



Amnesty International UK [Annual Review 2018](#)

# BEING THERE FOR HUMANITY

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



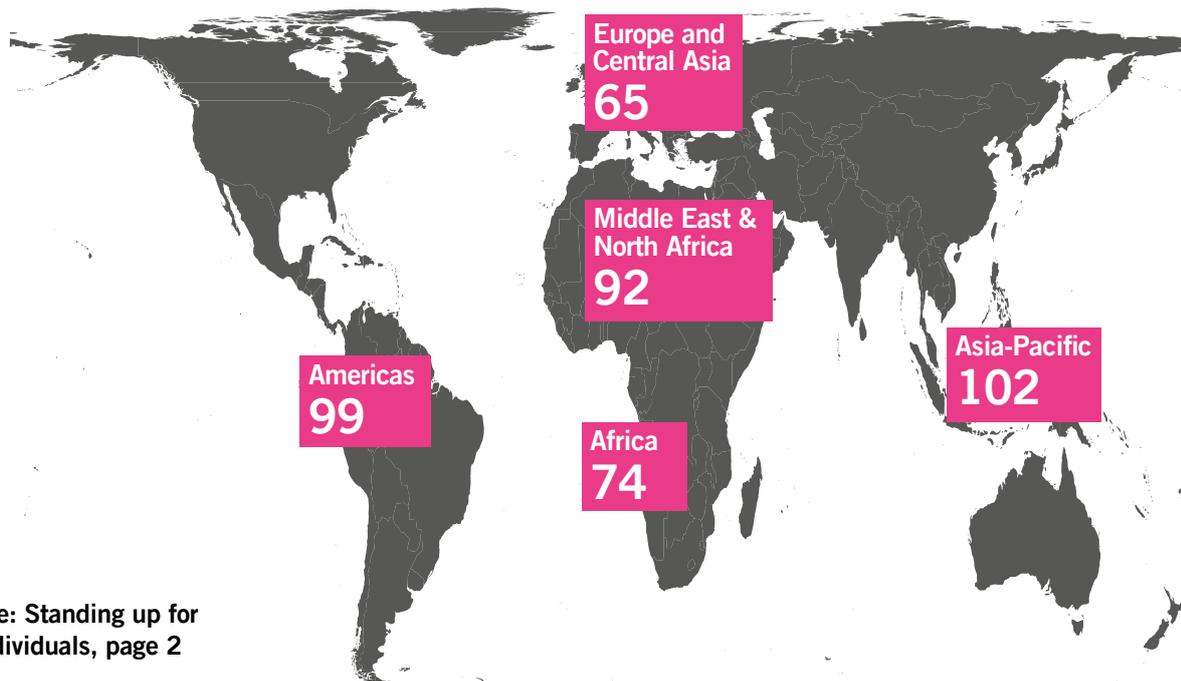
# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK

## Annual Review 2018

### Contents

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- |    |   |    |  |
|----|---|----|--|
| 01 | Being there for humanity – Kate Allen     | 12 | Investigating human rights violations  |
| 02 | Standing up for individuals               | 14 | Technology and human rights            |
| 03 | Changing people's lives                   | 16 | Standing up for human rights in the UK |
| 04 | Standing up for human rights defenders    | 18 | Educating people about human rights    |
| 06 | Standing up for refugees across the world | 20 | Women's rights                         |
| 08 | Standing up for refugees in the UK        | 22 | Standing up for the rights of girls    |
| 10 | Responding to crisis and armed conflict   | 24 | Funding our human rights work          |



See: [Standing up for Individuals](#), page 2

Amnesty International issued **432 urgent actions** and worked on hundreds of long-term cases during 2018. Many of these involved more than one person. This map shows the regional distribution of these cases.

**URGENT ACTIONS Total: 432**  
Male: 284 | All genders: 80  
Female: 59 | No gender specified: 9

# Being there for humanity

**‘Every message, every action, every gift is a win for humanity.’**



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**Dear Supporter,**

This review shows how your generous donations helped us to stand up for human rights around the world in 2018 – and underpins our ambitious plans for the future.

Last year, the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, saw some striking victories. Ethiopian journalist Eskinder Nega, Cambodian activist Tep Vanny and Bangladeshi photographer Shahidul Alam were all freed from prison, the Republic of Ireland overturned its abortion ban, and Burkina Faso abandoned the death penalty.

Under Kumi Naidoo, who became secretary general of Amnesty International in August, we stepped up our campaign to protect people on the human rights frontline, responded to armed conflicts as they developed, and challenged the narrative on the global refugee crisis.

Over the year our researchers exposed war crimes in South Sudan, the shocking scale of civilian deaths caused by US-led forces in Raqqa, and the mass detention of Uighurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in China. In the UK, we challenged a racially discriminatory police database, campaigned against Northern Ireland’s outdated abortion law, and worked to reunite refugee families divided by conflict, persecution and unfair immigration rules.

In the face of rising authoritarianism, intolerance, misogyny, racism, and homophobia, we stood alongside burgeoning protest movements around the world: the school students calling for action on the climate crisis, the Saudi women demanding – and winning – the right to drive, and the many thousands who marched against the regressive policies of US President Donald Trump.

The year ended with more than 5.5 million people worldwide taking part in our annual Write for Rights campaign, in which individuals send personal messages of support to people who epitomise the struggle for human rights.

The campaign was another powerful display of support for the basic values we all share and continue to stand up for. Every message, every action, every gift is a win for humanity.

Thank you so much for making our human rights work possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Allen".

**Kate Allen**  
**Director, Amnesty International UK**

# Standing up for individuals

Taking action for people whose rights are being abused or denied is at the core of our work. On these pages we show a snapshot of some of our success stories.



© Private

'I am wholeheartedly grateful to Amnesty International and all the people around the world who have showered me with compassion and kindness and spared no effort in supporting me.'

After a sham trial in 2016, **Atena Daemi** was sentenced to seven years in prison for speaking out against the death penalty in Iran. In jail she has been beaten, abused and put in solitary confinement. More than 700,000 people took action for Atena during Write for Rights 2018 and the authorities have now provided the medical care she requires.

The principle of the many standing up for the few remains at the heart of our work. Hundreds of thousands of people worldwide mobilise behind two basic approaches:

- **Urgent Action** protects people in imminent danger of serious abuse.
- **Long-term casework** aims to create lasting change.

With both approaches, Amnesty International supporters send appeals to government officials by post, email, text message and social media.

## Urgent action

When someone is at imminent risk of execution, torture or other serious abuses, we tell tens of thousands of members of our global Urgent Action Network, who quickly send letters or emails to the relevant authority. In 2018 members of the UK Urgent Action Network took action on behalf of hundreds of people who were wrongly detained, in need of medical treatment or legal advice, or facing torture and ill treatment, see map on inside front cover.

## Long-term casework

Supporters in the UK took action on scores of long-term cases in 2018, opposing torture, unfair trials, arbitrary detention, forced psychiatric treatment and the threatened destruction of indigenous peoples.

Among these cases was that of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a British-Iranian mother jailed in Iran after a deeply unfair trial. Tens of thousands of supporters took action for Nazanin during 2018 and our campaign will continue until she is free.

## Write for Rights

Held every November and December, Write for Rights is the world's biggest letter-writing campaign. Our supporters send cards, letters, emails, tweets, Facebook posts and other messages of support to people whose rights have been abused and appeals to the relevant authorities. More than 5.5 million appeals and messages were sent in 2018.

For a peaceful protester jailed for speaking out against the death penalty, an LGBTI activist campaigning against prejudice, or indigenous people forced from their ancestral home, these messages can provide the strength to carry on.

# Changing people's lives

Over the course of 2018, Amnesty International helped to free prisoners of conscience, halt executions, overturn unjust laws, challenge the death penalty, improve conditions for migrant workers, and hold armed forces to account for civilian deaths. Here are just a few examples.

**January** Human rights lawyer Mahienour el-Massry was released in Egypt. She was sentenced to two years in prison in December 2017 for taking part in an 'unauthorised' protest against the government.

**February** Teodora del Carmen Vásquez, a Salvadoran woman jailed for 30 years for 'aggravated homicide' after suffering a stillbirth, was freed after a decade behind bars.

**March** Bus driver Jerryyme Corre was released after six years in prison on trumped-up drugs charges in the Philippines. Jerryyme was tortured in custody.

**April** Three prisoners of conscience – Dumdaw Nawng Lat, Langjaw Gam Seng and Lahpai Gam – were freed in a mass amnesty in Myanmar. Journalist Eskinder Nega was released from prison in Ethiopia. Eskinder, who featured in our Write for Rights campaign, was sentenced to 18 years on spurious 'terrorism' charges in 2012 after criticising the government.

**May** Opposition leader and prisoner of conscience Anwar Ibrahim received a royal pardon in Malaysia. Anwar has twice been imprisoned on politically motivated charges.

**June** A Sudanese court quashed the death sentence of a young woman who killed her husband in self-defence during an attempted rape. Noura Hussein

received a revised five-year prison sentence and a 'blood money' fine.

**July** Poet and artist Liu Xia, wife of the late Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo, was freed after eight years of illegal house arrest in China.

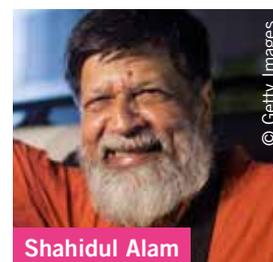
**August** After 735 days behind bars, land rights activist Tep Vanny was released in Cambodia.

**September** Hundreds of thousands of migrant workers gained the right to leave Qatar without their employer's permission. The reform was the product of a partnership between Qatar and the International Labour Organisation, put in place after Amnesty International helped uncover widespread labour abuses.

**October** Burkina Faso's parliament adopted a new penal code that abolished the death penalty.

**November** Award-winning photographer and activist Shahidul Alam was released after 100 days in prison in Bangladesh. He had been arrested in August 2018 and charged under a draconian law after speaking to media about student protests.

**December** Mayor of London Sadiq Khan called for a comprehensive overhaul of the Metropolitan Police's Gangs Matrix, after publication of a damning Amnesty International report on the controversial database. We warned that it was a racially discriminatory system stigmatising young black men. (More on page 16.)



# Standing up for human rights defenders

**Human rights are the result of campaigning, resistance and struggle by ordinary people – teachers, students, lawyers, journalists, indigenous communities, LGBTI groups, factory workers and many others. But defending human rights is a dangerous activity. Globally, at least 3,500 human rights defenders have been killed since 1998 – an average of 180 deaths a year.**

## Human rights defenders campaign

In 2017, in response to this global assault, we launched a major campaign – Brave – to defend the people on the human rights front line: housing rights activists, lawyers, LGBTI campaigners, indigenous groups and others who stand up for human rights. We urged governments to speak out publicly about the importance of defending human rights, scrap repressive laws, stop silencing peaceful dissent, and release people locked up for challenging injustice.

The campaign aims to:

- Ensure that human rights defenders, particularly women and young people, are better protected, recognised, connected and equipped to carry out their work.
- Ensure that individual human rights defenders are protected from attacks, intimidation and harassment.
- Encourage more people in the UK to campaign with and in support of human rights defenders in the UK and around the world.

## Human rights lawyer acquitted

Azza Soliman is an Egyptian lawyer who defends victims of torture, arbitrary detention, domestic violence and rape. The authorities have put her under surveillance, harassed her and publicly labelled her a ‘spy’ and a ‘threat to national security’. She was charged, unfairly, with tax evasion and operating a civil society organisation without proper registration, and slandering Egypt by saying that Egyptian women are at risk of rape. We raised our concerns about this and the wider crackdown on human rights defenders with the Egyptian Embassy in London. In late 2018, Azza and 42 other voluntary organisation workers were acquitted. It was a positive step but Azza remains at risk and our work continues.

## Human Rights Defenders World Summit

In October, 150 journalists, lawyers, whistle-blowers, students, community leaders, teachers, trade unionists and others who stand up against injustice gathered in Paris for the Human Rights Defenders World Summit. Amnesty International was one of the organisers of the three-day event, which featured discussions on regional and global issues, environmental and women human rights defenders, and the increasing attacks on activists everywhere. An action plan from the summit was subsequently presented to the UN in December.

## Protective Fellowship Scheme

We continue to work with York University on its Protective Fellowship Scheme, under which up to 10 human rights defenders are given the opportunity to develop their skills, recuperate and receive support.

## Taner Kılıç out on bail

We took action to defend journalists and rights activists in Turkey – including our own staff. We mobilised millions of people around the world and increased the pressure on the authorities. Taner Kılıç, honorary chair of Amnesty International Turkey, was released on bail in August after 432 days behind bars. He was detained in June 2017 on baseless ‘terrorism’ charges as part of the Turkish government’s widespread crackdown on anyone perceived as an opponent. The court case against Taner and other human rights defenders continues.



© Getty Images

Above: Taner Kılıç addresses Amnesty International members in Turkey shortly after his release from prison.  
Below: Brazilian human rights defender Marielle Franco.

## Justice for Marielle Franco

Our Write for Rights campaign highlighted the case of Marielle Franco, who dedicated her life to defending the rights of women, black, LGBTI and other marginalised people in Rio de Janeiro. A prominent city councillor who grew up in a favela, she also fearlessly denounced police abuses and extra-judicial killings. On the evening of 14 March 2018, Marielle and her driver were shot dead as they returned home from a public debate. Later that year tens of thousands of supporters around the world took action for Marielle in Write for Rights.



© Midia Ninja

**'I don't think we should be paralysed by fear in our fight against injustices, because we won't be protected by fear and silence.'**

*Monica Benicio, Marielle Franco's partner*

Our ongoing Brave campaign focuses on three key areas: women's and LGBTI rights; individual human rights defenders; and getting more people actually engaged in the campaign.



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# Standing up for refugees across the world

**From the Mediterranean to Bangladesh, Venezuela to the US-Mexico border, the global refugee crisis dominated the headlines in 2018. Instead of offering safety and compassion, governments continued to shirk responsibility. But as politicians failed, ordinary people, communities and grassroots organisations worked to create a welcoming environment. Amnesty International worked alongside them through the ‘I Welcome’ campaign to push for solutions, document abuses and amplify refugee voices.**

## **Pushbacks and family separations**

We revealed the immense suffering caused by the Trump administration’s catastrophic immigration policies. Amnesty International’s report *‘You don’t have any rights’* documented the forced separation of thousands of families, the mandatory and indefinite detention of asylum-seekers while their claims are processed, and the mass pushbacks at the US-Mexico border designed to prevent people claiming asylum. As well as being harmful, these practices are illegal under US and international law.

## **Supporting the Rohingya people**

We also campaigned against the reckless plan to start repatriating the 800,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. An Amnesty International UK delegation visited camps in Cox’s Bazar to speak directly to Rohingya refugees and ensure their voices are heard on the international stage. We lobbied UK Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, urging him to show leadership on human rights issues during his visit to Myanmar. And we stepped up our campaign to hold the Myanmar government and military figures to account for their actions (see page 10).

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**‘These women, men and children would be sent back into the Myanmar military’s grasp with no protection guarantees, to live alongside those who torched their homes and whose bullets they fled.’**

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*Nicholas Bequelin, Amnesty International’s Southeast Asia regional director*

## **Highlighting the crisis in Venezuela**

Around 3 million people have fled Venezuela since 2015 and the rate of departures increased significantly in late 2018. Amnesty International documented the mass human rights abuses – including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and torture – that are forcing Venezuelans to leave and urged neighbouring governments to protect the refugees who have entered their countries.

## **Demanding safe routes across the Mediterranean**

Since late 2016, EU member states – particularly Italy – have implemented a series of measures aimed at closing the migratory route through Libya and across the central Mediterranean. The results: a surge in the numbers of people drowning at sea, and the trapping of tens of thousands of refugees and migrants in Libyan detention centres, where torture, rape and extortion are routine.

Italy began to deny entry to ships carrying rescued people, leaving the injured, pregnant women, torture survivors and children to drift at sea for days. European states have also acted to obstruct and criminalise organisations attempting to save lives in the Mediterranean.

Amnesty International research exposed how European governments, in their efforts to stop people crossing the Mediterranean, collude in a sophisticated system of abuse and exploitation of refugees and migrants by the Libyan Coast Guard, detention authorities and smugglers. We published our findings in November 2018, to coincide with a conference of Libyan and other world leaders seeking a solution to the political stalemate in Libya.



© Getty Images

A two-year-old from Honduras cried as her mother is detained and searched at the US-Mexico border, June 2018. Below left: Refugee women at the launch of Amnesty International's report 'I want to decide about my future', Athens, October 2018. Below right: Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh mark one year since their expulsion from Myanmar.



© AI/Lene Christensen



© Reuters/PA Images

## Voices of refugee women

Greece is the first point of entry to Europe for many people fleeing conflict and violence. It has been the site of immense solidarity from ordinary people, but also the laboratory for heartless European migration policies. Since 2016, with the closure of routes through the Balkans, many refugees and asylum seekers have been forced to remain in the country.

Amnesty International fieldwork in refugee camps in Greece showed us that women faced particular challenges, their rights violated on a daily basis. We documented women's experiences in detail to ensure that their voices would be heard. More than 100 women and girls who had fled their homelands contributed insights and information to our report, *'I want to decide about my future' – uprooted women*

*in Greece speak out.* The report was translated into Greek, Farsi and Arabic.

The report backed the 10 demands of refugee women in Greece:

- 1 Suitable accommodation
- 2 Stop confining people to the islands
- 3 Protect women at risk of violence
- 4 More female interpreters and staff
- 5 Access to information
- 6 Full access to services
- 7 Support safe female-only spaces
- 8 Livelihood opportunities
- 9 Europe should welcome refugees
- 10 Full participation of women in decisions that affect them

# Standing up for refugees in the UK

**In 2018, we worked to ensure respect for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. We collaborated with a range of refugee support organisations to urge the government to improve the asylum system and change the immigration rules that keep refugee families apart. We also worked with football clubs, among others, to organise activities that welcome refugees into their local community.**

## Challenging immigration detention

Tens of thousands of people are held in immigration detention in the UK every year, often in terrible conditions. For the vast majority, there is no time limit – they could be held indefinitely. In 2017, our research highlighted the devastating impact this has on detainees and their families, and in 2018 we kept the pressure on the UK government to radically reform its policies. Thousands of people signed a petition urging the Home Office to significantly reduce its use of immigration detention, introduce a time limit for all of those detained and ensure automatic judicial oversight.

## Refugee casework

Amnesty International UK assists with the legal cases of asylum seekers, trafficking victims and others who need international protection in the UK. We don't directly represent individuals: instead we act as an independent third party, providing information and analysis on human rights conditions in countries from where people have fled. We also submit reports tailored to the specific issues in individual cases, as well as broader test or guidance cases, to assist immigration officials and judges. In 2018, we intervened in 34 cases from 17 countries including Pakistan, Egypt, Iran, Cameroon, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and China.

An overwhelming majority of the people we supported won their cases. They included a human rights activist who had received death threats for her outspoken criticism of Pakistan's military; an LGBTI rights activist from Egypt who had called for the decriminalisation of same-sex sexual relations; and a Chinese human rights lawyer. All three are now recognised as refugees.

## Football Welcomes

Clubs from across the UK, players, celebrity fans and thousands of school children celebrated the contribution refugees have made to the beautiful game and their local communities in April. In total, 60 clubs participated in Football Welcomes 2018 – double the number that took part in 2017 – including a dozen from the Premier League, and clubs in the English Football League, the Scottish Premiership and the Women's Super League.

Football Welcomes creates opportunities for refugees and others in the local community to interact and share experiences, which is key to breaking down barriers and promoting understanding. It also enables us to tell a positive story about refugees and show that, despite hostile rhetoric from the government and media around immigration and asylum, many people across the UK want to support and welcome refugees.

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**'It's great to see women's teams taking part in Amnesty's brilliant Football Welcomes initiative this year [and] I'm over the moon that the Hammers are joining so many other clubs to say, "Refugees Welcome" this weekend.'**

*West Ham fan Keira Knightley*

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## Keeping refugee families together

Our #FamiliesTogether campaign to reunite more refugee families divided by conflict and persecution took a major step forward in 2018. The Refugee (Family Reunion) Bill passed its second reading with the cross-party support of 129 MPs in March. Ahead of the vote Amnesty International UK supporters contacted their MPs, organised events and



Above: Our art installation on London's South Bank promoted family reunification rights for refugees.

Below left: The UK's biggest family photo album.

Below right: Tottenham Hotspur Ladies team support the Football Welcomes campaign.

© David Parry



campaign on social media. We also staged a two-day art installation celebrating the wonder of family life and held a Families Together Festival with food, live music and lots of activities.

Later in the year, to press for further progress with the bill, we unveiled the UK's biggest family photo album outside parliament. Featuring photos from almost 1,000 families across the UK, including famous faces like Kate Moss, Richard Branson and Riz Ahmed, the album sent a powerful message to



© Wu's Photography wusphotography.com

the government that the British public want refugees to be able to reunite with their families.

### Welcome Cinema

Throughout the year Amnesty International UK supported Welcome Cinema, monthly events that use film and food to bring together refugees, asylum-seekers and the general public in London. It aims to help the integration process and forge friendships.

# Responding to crisis and armed conflict

**Amnesty International responded to human rights crises around the world in 2018. We documented abuses to provide evidence for our campaigns, raised public awareness to build momentum for change, and lobbied governments and the international community to protect civilians and ensure justice for survivors.**

## Myanmar

As part of our campaign for accountability in Myanmar, we gathered extensive evidence that implicated military commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing and 12 others of crimes against humanity. The UN Human Rights Council subsequently called for the collection and preservation of evidence of human rights crimes in Myanmar (see also page 6). We withdrew our highest honour, the Ambassador of Conscience award, from State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi for her apparent indifference to atrocities committed by the Myanmar military and increasing intolerance of freedom of expression.

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**'Those with blood on their hands – right up the chain of command to senior general Min Aung Hlaing – must be held to account for their role in overseeing or carrying out crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations under international law.'**

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*Matthew Wells, Amnesty International's senior crisis advisor*

## Yemen

We kept the spotlight on the civilians bearing the brunt of war in Yemen, documenting a series of unlawful attacks by the Saudi-led coalition. Our researchers revealed how millions are at risk because food, fuel and medical supplies are being deliberately delayed by the coalition and their distribution further hindered by the Huthi armed movement. We urged the UK government to stop arming Saudi Arabia and intervened in a legal case that sought to end these arms sales. We also revealed that scores of people have 'disappeared' in the United Arab Emirates' network of secret prisons in Yemen.

## Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Our campaign calling on governments to ban the importation of goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories intensified in 2018. We lobbied MPs, raised public awareness and handed a 54,00-signature petition to the Foreign Office.

As well as highlighting the violence of Israeli security forces during the 'Great March of Return' demonstrations, in which more than 150 Palestinians were killed, we campaigned against the demolition of a Bedouin village near East Jerusalem and for the release of teenage Palestinian activist Ahed Tamimi.

We also spoke out against the Palestinian authorities' crackdown on peaceful protesters, during which scores of people were beaten and arbitrarily arrested.

## Syria

In 2018, we documented the government's war crimes in Eastern Ghouta, how Turkish forces gave Syrian armed groups free rein to commit human rights abuses in the city of Afrin, and how civilians in Daraa province were subjected to indiscriminate shelling and air strikes.

Alongside this, we provided workshops for Syrian civil society groups and women's human rights defenders, helping them to better engage with the UK government and secure international arrest warrants for Syrian officials accused of abuses. Our lobbying also helped to persuade the UK government to increase funding for an international investigation into human rights violations in Syria and state publicly it would not re-engage with the Assad regime.



Above: Amnesty International 'wanted' poster in New York, on the first day of the UN General Assembly session, September 2018.  
 Below left: A Syrian child receives treatment after an alleged chemical attack by government forces, Douma, April 2018.  
 Below right: A young Yemeni prays by the graves of schoolboys killed when a bus was hit by a Saudi-led coalition airstrike, September 2018.



## Iraq

Amnesty International research exposed how so-called Islamic State's scorched-earth tactics devastated rural Yazidi communities in northern Iraq. Our *Dead Land* report revealed that the armed group also committed war crimes and crimes against humanity when it deliberately destroyed Yazidi farmland and orchards, sabotaged wells and stole machinery.

**'Today, hundreds of thousands of displaced farmers and their families can't return home because IS went out of its way to render farming impossible.'**

*Richard Pearhouse, Amnesty International's senior crisis adviser*

# Investigating human rights violations

**Carrying out in-depth investigations into serious human rights violations is a fundamental part of Amnesty International's work and forms the basis of our campaigns.**

## **Coalition forced to admit responsibility for civilian deaths**

In June, Amnesty International's *'War of annihilation'* report revealed the shocking scale of civilian deaths caused by the US-led offensive to drive self-styled Islamic State out of Raqqa in 2017. Based on visits to 42 locations and interviews with 112 people, the research showed how 80 per cent of the city was destroyed and hundreds of civilians killed. The coalition initially dismissed the report, but subsequently U-turned and admitted responsibility for the 77 deaths we documented. These, however, are just the tip of the iceberg and we later launched a digital crowdsourcing project to further analyse the devastation (see page 14).

## **War crimes in South Sudan**

Based on testimonies from 100 displaced people, the Amnesty International briefing *'Anything that was breathing was killed'* documented how South Sudan's government forces and militias committed serious human rights violations and war crimes during attacks on villages in southern Unity State in April-June 2018. As well as the killing, abduction and rape of civilians, it revealed a widespread campaign of looting and destruction with the purpose of forcibly displacing civilians and making villages uninhabitable in the future. We called on South Sudan's government to end the abuses and to establish the long-awaited war crimes court. We also urged the UN Security Council to enforce the arms embargo on South Sudan.

## **Security forces abuse women freed from Boko Haram**

Amnesty International's report *'They betrayed us'* revealed how thousands of women and girls who

survived Boko Haram's brutal rule were systematically raped, sexually exploited and starved by the Nigerian security forces who claimed to have rescued them. Published in May and based on 250 interviews, it showed how soldiers and militia members used force and threats to abuse women in remote 'satellite camps', as the military reclaimed territory in northeast Nigeria from the armed group. The Nigerian government responded to the report with an attempted smear campaign and paid people to protest outside our office. It didn't work: Nigeria's senate took our allegations seriously and launched an investigation, though its impact was limited.

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**One [militia] man came and brought food to me. The next day he said I should take water from his place. He then closed the tent door behind me and raped me. He said I gave you these things, if you want them, we have to be husband and wife.'**

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*A 20-year-old woman held in a 'satellite camp'*

## **Tackling the trade in torture equipment**

Our briefing *Combating torture* showed how companies around the world continue to profit from the sale of gruesome torture equipment like spiked batons, stun belts and leg irons, even though torture is outlawed internationally. Produced in partnership with the Omega Research Foundation, the report called for a two-pronged approach: a ban on inherently abusive equipment; and regulation of equipment that may have a legitimate purpose but is commonly used for torture or ill-treatment. Released in September, the briefing underpins our call for world leaders to join the global Alliance for Torture-Free Trade, whose 58 members have committed to tougher controls and restrictions.



© Getty Images

Above: Women demand peace and their rights in South Sudan's capital, Juba, July 2018.  
 Below: Civilians who survived the bombardment of Raqqa, Syria, talk to Amnesty crisis researcher Donatella Rovera, February 2018.

## Mass detentions in China

In September, the Amnesty International briefing *China: Where are they?* – documented the Chinese government's intensifying campaign of mass internment, intrusive surveillance, political indoctrination and forced cultural assimilation of Uighurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR). As many as one million people in the XUAR have been arbitrarily detained in 're-education camps' since March 2017. Based on more than 100 interviews, the briefing highlighted the anguish of friends and relatives of those who are being held in the region and prompted widespread media coverage of the issue – a first step in putting pressure on the Chinese authorities to stop the abuse.

**'The mass detention camps are places of brainwashing, torture and punishment. That a simple act of messaging your family abroad can get you detained highlights how ludicrous, unjustified and completely arbitrary the Chinese authorities' actions are.'**

*Nicholas Bequelin, Amnesty International's East Asia director*



© AI

## Military land grab in Myanmar

The military is involved in a massive land grab in Rakhine State, with security force bases built on land where Rohingya villages were burned to the ground just months earlier, an Amnesty International report revealed in March. *Remaking Rakhine State* used eyewitness testimony and satellite analysis to show how the development makes the voluntary, safe and dignified return of Rohingya refugees an even more distant prospect.

This research has strengthened the campaign for accountability in Myanmar (see page 6 and 10).

# Technology and human rights

**There were further reminders in 2018 of the threat technology can pose to human rights, as news emerged of Google's plan for a censored Chinese search engine and the extent of the deadly US drone programme. But there were also many examples of technology providing activists with new ways to protect human rights, document abuses and hold authorities to account.**

## **Decoders expose serious negligence by Shell in the Niger Delta**

A groundbreaking Amnesty International project in March exposed evidence of serious negligence by oil giants Shell and Eni, whose irresponsible approach to spills in the Niger Delta is exacerbating an environmental crisis. It built on work by our innovative Decoders network, which crowdsources human rights investigations. More than 3,500 people from 142 countries took part in *Decode Oil Spills*: collectively they worked 1,300 hours – the equivalent of one person working full-time for eight months. Amnesty International used the evidence to call on the Nigerian government to re-open investigations into 89 oil spills.

## **'Strike Trackers' project launched**

In November, we launched a new Decoders project in which thousands of digital activists can use satellite imagery to analyse how the US-led military coalition's bombing destroyed almost 80 per cent of the Syrian city of Raqqa. 'Strike Tracker' is the latest phase of our in-depth investigation into the shocking scale of civilian casualties resulting from four months of US, UK and French bombardment of the city to oust Islamic State in 2017.

## **Amnesty International reveals European support for deadly US drone programme**

At least 738 civilians have been killed by US drone strikes since 2004, Bureau of Investigative Journalism research revealed in 2018. But the USA is not acting alone. In April, Amnesty International's *Deadly Assistance* report showed how the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy have assisted the secretive US global killing programme for years, providing vital

intelligence and infrastructure despite mounting civilian casualties and allegations of unlawful killings, including war crimes.

Later in the month the 19 organisations – including Amnesty International – that make up the European Forum on Armed Drones released a joint statement urging the four governments to stop supporting US drone strikes.

## **Satellite analysis reveals forced eviction of 4,000 families**

Thousands of buildings were demolished in sudden forced evictions that left more than 4,000 families homeless on the outskirts of the Somali capital Mogadishu, Amnesty International research revealed in January. It was based on an analysis of satellite imagery from before, during and after the destruction, which took place in late December 2017.

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**'These satellite images give a birds-eye view of the shocking scale of these forced evictions that destroyed the possessions, dwellings and livelihoods of thousands of vulnerable families.'**

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*Sarah Jackson, Amnesty International's deputy regional director for East Africa*

## **Google reportedly drops censored Chinese search engine plan**

Thousands of people echoed our call for Google to drop its controversial plan to re-launch its search engine in China and cooperate with the government's repressive online censorship and surveillance rules. Under the plan, codenamed 'Project Dragonfly', people using Google in China would be blocked from accessing



'The data we glean from 'Strike Tracker' will take us one step closer to establishing the staggering scale of civilian casualties and will build on the legal obligation, as well as the moral imperative, for the coalition to take full responsibility for its actions.'

*Milena Marin, Amnesty's crisis response senior advisor*

Above: Civilians in Raqqa, Syria, after the deadly coalition bombardment, February 2018.

Below left: Amnesty protest at Google's London office, November 2018.

Below right: A US MQ-9 Reaper drone over Afghanistan; the Reaper can carry precision-guided bombs and air-to-ground missiles.



banned websites like Wikipedia and Facebook. Content from search terms like 'human rights' would be banned. Reports in late December suggested that Google had put Project Dragonfly on hold.

### Fighting claims of fake news

On 10 July, a disturbing video of the extrajudicial killings of two women and two children went viral. As it spread on social media, so did the rumours: was this in Mali or Cameroon? Were the perpetrators government forces or Boko Haram fighters masquerading as soldiers? Was the video real or staged? In situations like this, people in power sometimes take advantage

of the confusion to peddle false narratives, and on 12 July Cameroon's Minister of Communication dismissed the video as 'fake news'.

The same day Amnesty International started work. We used geolocation data and expert analysis of the uniforms, weapons and speech in the video to conduct our own assessment. This allowed us to challenge the Cameroonian government's narrative and show that its soldiers were highly likely to have carried out the killings. On 10 August, when another horrific video appeared, the government backed down and announced that seven soldiers had been arrested and were under investigation.

# Standing up for human rights in the UK

**During 2018, Amnesty International UK campaigned for same-sex marriage and abortion reform in Northern Ireland, challenged a discriminatory police database, spoke out about the Windrush scandal and protested against Donald Trump's human rights record.**

## **The Windrush scandal**

After a huge public outcry, the government eventually acknowledged the appalling injustice done to Commonwealth citizens and their children who arrived in the UK decades ago. The experience of the Windrush generation shows the enormous damage that ensues when policies are made without considering the consequences for the people directly affected. Our submission to the Home Office's review of the scandal sought to bring greater understanding and recognition of how deep-seated the problem is.

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**'Our immigration system needs fundamental reform to address its long-standing systematic faults.'**

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*Steve Valdez-Symonds, Amnesty International UK programme director for refugee and migrant rights*

## **Thousands of children denied their rights**

Working in partnership with the Project for Registration of Children as British citizens, we also drew attention to another related scandal: thousands of children born in the UK to non-British parents are being denied their right to British citizenship because the Home Office charges an excessive £1,012 registration fee. Many can't afford to pay and as a result their ability to work, study or even get hospital treatment is limited. Shamefully, only £372 of this fee represents the cost of administration – the remaining £640 is government profit. Almost 22,000 people signed our petition calling for change.

## **Human rights after Brexit**

In June, MPs voted against a series of Lords amendments to the EU Withdrawal Bill that aimed to

preserve human rights protections after Brexit. On the day of the vote, Amnesty International UK, Liberty and Stonewall arranged for LGBTI choirs to perform outside parliament: LGBTI people in the UK rely on the EU rights charter to protect them from discrimination. In Scotland, a coalition of more than 150 organisations, including Amnesty International, published newspaper adverts urging MPs to vote to protect human rights. We later briefed MPs about our concerns with the Trade Bill, which will shape UK policy post-Brexit, and has knock-on effects for a spectrum of human rights.

The June votes were a setback, but our campaign continues to defend the Human Rights Act and ensure human rights protections remain after Brexit.

## **Trapped in the Matrix**

Launched by the Metropolitan Police in 2012, the Gangs Matrix is a database of suspected gang members in London. It purports to be a risk-management tool focused on preventing serious violence, but a damning report from Amnesty International UK warned that it is fundamentally unfit for purpose.

*Trapped in the Matrix* shows how the database is a racially discriminatory system that stigmatises young black men for the music they listen to or their behaviour on social media. It raised serious concerns about how people are placed on the database, how information is shared with other agencies, and the adverse impact on the young black males disproportionately represented on it.

In response, the Information Commissioner's Office launched an investigation that found that the Matrix broke data protection rules. In November, we handed over a 12,500-signature petition to City Hall calling



Amnesty International UK supporters send a message to US President Donald Trump during his visit to the UK, July 2018

for the Mayor of London to reform or scrap the Matrix. His subsequent review found that the database was potentially discriminatory.

### Pushing for change in Northern Ireland

Amnesty International UK kept the pressure on the UK government to reform Northern Ireland's outdated abortion law (see page 20) and legalise same-sex marriage. In October, MPs voted for an amendment to hold the government to account on its human rights obligations, which could force ministers to take action on the issues.

Meanwhile, more than 35,000 supporters signed a petition demanding marriage equality in Northern Ireland.

### Donald Trump: A human rights nightmare

Ahead of the start of Donald Trump's controversial UK visit on 12 July, Amnesty International UK activists unfurled a giant banner with the president's face and the phrase 'Human rights nightmare' on Vauxhall Bridge opposite the US Embassy. The

following day – Friday the 13th – we highlighted the Trump administration's increasingly strident assault on human rights at home and abroad. Supporters, some dressed as characters from horror films, carried placards with slogans such as 'A nightmare on any street'. We also projected an image of the president's face and the message 'Rise and shine – defend human rights' onto his golf course in Ayrshire and took part in protests in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dublin.

### Call for torture inquiry

Amnesty International UK teamed up with Freedom from Torture, Liberty and Reprieve to call for a proper examination of the UK's involvement in torture and handing suspects over for investigation during the US-led 'war on terror'. In June, the parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee published two damning but incomplete reports that revealed the scale of the problem. The committee said the government had blocked access to evidence and prevented it from carrying out a thorough inquiry. Our 27,000-signature petition to Downing Street in August called for an independent, judge-led inquiry.

# Educating people about human rights

Ensuring that everyone knows, values and can claim their human rights is a key element of our work. We do this through our human rights education programme, which works with children, young people and adults in the UK and around the world.

## IN THE UK...

More than **38,000 children and young people** in the UK took part in our human rights education activities in 2018.

### Working in schools

Our volunteer school speakers inspire children and young people to take action for human rights. In 2018, their talks, workshops and assemblies reached more than 34,000 students across the UK and were described by teachers as ‘brilliant’, ‘engaging’ and ‘thoughtful and imaginative’.

### Working with teachers

We also give teachers the knowledge and resources they need to teach human rights in the classroom. In 2018, more than 300 teachers took part in our workshops and training programmes, which include a one-year certification course that equips participants to teach their colleagues about human rights. Our half-termly e-newsletter, TeachRights, has almost 5,000 subscribers.

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**‘[I gained] the motivation to dedicate some time to planning lessons to improve human rights education.’**

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*A participant in Amnesty International UK’s teacher programme*

### Teaching resources

More than 30,000 people accessed our free teaching materials, which span early years to adult education, in 2018. Highlights include our updated *Words That Burn* education pack, which aims to get students excited about poetry, human rights and their ability to create. Around 1,350 young people used the pack last year. We also produced new primary and secondary school resources, translated *First Steps* – which introduces human rights to children aged 3-5 – into Welsh and created a series of new educational webpages.

### Amnesty CILIP Honour

The Amnesty CILIP Honour was awarded to one book on each of the Carnegie and Kate Greenaway award shortlists for raising awareness of human rights. In 2018, the winners were Angie Thomas’ *The Hate U Give* and Levi Pinfold’s *The Song From Somewhere Else*. We also produced teaching materials for every book on both shortlists.

### V&A Graphic Gathering

We have teamed up with the V&A to encourage the next generation of graphic designers. Entrants for the Graphic Gathering 2017-18, the museum’s annual competition for secondary school students, were asked to design an icon for Amnesty International UK that conveyed the message ‘Refugees Welcome’. The two winners worked with our designers to develop their creations for use in our Refugee Week campaigning in June.



In Kibera, Kenya, the youth organisation Wasanii Sanaa and Amnesty International use poetry, theatre and dance to tackle poverty, drug addiction and child trafficking by teaching the community why it's important to know and claim their rights.

## Adult education

More than 6,000 adults in the UK took part in our human rights education activities in 2018, including our massive open online courses (MOOCs – see right).

## Global human rights education

We want people everywhere to know their rights and how to claim them. As well as our work on female genital mutilation and early child marriage in Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Senegal (see p00), we ran a range of human rights education programmes around the world in 2018:

**Human Rights Academy:** Launched as a pilot project in the Middle East and North Africa in 2017, Amnesty International's Human Rights Academy brings together students, activists, and human rights defenders throughout the region and beyond. In 2018, 150,000 people participated in its free online courses, which are available in Arabic, Spanish, French and English.

**MOOCs:** Developed in partnership with edX, which was founded by Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, our massive open online courses (MOOCs) allow us to reach a new and wider global audience. They are available in English, French and Spanish and cover issues such as human rights defenders and refugees.

## AROUND THE WORLD...

In 2018, Amnesty International provided **181** human rights education projects that reached more than **700,000** people in **167** countries.

# Women's rights

**Women remained at the forefront of human rights movements in 2018. Thousands took to the streets in India and South Africa to protest against sexual violence. Activists in Saudi Arabia risked arrest to resist the driving ban. Their counterparts in Iran campaigned against forced veiling. Demonstrators in Argentina, Ireland and Poland rallied in vast numbers to demand an end to oppressive abortion laws. And in the USA, Europe and parts of Asia millions joined the second Women's March to demand an end to misogyny and abuse.**

## Toxic Twitter

On 21 March, the 12th anniversary of the first tweet, we launched our Toxic Twitter campaign, challenging the company's failure to protect women from abuse and violent threats. It built on Amnesty International UK's 2017 research highlighting the shocking harassment women face online. The campaign got widespread media coverage, and our research was referenced by the UK government at the G7 summit in Canada. During our Write for Rights campaign, supporters called for Twitter to be made a safe space for all its users and after meeting Amnesty International's secretary general, Kumi Naidoo, the firm's CEO Jack Dorsey agreed to consider our recommendations.

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**'Online abuse is not about robust debate. It's about intentional harassment of women to get them to leave the internet.'**

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*Seyi Akiwowo, founder of Glitch!UK, which combats online violence against women*

## Women Making History: #StillMarching

Amnesty International UK hosted a one-day festival in May celebrating the work of women human rights defenders. Actors Olivia Colman and Indira Varma and *Guilty Feminist* podcast host Deborah Frances-White attended Women Making History: #StillMarching, which featured panels, debates, performances and workshops. Participants also joined a global Wikipedia edit-a-thon to increase the public profile of women human rights defenders.

## Suffragette Spirit Map

On 8 March, International Women's Day, we launched the Suffragette Spirit Map to celebrate women human rights defenders in communities across the UK. A century after some women (those over 30 who owned property) won the right to vote, we worked with regional newspaper groups, metro.co.uk, marieclaire.co.uk, stylist.co.uk and the People's Postcode Lottery to find women who embody the spirit of the suffragettes. Hundreds of amazing women were nominated and added to the map, including campaigners against domestic violence, disability rights activists and trade unionists.

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**'It has been really wonderful to be part of this movement recognising women who understand the importance of making a difference to the lives of those around us.'**

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*Alison Ussery, who campaigns against modern slavery and human trafficking and appears on the Suffragette Spirit Map*

## Northern Ireland abortion laws

In June, the UK Supreme Court found Northern Ireland's abortion laws to be in breach of human rights after Amnesty International UK and women directly affected by the law intervened in the case. Together, we provided evidence of how the near-total ban on abortion violates women's rights.

Despite the judges' finding, a formal declaration of incompatibility – the declaration issued by a UK court that a statute is incompatible with the European Convention of Human Rights – could not be made. The court found that the Northern Irish Human Rights Commission (the body that brought the case)



© Getty Images

Above: After a campaign supported by Amnesty International, in May 2018 the people of Ireland voted overwhelmingly to overturn the constitutional ban on abortion, raising hopes that abortion would be decriminalised in Northern Ireland too.  
 Below: Women making history at Amnesty International's Human Rights Action Centre, London, May 2018.

did not have the power to do so, as it was not itself a 'victim' of any unlawful act.

We are now supporting Sarah Ewart, one of the women directly affected by Northern Ireland's abortion law, to bring the case to the Belfast High Court.

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**'In June at the Supreme Court, I felt like we were finally getting somewhere – that people realise that us women in Northern Ireland are being denied our rights.'**

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*Sarah Ewart, who gave evidence on the impact of Northern Ireland's abortion laws*

## One step closer to abortion reform in Argentina

A vibrant movement led by women and girls brought reform of Argentina's restrictive abortion laws one step closer. Huge rallies, marches and vigils – sometimes involving hundreds of thousands of people – led to a vote in Congress. In June, the lower house of Congress approved a bill legalising abortion in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy, but the senate



© AI/Marie-Anne Ventoura

rejected it in August. Change, however, is inevitable. More Argentinians than ever before are talking about abortion and sharing their experiences, and previously taboo topics such as sex education and access to contraception are now on the national agenda.

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**'This movement has opened a huge window to the entire continent and beyond. Now they see us all over the world. It won't be long until we win.'**

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*Mariela Belski, Amnesty International Argentina's executive director*

# Standing up for the rights of girls

Our three-year human rights education programme to tackle female genital mutilation (FGM) and early forced marriage in Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone and Senegal made further progress in 2018. Launched in 2017, the programme aims to transform attitudes and protect more than 22,000 girls from these abuses. It is supported by the Department for International Development's UK Aid Match scheme, which matched pound for pound the £810,000 received from Amnesty International UK supporters and the public in 2016.



Amnesty International UK worked in partnership with Amnesty International in the three countries and identified 71 target communities. Here we supported grassroots organisations as they teach girls and their communities about the dangers of FGM and early and forced marriage, the importance of girls' and women's rights and their national laws. In 2018, our activities included:

- **Setting up girls' human rights clubs** in schools to raise awareness and create safe spaces to learn about the risks of FGM and early marriage;
- **Tackling myths about FGM** with community leaders and teachers;
- **Running radio campaigns** featuring advertising jingles and 'know your rights' phone-in programmes;
- **Establishing 'alert committees'** – community groups trained to detect, prevent and report cases of FGM and early marriage to the authorities.

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**'Women don't know about their rights or even that they have rights. They think men are always right and whatever they say women should follow. So we are trying to educate them. To stand up. This is not just an issue for Burkina Faso, it concerns the whole world, so this is our opportunity to help girls and women become self-empowered.'**

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*Bibata Ouedraogo, president of the Association Feminine pour le Development du Burkina, which promotes the rights of women and girls in Burkina Faso and is supported by Amnesty International*

## Zalissan's story

In Burkina Faso, 92 per cent of the women and girls who have taken part in the training activities that Amnesty International UK supports have demonstrated the confidence to stand up for their rights. This includes girls like Zalissan, 14, who refused to marry the 80-year-old man her father had chosen for her: 'I knew my rights because of the training I had in my school and community.'

Zalissan turned to her local 'alert committee', which offered help and advised her to talk to her father. 'In the end, my dad didn't go through with the marriage because he understood there were people committed to protecting me,' she said. 'Before, if a girl refused to get married in this way, she would be cast out of her community, but I'm still safe at home with my family, and the wedding has been called off.'

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**'Because early and forced marriage and FGM are difficult subjects, we try to find creative ways to get communities to not turn away from these important issues. We have the radio and a theatre group – one for children and one for adults – and present these subjects in entertaining and interesting ways.'**

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*Clotilde Sawadogo, director of Radio Salaki, which reaches two million people in western Burkina Faso. Amnesty International supports the station's work on early forced marriage and FGM*



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Above: Zalissan found the confidence and support to refuse a forced marriage.  
Below: Community radio spreads the word on human rights, Labien, Burkina Faso, June 2018.

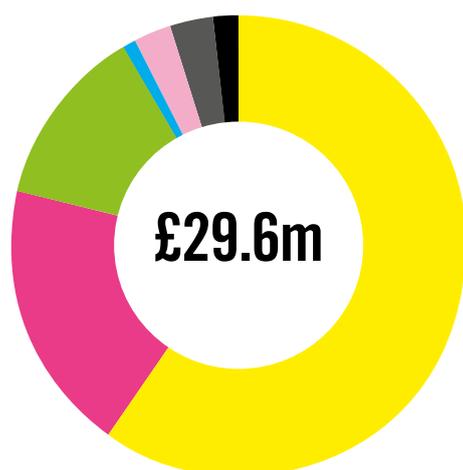


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# Funding our human rights work

## Income and expenditure year ended 31 December 2018

### Where the money comes from

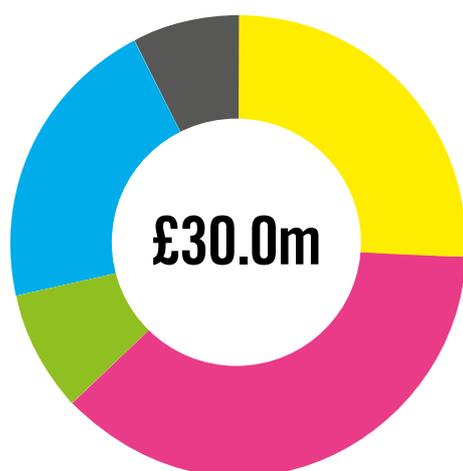


	Actual 2018		Actual 2017	
	£m	%	£m	%
Members and Supporters	17.4	59	17.7	60
Legacies	5.6	19	5.8	19
Appeals and Raffles	3.9	13	3.8	13
Grants	0.5	2	0.3	1
Other	0.7	2	0.7	2
Shops and Catalogue	1.0	3	0.9	3
Community Fundraising	0.6	2	0.5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>100</b>

Amnesty International UK can maintain its financial independence and integrity because the majority of our income is from individual members and supporters. We also gratefully acknowledge

the generous support of charitable trusts, foundations and companies, as well as individuals who have remembered us in their wills. We could not do our work without your support.

### Where the money goes



	Actual 2018		Actual 2017	
	£m	%	£m	%
Campaigning, raising awareness, educating	8.4	28	7.4	26
Research	9.9	33	10.4	37
Encouraging more people to become activists	2.7	9	2.4	9
Recruiting, retaining and communicating with supporters	6.6	22	6	21
Raising additional funds	2.3	8	2.2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>100</b>

The money Amnesty International UK receives goes towards research and action that aim to prevent and end grave abuses of human rights. In 2018, 70 per cent was spent directly on human rights work: research, campaigns, education,

awareness-raising and encouraging more people to take an active part in our work. 30 per cent was spent on supporting our human rights work indirectly, enabling us to recruit and keep supporters and raise additional funds.

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## Our finances and legal structure

Amnesty International UK is composed of two distinct but related legal entities. These are:

1. Amnesty International United Kingdom Section is a company registered in England and Wales (no.01735872) and is responsible for the bulk of our campaigning, education and advocacy work in the UK.
2. Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust is a charity registered in England and Wales (no 1051681) and in Scotland (no SC039534) and a registered company (no 03139939). The Trust funds our UK and global activities to promote human rights. Funds raised for the Trust may only be spent on human rights work that the Charity Commission regards as charitable under UK law.

For full audited accounts of both entities see:  
[amnesty.org.uk/finances](https://amnesty.org.uk/finances)

Registered office: 17-25 New Inn Yard,  
London EC2A 3EA

## The Board of Amnesty International United Kingdom Section 2018

Ruth Breddal (chair)  
Thomas Hedley (resigned 1 June 2018)  
Eilidh Douglas  
Lucy Blake  
Meredith Coombs  
Tom Sparks  
Thomas Chigbo  
Darren Nair (appointed 1 June 2018)  
Abigail Grant  
Jeremy Allen (resigned 1 June 2018)  
Lisa Warren  
James Lovatt  
Sharon Lovell  
Tracy Newton-Blows (resigned 1 June 2018)  
Hannah Perry (resigned 31 May 2018)  
David (Hugh) Sandeman (appointed 1 June 2018)  
Senthorun Raj (appointed 1 June 2018)  
Susan Jex (B) (appointed 1 June 2018)  
Tom Harrison (E) (appointed 1 June 2018)

## The Trustees of Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust 2018

Gareth Davies  
Livia Aliberti  
Meredith Coombs  
Amie Ibrahimi Brown  
Nicholas Vogelpoel  
Nicolas Patrick  
Ruth Breddal  
Thomas Hedley (resigned 8 June 2018)  
Rebecca Warren (appointed 2 June 2018)

## Director

Kate Allen

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## We still need your help to protect human rights in 2019

We are Amnesty International. We work to protect people wherever justice, freedom, truth and dignity are denied.

As a global movement of over 7 million people, Amnesty International is the world's largest grassroots human rights organisation.

We investigate and expose abuses, educate and mobilise the public, and help transform societies to create a safer, more just world.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion.

Our vision is a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

Your continued support of Amnesty International will enable us to increase our impact and make a real difference to people facing grave human rights violations around the world.



Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust. Charity registered in England & Wales no. 1051681. Charity registered in Scotland no. SC039534. Company limited by guarantee, registered in England no. 03139939. Registered office 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA.

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## How your money could help

**£1,500** could cover the annual cost of external trainers delivering our human rights education training to teachers, which is linked to the relevant curriculum area in each nation or region.

**£5,000** could cover the costs of an Amnesty International investigator's trip to uncover evidence of human rights abuses.

**£20,000** could cover software, licensing and communications per year for the revolutionary Amnesty Decoders network of digital volunteers.

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## Contact us

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