memory and Tolerance, Lancaster University and at the Hebrew School Mount Sinai. In activism and campaigns, they worked with the fundraising team at university fairs (Tec de Monterrey and UNAM).

In terms of signatures, although offline has increased considerably (1,990 more than in 2017); digital has been much lower than in 2017 (10,430 vs 2018 (2,569). This is clearly due to the significant reduction in budget that took place in the middle of the year, which meant insufficient amounts for digital lead generation strategies. However, it is also positive that all digital signatures were organic.



Still from a video advertising a human rights film festival in Mexico. © Amnesty International Mexico

37,722 Total Actions

## MOLDOVA

No description provided.

## MOROCCO

12,520 Total Actions  
6,732 Estimated

W4R 2018 was launched at the Section via a face-to-face meeting with Nawal Benaissa, led by their national youth network representatives, and broadcast live on AI Morocco's Facebook page. This marked the beginning of simultaneous "Artistic Open Mic" evenings in cultural cafés and public Amnesty booths in several universities nationwide. These activities were solely planned for before the launch of the campaign by all of the youth groups during their annual forum in November. Further promotional actions (videos, Social media...) were launched throughout December by the National Youth Committee to support youth's engagement in the campaign.

AI Morocco has also greatly invested its work in HRFS and HRs clubs through events marking the "70th Anniversary of UDHR" targeting a total of 24 schools in 11 cities. Although HRE programs have always been a major hub for the section's activism in previous W4R editions, this past year -and due to new administrative restrictions by the Ministry of Education on NGOs work & access to formal-educational institutions- AI Morocco has not been able to reach its potential with HRE partners to collect signatures and solidarity cards. The section also chose not to work on the local case of Nawal Benaissa in HRFS & HRs clubs to protect its partners & supporters due to tensions with local authorities on Amnesty's reporting on the Rif protests related to Benaissa's case.

152,967 Total

## NEPAL

This year's Write for Rights result was Amnesty Nepal's best ever. Following a planning session in mid-November, activists from the groups and youth networks were actively involved in the campaign in Kathmandu and various parts of the country. Around 75 activists took part in the planning sessions where the Section had presentations/ video screening and interactions on HRDs, the Write for Rights campaign, the cases of the 2018 campaign and different ideas on running the actions.



The activists who were also running the Human Rights Education programmes in different schools took the Write for Rights programme there as well. A new youth network of Amnesty Nepal 'United Youth Network' collected the most letters, 16,506. The highest level of mobilisation in W4R 2018 was on the Human Rights Day on 10 December.

This year, the Section picked a local case demanding concrete steps from the government to end the cases of violence against women. 23,247 letters collected in this regard will be submitted to Nepal's Home Minister Ram Bahadur Thapa very soon.

ABOVE Amnesty Nepal's youth activists engaging the public in Write for Rights 2018 near Bouddhanath Stupa in Kathmandu.  
© Amnesty International Nepal

## NETHERLANDS

181,086 Total Actions

On 10 December at 10.00am the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs started the day in Amsterdam by writing a letter in AI Netherlands special Write for Rights train! This old-fashioned classic train took off to ride through the Netherlands, passing various train stations to pick up letter writers. The Section's Write for Rights campaign started two weeks earlier on 20 November, when Zunar from Malaysia kicked off this year's edition. Zunar is one of the people for whom the Section campaigned during Write for Rights 2015 and his travel ban had been lifted only a few months earlier. Together with Tjeerd Royaards, a famous Dutch cartoonist, Zunar took part in a cartoon battle at a school where dozens of students drew solidarity cards for Atena Daemi. In total, more than 50,000 school pupils from 350 schools joined Write for Rights in November and December.

Around the country there were approximately a thousand letter writing events in schools, cafes, libraries, town halls et cetera. We organized a pilot to support 25 of these events with (paid) Facebook promotion, and we are looking into the possibilities to develop this on a larger scale.

Around 10 December Albert Woodfox, Robert King, Yecenia Armenta and Teodora del Carmen visited the Netherlands and attended several events to tell their stories about the injustice that they experienced, their imprisonment, human rights in general and what Amnesty's Write for Rights has meant for them (we campaigned for Albert, Yecenia and Teodora during W4R 2015).



Former Write for Rights cases, Yecenia Armenta and Teodora del Carmen Vásquez, take a selfie on the AI Netherlands Write for Rights train. © Amnesty International Netherlands



## NEW ZEALAND

1,504 Total Actions

With other section priorities in 2018, Write for Rights was more modest for AI New Zealand this year. There was limited on-line promotion, which impacted on the action taking number. Local teams were at the forefront of offline events around the country.

## NIGERIA

10,457 Total Actions  
52,000 Estimated Participants

Write for rights in Nigeria commenced with a national launch on 1 December. Thereafter, a total number of 23 events took place in sixteen (16) states across the country. Activists and supporters of Amnesty International in Nigeria and the public gathered in various events to write letters and sign petitions in solidarity with women human right defenders. Highlights of events ranged from friendly football matches, solidarity walks, youth neighbourhood gatherings, to write for rights action at a Nigerian law school. 10,457 actions were taken in support of cases from Kenya, Morocco, India, South Africa, Iran, and Brazil. As part of measures taken by AI Nigeria to bring Write for Rights global campaign closer to the ground in terms of national relevance the case of Knifar women was also promoted. The case gathered 3,572 actions. The facilitation of the various events across the states by coordinators of AI Nigeria supporters group was helpful in ensuring the success of the events. Collaboration with youth groups particularly the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI Network) which is popular across Nigeria also helped. For example, in some states they offered their venues free to AIN supporters for Write for Rights. The solidarity walk in Nigeria's capital city was a first-time initiative which created more awareness and participation at the Write for Rights events.



2018 Write for Rights even with AI Nigeria © Amnesty International Nigeria

## NORWAY

The Section launched the campaign on 9 November coinciding with their Biannual general meeting in Stavanger. Nonhle Mbuthuma participated for the entire weekend meeting members and youth activists and also featured as guest speaker. Participants created a large picture of Nonhle by colouring smaller squares on a pixelated board. There was also a W4R workshop during the weekend. Following the BGM Nonhle Mbuthuma travelled on a speaker's tour to Bergen and Trondheim meeting students and local activists for talks and interviews.

**184,899 Total Actions**  
**36,730 Estimated Participants**

The Section's Youth gathering was hosted in Oslo in November and Geraldine Chacón participated by Skype speaking to and engaging with around 70 youth activists aged 13-26. Tromsø Arctic Pride was held on November 11. Activists carried pictures of Vitalina Koval in the parade.

As part of Amnesty Norway's 2018 Write for Rights campaign, activist and Amnesty employees visited almost 50 schools, engaging several thousand pupils all over Norway. They presented the cases and guided pupils through letter writing sessions. A student group in Bergen hosted a 12-hour letter writing marathon in a large tent on the city's main square Torgallmenningen. Local musicians participated, there were several speakers, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) covered the event on regional TV. More than 4000 letters were written by passers-by and activists during the event.

In several cities the Section collaborated with local libraries and were allowed to have small W4R exhibitions with letters displayed and available for all of the libraries visitors. All Norway conducted fundraising by direct mail on Amal Fathy's case and it was the most successful ask they have had so far.

The Section also collaborated with the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo, in connection with a photo exhibition by the photographer Rune Eraker. The NPC displayed cards of appeal in the cases of Pavitri Manji, Atena Daemi and Vitalina Koval asking their national and international visitors to sign. All over Norway activists engaged in letter writing sessions held privately, at universities, schools, local cafés etc. Several activists wrote informative pieces in local newspapers in addition to promoting W4R events.



Nonhle Mbuthuma on speaker's tour in Trondheim, Norway © Amnesty International Norway

707 Total Actions

## PARAGUAY

AI Paraguay organized a five-day tour, travelling to two cities in the interior of the country (Ciudad del Este and Encarnación), as well as Asunción (capital of the country). The tour aimed at informing and mobilizing people, promoting participation in activities to collect signatures, letters and audio about W4R cases. During the Write for Rights Tour the Section was lucky to have Merybell Reynoso (Regional Coordinator of Activism and Youth Work) and also two activists from Honduras.

At the launch of the Tour the Section held a Hip Hop and Rap contest on the Asunción waterfront. The Section got 18 young activists to participate. The activists joined the tour in the cities of the interior, where the Section had organized workshops for Human Rights Defenders (facilitated by activists from Honduras). There were cultural exchanges, a tour of shopping centres to discuss the campaign on Human Rights in Social Networks (facilitated by Merybel Reynoso) Artistic Festival.

Write for the Rights managed to strengthen the network of activists to continue building the actions the Section works on, as well as solidarity work with the cases. This all helped to raise the visibility of the organization through street actions and social networks.

8,166 Total Actions

## PERU

The campaign in 2018 was AI Peru's best ever! The Section diversified and expanded the scope of the campaign at the national level, working with urban and rural populations, with teachers from public and private schools, with universities and activism networks, as well as partner organizations such as community cinema networks in many regions and right holders' organizations. The Section also improved their tactics to get the same person to sign at least 6 cases at the same time. We achieved this thanks to an initiative from the mobilization area, which made an important improvement in the design of signatures of signatures.

In addition to the main cases, the Section included Flor de María Paraná, a woman HRD working on land, territory and environmental rights. The Section created specific material of the case and translated it into French to work with French-speaking institutions in Peru and share it with other French-speaking sections. The Section used Write for Rights to link with other campaigns and projects the Section were working on, including the campaign for *25N* and *It's My Body* project, which allowed us to reach more people with the cases of women defending human rights and to work on the issue of violence against women and sexual and reproductive rights.



In 2019 the Section believe it will be necessary to take advantage of digital tools and platforms to reach a greater number of people, use influencers to spread the campaign and at the same time, continue looking for ways to make the work of Amnesty Peru more visible.

Trans activists join the W4R campaign in Lima. © Amnesty International Peru.

**55,293 Total Actions**  
**35,763 Estimated Participants**

## PHILIPPINES

Amnesty International Philippines used Write for Rights 2018 to highlight the protection of women human rights defenders and combating discrimination in all its forms, as the year-end theme for most groups celebrating and commemorating human rights week in their respective areas. The section also used the W4R platform to gather support for the protection of Filipino indigenous peoples' lands that are currently under threat due to extractive and logging companies

Despite the difficulty of the current political climate, W4R activities were conducted by the section in more than 40 major areas in the country. AIPH has been expanding its reach beyond schools and universities and has been steadily engaging rural communities outside the city and municipal centers. Booths were set up that were mainly accompanied by face to face tactics, in malls, vacation and tourist areas, city and municipal plazas, barangay halls, fish and vegetable markets, farmers' cooperatives, indigenous peoples' communities, churches and worship places, school halls and classrooms, libraries and school gymnasiums. Some members from different areas in Mindanao even conducted house to house visits to gather letters and distribute W4R materials and Amnesty International brochures. The section encouraged its members to gather actions from communities

**308,974 Total Actions**

## POLAND

In 2018 AI Poland held a record breaking 854 events across the country. The majority of events were organized at schools and universities, but also in libraries, cultural centres, cafes and private houses. As the result over 300,000 actions were taken for the nine global cases and one Polish case of '14 Women Against Fascism'. During many of these events participants could take part in discussions about human rights, exhibitions, educational workshops or concerts.

The Section promoted their national case in the media and on AIPL social channels. The Section's main Write for Right event took place in Warsaw between 8-9 December, where some of the activists from the national case were able to attend. During the event the Section held their annual *Pen of Hope* gala, when journalist Anton Ambroziak was presented the Amnesty media award to for his media work on human rights in Poland.

The Section produced educational materials about human rights and W4R campaign and sent packages of campaign materials to over 600 event organisers in Poland.



We invited organisations to join the campaign. This included women rights groups, LGBT activists and other organizations, such as those working to support the rights of people with disabilities, and activists working on environmental protection.

Six of the 14 activists who featured in AI Poland's national case © Grzegorz Żukowski

## PORTUGAL

348,824 Total Actions

Amnesty Portugal continued to increase its Write for Rights actions, with special emphasis on the solidarity letters – a number that grew fivefold. This increase was mainly due to this year's cases, especially Marielle Franco and Geraldine Chacón, whose realities are familiar to Portuguese society. There was huge interest expressed about environmental rights and corporate responsibility, which helped to highlight Nonhle Mbuthuma's case.

As there is an ongoing work with national education entities, Write for Rights became a well-known campaign within schools and communities, where our local groups are present. Participants of all ages are easily engaged and show commitment by taking a variety of actions: letter writing, drawing of postcards, theatre plays, school podcasts or by organising public events. Some influencers helped to raise awareness on this year's selected cases, particularly when the section welcomed Vitalina Koval, Mónica Benício (Marielle's partner), Idil Eser or when Nonhle Mbuthuma and Geraldine Chacón were interviewed, the latter more than once.

## PUERTO RICO

1,311 Total Actions

After much re-structure and effort post hurricane María, AI Puerto Rico (AIPR) bounced back healthily with this run of Write for Rights! In 2018 the Section focused on school and university environments, working on the educational component of human rights in order to do deeper work. This allowed us to both connect with individuals and students about the global movement, as well as to establish meaningful connections that will result in growing partnerships.

The Section's student volunteers and student groups ran letter writing days, integrating the letter writing element into bigger human rights initiatives on their campuses. AIPR activists held conferences on the death penalty and its impact, the rise of the LGBTQIA+ movements in Puerto Rico and the world, and even connected with fourth-graders in a local elementary school to begin their immersion into a human rights focused education.

The team will be working hard all throughout summer to build a robust 'contingency plan' for Write for Rights 2019. Through this experience, we've connected with a network of educators and individuals that are passionate about continuing this work—and so are we.

326,350 Total Actions

## SENEGAL

Amnesty International Senegal mobilized 114 groups to take part in W4R 2018, with around 3,000 members and supporters who worked for 15 days to collect signatures on the cases of Pavitri Manjhi, Nawal Benaissa and Nonhle Mbuthuma from the global selection and the case of Bubacarr Manga from Gambia and Ibrahima Mbow from Senegal. The campaign took the form of a competition. Each local group sought to collect the largest number of signatures. The group that comes first is awarded on the day of the General Assembly of the section.

The activities took place in 80 different localities across the country. It was mostly stands, visits to schools, public places, for example markets and sports events. Activists also walked the streets and went door to door to share the different cases and collect signatures.

One week after the start of the marathon the local groups communicated their figures on a group WhatsApp "Activists AIS Senegal" for activists to share information. The event was also relayed on the Section's website and Facebook page for the general public. W4R works because we can communicate about the Amnesty and its mission in the local language and makes it easier for people to understand, particularly those with literacy issues.

## SLOVAKIA

7,936 Total Actions

In 2018 AI Slovakia focused on schools and young audiences. Besides schools organizing their own events and sending letters to the authorities, the Section also participated in many events with the theme of human rights

The biggest highlight was the visit of Vitalina Koval in Bratislava, shortly after the passing of Kateryna Handzuiik, another Ukrainian activist. This led to public debate about the situation of human rights defenders and other activists in Ukraine.

The Section also sent more than 7936 letters from school and other organisations and collected over 4800 signatures on the online petitions.

## SLOVENIA

15,894 Total Actions  
8,000 Estimated Participants

In addition to online petitions, offline activities were carried out by primary and secondary schools. 63 schools and youth institutions and more than 6,000 students participated in Amnesty Slovenia's Write for Rights campaign. Some schools wrote letters during lessons, while others organised whole-school events with exhibitions and in one case also school radio show. The Slovene national TV station visited one of the schools that participates in Amnesty's W4Rs; 2 minutes long news about that was part of a weekly children's news programme.

## SOUTH AFRICA

5,807 Total Actions  
1,873 Estimated Participants

Amnesty International South Africa worked on four cases during the Write for Rights period- Nonhle Mbuthuma, Sengwer Indigenous Peoples, Marielle Franco and Pavitri Manjhi. They mobilised their school networks, had a presence at Johannesburg Pride which saw hundreds of people writing letters in solidarity with Marielle's family, students in Pretoria connected over the shrinking space for human rights defenders, and a new community chapter was formed in Cape Town after learning about the campaign.



Volunteers, activists and staff came together for a day of action on International Human Rights Day, hitting the streets to collect close to 500 actions for this year's women human rights defenders.

School children in South Africa take part in Write for Rights © Amnesty International South Africa

325 Total Actions

## SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL OFFICE

The South Asia Regional Office organised *Art for Rights: South Asia Human Rights Festival* in December 2018 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and introduced Write for Rights to the youth audiences who took part in the festival, as well as the performers from South Asian countries.

The festival explored the interface between film, music, dance and performance art and human rights, all of which shape our cultural frameworks. For the first time, *Art for Rights* brought together, discussed and celebrated the diverse and pluralistic literary traditions of South Asia – a region of activism, the arts and big ideas. At the Festival, films from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were screened, and featured musicians, artists and dramatists who have all used their craft to empower communities. A live mural, puppet show and photography exhibition, opera performances and dramas from various genres served as visual reminders of the importance of standing up against injustice. Parallel to the performances, a panel discussion was held titled ‘Sri Lanka: Where did Human Rights go Wrong’.

Youth from universities all around Sri Lanka took part, for some the festival was their first exposure to human rights issues. A W4R desk, run by volunteers, was well received at the festival. The participants were ready to speak up and connect with the global movement. Many participants asked for ways to connect with Amnesty. It was the first time most of those who took part had heard of Write for Rights and they wanted to know how locals could get involved, both the youth and civil society. They also asked whether there any other ways of support they can provide beyond writing letters, but they liked the idea of writing letters. Some noted that it gives a personal touch, and shows moral support, even to strangers whose rights are being violated.

33,850 Total Actions  
11,392 Estimated Participants

## SOUTH KOREA

Amnesty South Korea (AIK) approached the campaign in three ways. Firstly, via a microsite. The site had increased efficiency for participation by setting up a user journey that minimizes people leaving. Users could write a letter online, with multiple choices of contents. The petition was completed, people added an image with the W4R case’s faces and participants’ faces and shared it. Through strategic micro-site construction, the Section’s support base expanded, and 30,219 signatures were collected.



Children learning about, and writing letters for, Marielle Franco, one of the cases featured in the Write for Rights campaign, at an event hosted by Amnesty Korea in Seoul, South Korea. © Amnesty International

The Section also worked offline. AIK hosted 'Letter Day'. Over 100 people participated and 614 letters and petitions were written. In addition, the Section's quarterly magazine featured W4Rs specific features, and a two-sided poster of a W4R case and the UDHR was produced and sent to the donor. It formed a simple e-mail journey to focus on delivering W4R campaigns to its members.

With online advertising and search enhancement, the inflow to the W4R landing page was increased. Media work and press pitching was carried out on W4R campaign, and articles were published on the web. Advertising and media exposure have improved awareness and credibility of the campaign.

**SPAIN** 54,068 Total Actions

The Spanish section worked on 3 cases in 2018: Marielle Franco, Nawal Benaissa and Atena Daemi. The Section turned December 10 into a party for the courageous women human rights defenders, with the aim of having people see the struggle for human rights as something positive. Each of the cases helped the Section to appeal to very different kinds of audiences.

In 2018, 69 groups participated, with a variety of interesting activities: from a race for human rights in Albacete (with over 300 athletes taking part), to concerts, such as one held in Asturias with the over 600 people attending. Parties and events at Christmas markets were popular.

The Section were fortunate to have defenders such as Aleida Quintana, Marinete da Silva (the mother of Marielle Franco) and Renata Neder, AI researcher on Brazil in attendance. They visited Madrid, La Rioja, Lugo and Córdoba, attending public events, talks and meetings with the media.

The Section also worked very hard in schools and educational institutes, through their School Network for human rights.

54,579 Total Actions  
12,000 Estimated Participants **SWEDEN**

Write for Rights in 2018 was almost all offline in Sweden. 93 groups (youth, student and local groups) arranged public activities in libraries, Christmas markets, theatres, shops, streets and public squares and collected almost 45,000 signatures offline for Marielle Franco, Nawal Benaissa, Nonhle Mbuthuma and Geraldine Chacón. The Section's collaborating schools also arranged human rights themed days, with 2650 solidarity letters written for the 2018 Write for Rights cases.



**9,612 Total Actions**

## **SWITZERLAND**

Because of a national vote on international law (a populist party wanted to make national law above international law), Write for Rights remained a low-level campaign in 2018. However, 31 groups joined the action in early December, even in the snow. The Section worked on 5 of the global cases (Ukraine, South Africa, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Venezuela) and had letter stands all over the country, at concerts etc. The action was combined with the 70th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, which was celebrated with the Swiss authorities, city officials, other NGOs and over 100 members of the public during a public action in Bern and Write for Rights was the core of this action.

A giant work of graffiti was painted live during the event and flyers and posters were produced. The posters had the 5 portraits with the tagline: “They fight against injustice. Support them”.

## **TAIWAN**

**159,038 Total Actions**  
**123,165 Estimated**

AI Taiwan elected to work on nine of the 10 global cases in 2018. The Section have a huge teacher base who take part in the campaign every year, and as such school participation is the main force for their campaign. The Section started informing the teachers about the Write for Rights projects in late September, giving them information about registration and holding three seminars for teachers in various parts of the country, while keeping all teachers informed by emails and Facebook group messages around every two weeks.

Besides schools, the Section held seven W4R events all over Taiwan, with people writing solidarity letters. AI Taiwan also invited people to sign petitions through face-to-face, inviting individuals, university groups and local groups to join and also hold their own W4R parties. In 2018 there were 393 schools, 650 teachers, 76,576 young students, 44,093 individuals taking action, while 2,496 people signed the petition online. The Section provided certificate and little gifts (W4R stickers and pens) for teachers, students and individuals who registered to hold their own W4R parties. People from all around Taiwan joined the movement, even the ones from offshore islands, and they can see that W4R impact has the potential to grow unlimitedly.



A school in Taiwan takes part in Write for Rights © Amnesty International Taiwan

15,921 Total Actions

## THAILAND

As part of Write for Rights 2018, Amnesty Thailand continued to link the campaign to Human Rights Education work, gaining significant numbers of actions from classrooms around the country. The Section also created localised content including video clips on Thai women human rights defenders as part of their online strategy to support the campaign.

A highlight this year was a design thinking workshop aimed at putting an innovative spin on Write for Rights. Many creative ideas were developed during the workshop. This proved a success for Amnesty Thailand in engaging with a new audience and it raised exciting opportunities for future campaigns. The section also set up booths in markets and parks, and as part of other events by Amnesty Thailand or their partners’.



Write for Rights 2018 event in Thailand © Amnesty International

## TOGO

134,942 Total Actions  
29,290 Estimated Participants

Amnesty Togo held lots of events for Write for Rights, many coincided with activities for the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Section held a big event on 10 December.

In 2018 the Section again increased their numbers of actions, with over 40,000 more signatures in 2018 as compared to 2017.



Write for Rights and 70th Anniversary of the UDHR event in Togo. © Amnesty International Togo.

## TURKEY

2,563 Total Actions

The section held two events for letter writing, one took place in the office with the staff in December 2018 and the second in January 2019 in Ankara, by Ankara activist group.

Open calls were made through social media; Instagram, Facebook and Twitter and call for action mailings were sent to activists and supporters.



Letters written by AI Turkey for Write for Rights  
© Amnesty International

## UNITED KINGDOM

182,057 Total Actions  
74,426 Estimated Participants

The Section produced a pack of resources for local groups, schools and other supporters to take action for Write for Rights, resulting in hundreds of events being held by local groups around the UK – including a 10-day event held in a cathedral. Focusing on WHRDs created a strong hook for AIUK to be able to engage with artists and celebrities, a strong focus for their well-attended Parliamentary event where 46 parliamentarians took action on the cases, and for [media coverage](#).

AIUK coordinated a successful global day of action for Nonhle Mbuthuma’s case. This was planned in close collaboration with Amnesty South Africa, with public activities targeting President Ramaphosa taking place in eight countries around the world – including Europe, the Americas and Africa – which were covered in a number of South African publications.

The Section also arranged a visit from Mônica Benício, Marielle’s partner, to share her and Marielle’s story. As part of this, AIUK interviewed Mônica and created a video, which she has continued to use herself as a resource to share with others.

To help attract new audiences AIUK focused on four key cases through digital communications, assigning them each a ‘comms focus’ week. And to get their current supporters taking action they made sure Write for Rights branding was prominent across all owned online and offline media. As a result, the Section had a 60% increase in online actions taken for Write for Rights, compared to 2018.

Along with the global cases, the Section included three UK cases: Northern Ireland abortion rights activists, campaigner against online abuse Seyi Akiwowo, and anti-deportation HRDs the Stansted 15. This meant they could strategically align their work on the project with some of their ongoing UK campaigning work, and also provided a way to connect new audiences to Write for Rights, especially students.

50,103 Total Actions

## UKRAINE

AI Ukraine worked on 7 global cases (Vitalina Koval, Nawal Benaissa, Sengwer Indigenous People, Marielle Franco, Geraldine Chacon, Gulzar Duishenova, Atena Daemi) and one local case – Kateryna Handziuk. Given that the killing of Kateryna Handziuk became a very prominent and well-known case – it ended up being the most popular case, reaching 7,118 actions.

The national office was involved in managing other Sections wanting to invite Vitalina Koval. Vitalina made 12 trips to European Sections starting in June 2018. The Section worked with 162 volunteers who organised W4R events in their own cities and villages. 75 were holding W4R events for the first time. Collectively, they managed to gather 39,400 letters and petition signatures. The Section also collected signatures via the website – reaching 10,703 signatures.



Vitalina with just a small selection of the many letters she received © Amnesty International

968 Total Actions

## URUGUAY

No details provided.

## USA

631,457 Total Actions

AIUSA's Write for Rights campaign had more actions (letters, online actions and petitions) than any previous Write for Rights in the section's history, when they factor in the "[sign one petition for all cases](#)" online action that we tried for the first time. AIUSA also continued to focus on real letter writing and [made a big push to engage educators](#) at the middle school, high school and university levels to hold W4R in their classrooms. In addition, they added the case of [Awad](#), a Women's Human Rights Defender from Sudan harassed for her work and seeking resettlement in the USA; empowered activists to organize and promote [letter writing events across the country](#), including student led events on campuses, that generated letters and local media attention, such as this [Chicago Tribune article about students writing letters](#); they lobbied the US State Dept, foreign embassies and Congressional staff in support of the cases; held a [So Far Sounds concert with Lauren Jauregui](#) of Fifth Harmony that engaged youth in letter writing and [generated media and social media attention](#); held a W4R and UDHR anniversary event in Washington DC that [engaged members of Congress](#); engaged people in W4R at [Circle of Sisters](#), the largest expo for women of color in NYC; promoted W4R at the Section's Regional Conferences; and included paper petitions on seven cases in their direct mail fundraising letter sent out in the fall, which generated 46,048 petitions and \$297,998 in donations (\$33,379 more than the previous year).



Senator Chris Coons writes a letter for Nawal Benaissa  
<https://twitter.com/ChrisCoons/status/1072285349316083712>

## VENEZUELA

11,174 Total Actions  
712 Estimated Participants

Amnesty Venezuela worked on 8 of the global cases, the involvement of colleges and universities was impressive, in schools over 250 children took part in the actions for Gulzar and Nawal, and in the universities more than 500 students supported the cases of WHRDs belonging to the LGBTI community, such as Marielle and Vitalina. This work had a significant impact during university fairs, but because of the sensitivity around LGBTI issues in Venezuela the Section had to be careful, as there are still cases of homophobia and discrimination against members of the community. These activities helped to raise awareness through education and the promotion of human rights, accompanied by participatory activities that were very positive and increased the scope of the campaign.

The Women's Network promoted various activities, with actions carried out in different spaces such as plazas, theatres and at places like concerts, dances. The Section worked with young female influencers on social media, they supported the campaign and promoted the importance of human rights defenders and highlighted the attacks and violations faced by defenders throughout the world.



Young activists in Venezuela © Amnesty International Venezuela

## WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2018 AMERICAS REGIONAL INITIATIVE

The Write for Rights Americas regional initiative aimed to develop a cross-regional unity to the campaign, to nurture collaboration among sections, foster movement building and digital activism, and develop innovative campaigning methodologies. The Americas' sections collected nearly 900,000 petitions and solidarity actions out of the nearly 6million global actions.

### DIGITAL TAKEOVER:

Together with the 12 sections in the Americas we developed a Digital Takeover of the Regional [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter accounts](#) from 1 November 2018 to January 2019. We showcased sections' actions for the W4R18 cases. We shared photos, videos, posters, lives, stories, vlogs, GIFs and online petitions.

This activity encouraged conversation, collaboration and creativity among Sections and they benefited from the regional audiences and engaged their own.

We dramatically engaged diverse audiences on their regional channels making them grow exponentially. The W4R take over made the Americas Instagram following increase by 77%. The Americas Facebook reached 1.6K new followers and 1.7M post reach during the takeover period.

On 29 November, a Twitter action was coordinated across the 12 sections hooking into the International Day of Women Human Right Defenders and promoting the two Americas W4R cases, Geraldine Chacon (Venezuela) and Marielle Franco (Brazil). There was significant engagement from audiences in the Americas and other regions.

**Innovative tool** - [www.tuaudioporlosderechos.org](http://www.tuaudioporlosderechos.org)

Amnesty Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela, jointly developed an audio campaigning tool allowing audiences to record solidarity messages and messages to send to targets. It was used by Spanish speaking Sections in the region and tested as an innovative tool to reach younger and diverse audiences. The number of messages collected were lower than expected but Sections would like to improve it in 2019, as it helped them reach new audiences and present an innovative tool to their activists.



### Regional skill sharing:

Skills sharing and project collaboration across the sections and regional conversations were encouraged among the 12 Sections. Sections organised 2 Webinars where they talked about lessons learned, best practices and campaigning tools, and the use of Human Rights Education as a tool for people engagement.

### Human Rights Bus in Paraguay:

The [Human Rights Bus Tour initiative](#) embarked activists and students from Paraguay and Guatemalan Human Rights Defenders on a national Bus tour (3-7 December) through several cities to feature workshops, digital activism and letter writing marathons, which also had significant impact on social media.

The campaigning bus toured Ciudad del Este, Hernandarias, and Encarnación to celebrate and make visible the plight and courage of eight women human rights defenders. Activists took over these vibrant cities and visited local markets to showcase the cases. Locals signed the petitions, recorded their solidarity messages in [www.tuaudioporlosderechos.org](http://www.tuaudioporlosderechos.org). Workshops on security, DIY fanzines, campaigns, digital activism and the traditional letter writing marathons was accessible to all audiences. Guatemalan HRDs also shared their experiences as land and environmental activists constantly at risk for the work that they do.

The bus tour started in Asunción with a Hip Hop and Rap Human Rights Competition. Young rappers discussed legal abortion and sexual diversity in their lyrics. Gender based violence was addressed. Impressive amount of social media interactions from activists in other countries requested the bus tour to stop in their towns.

