

# An Enabling Environment for the Right to Defend Human Rights



**W**e envision a world in which people's fundamental human rights and freedoms are universally recognised and respected by all, and in which everyone enjoys these rights and freedoms without fear of threats or attack.

We imagine a future where the principles set forth in the United Nations (UN) Declaration on Human Rights and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) are not just declarations, but are principles that all governments and power-holders recognise and live by.

We dream of a fair, equitable, and sustainable world where people live peacefully together.

Protection International (PI) is working hard to make this world a reality. We acknowledge that systemic and transformative change does not happen overnight. In this Global Strategy Framework, we **therefore focus on the meaningful and positive impacts we will achieve in the next five years.**

Over the next five years, we will take stock of the lessons learned in the past. We will also strategically direct our time, efforts and resources to further develop and improve ourselves while we address critical issues that HRDs face on the ground, and strengthen our internal collective power.

This strategy comes from conversations and dialogues with our teams worldwide, and inputs from our partners, HRDs, and funders for our way forward.

**PI's new Global Strategy – An Enabling Environment for the Right to Defend Human Rights – sets forth our strategic direction and priorities for 2024-2028.**



PI stands for the right to defend human rights (RDHR) for everyone. **Since 2007, we have been working with human rights movements across the globe.** We provide long-term accompaniment and support to HRDs and their collectives at risk. Our objective is to support the defenders in ensuring their own safety, holding duty bearers accountable to fulfil their obligation to protect HRDs, and garnering support from key stakeholders to maximise their contribution to HRD protection.



# 1 THIS IS PROTECTION INTERNATIONAL

PI is a non-profit organisation that started in Brussels in 2007 with the goal to foster resilience among HRDs and their collectives through preventive and comprehensive collective approaches to protection. **Since then, we have been supporting and working in partnership with HRDs and their communities**, local civil society groups, individuals, organisations, networks, and collectives facing threats, judicial harassment, stigmatisation or other forms of repression, in order to best mitigate risks. Our participatory model of intervention is continually evolving in accordance with the changing socio-political contexts in which HRDs are situated.

### Our history

**F**rom 2007-2018, we created 'protection desks' in countries that needed particular support, before evolving into a larger collection of offices around the globe which reported to a centralised head office in Brussels. In 2019, we started a decentralisation process aimed at creating more grounded and context-oriented decision-making that is more aligned with our grassroots approach. This resulted in the establishment of **Regional Hubs and Country Offices. We continue to evolve into an organisation that ensures that responsibility, accountability, and power are shared**

**amongst our offices and teams across the world.** We developed internal policies that reflect good practices and principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) in our way of working. We also sharpened our preventive tools, released manuals and research publications on HRD protection, promoted and built protection networks, and engaged with governments to ensure protection policies for HRDs are in place, to name a few. After more than 15 years of existence, we continue learning and improving as we grow and evolve.

# WE RENEWED OUR IMAGE



**Logo evolution**

Origin



Evolution



Our freedom rights, our safety depend on people who take a stand in defence. In defence of human rights defenders.

Human rights defenders take personal risks to make a safer, more equal, more just and more peaceful world for us all. Yet, in many parts of the world, they are harassed, jailed, cut, attacked, even killed, or completely intimidated.

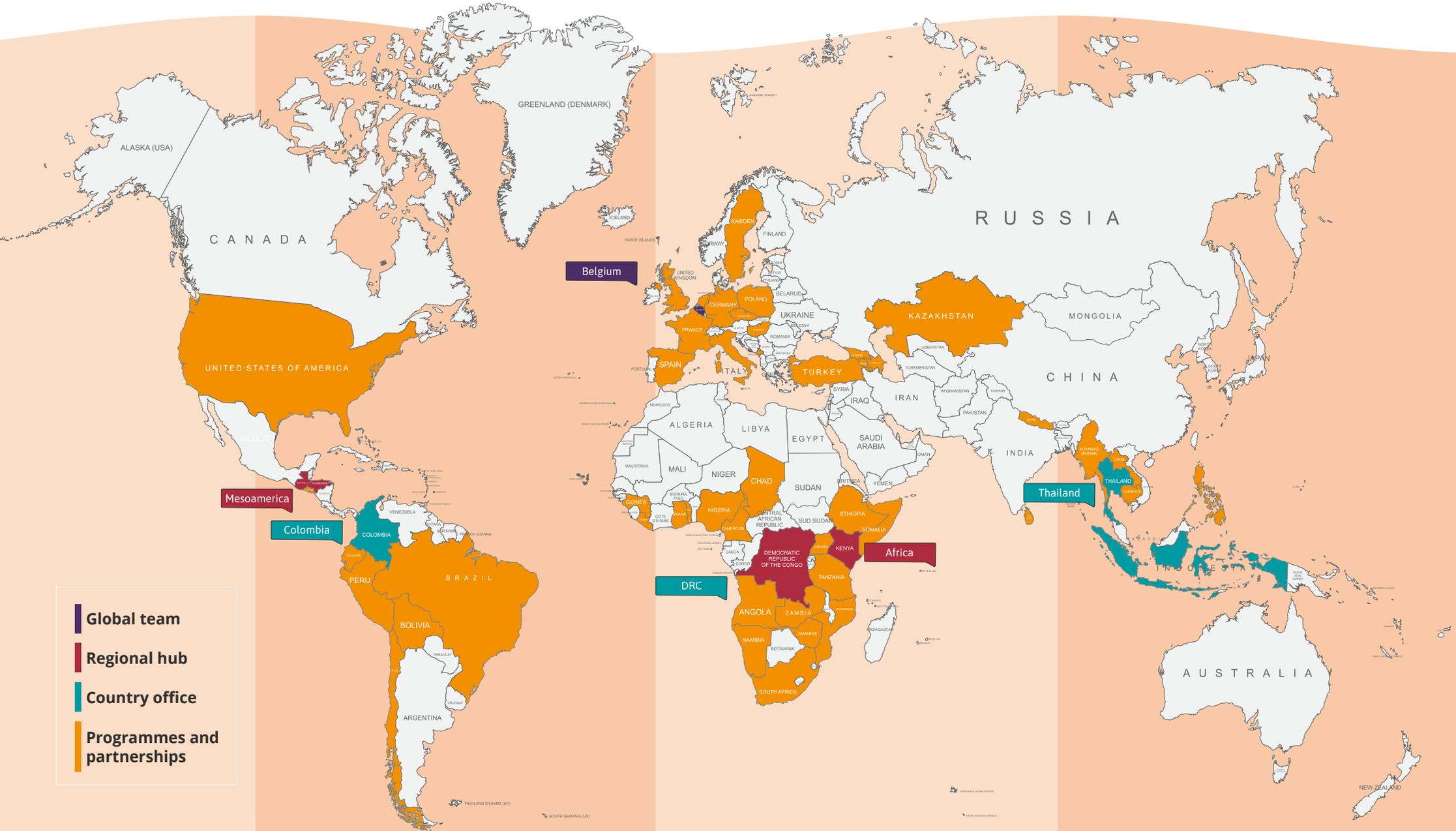
**Pour le droit de défendre les droits humains.**



# PI AROUND THE WORLD



Where HRDs we have supported over the past 5 years come from



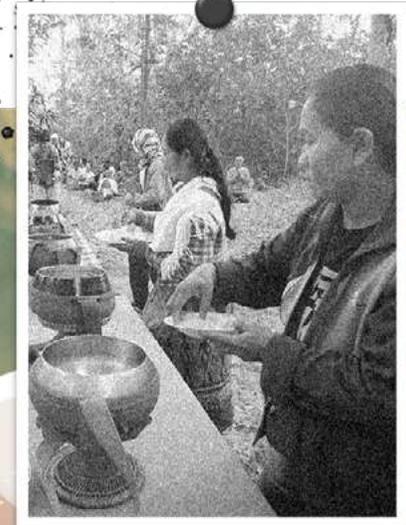
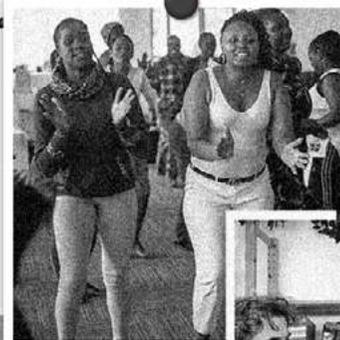
# OUR VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

## Our vision

We aspire to a world in which fundamental human rights and freedoms are universally recognised and respected by all. Everyone has the right to defend these rights and freedoms without fear of threats or attack.

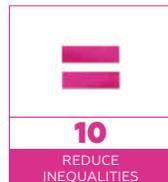
## Our mission

Our contribution to that world is to support HRDs through comprehensive protection programmes. Our programmes enable HRDs to build capacities for managing their protection effectively. We carry out targeted advocacy so that those who have the duty to protect HRDs fulfil their obligations, and we work to convince other individuals and institutions with a stake in the protection of HRDs to maximise their positive contribution. PI always works in partnership with defenders.



## Our core values

- ✦ **Solidarity & Collaboration**  
We are committed to standing alongside HRDs and supporting their efforts to improving our societies through peaceful means.
- ✦ **Participatory Decision-Making**  
We promote the respect and participation of everyone in the decision-making process. We are committed to horizontal and active listening – recognising the value in having a diversity of skills, perspectives and ideas.
- ✦ **Accountability & Integrity**  
We are committed to communicating, both internally and externally, about what we are doing as an exercise of transparency that reflects a reliable and credible organisation, fostering trust amongst our partners. We maintain a zero-tolerance policy on corruption.



- ✦ **Grassroots Ethos**  
We are committed to identifying the needs of HRDs and their communities, to adapting our work to their realities (cultural, historical, economic, etc.), and to valuing their work and their voices.
- ✦ **Commitment to Human Rights**  
We believe that respect for human rights will contribute to a more just global society. Everybody has the RDHR and fundamental freedoms without discrimination based on their identity, nor fear of being threatened or attacked.
- ✦ **Creativity & Learning**  
We are committed to reflecting on our individual and collective practices, learning from our mistakes, being open to new ideas and ways of working, sharing internally in order to learn, innovating and improving our level of understanding, and putting our lessons learned into practice to contribute more effectively to the work of others.

## WHAT WE DO

**P**I supports HRDs and their collectives at risk, based on international human rights standards that legitimise the work of HRDs and the positive role they play in building more just societies. PI aims to promote and protect the RDHR of everyone. Our interventions seek to **analyse the context and the root causes of violence against HRDs and their collectives, and to act upon them.** We do so, for instance, by delivering capacity building and capacity strengthening support on protection management to HRDs, by engaging with duty-bearing authorities to urge them to fulfil their obligation to protect, and by seeking support from key stakeholders to maximise their contribution to the protection of HRDs and their collectives.

We developed a **comprehensive, collective and long-term approach to the protection of HRDs and their collectives.** We look at protection from a **preventive lens that aims to foster resilience,** limiting the need for emergency interventions over time. PI supports the creation and strengthening of protection networks as a key element against the isolation of HRDs and their collectives. **We foster a collaborative approach to mobilise and influence like-minded actors** at the local, national and international levels.



## APPROACH TO OUR WORK

**W**e adopt a grassroots approach, providing contextual support for the HRDs' benefit, from the local to the international level. We aim to **increase the agency of HRDs and their collectives while contributing to the creation of enabling environments** for the exercise of their RDHR.

Our intervention is **rooted in the global majority and people placed in vulnerable situations**, with highly qualified national and local teams to ensure the sustainability and contextual relevance of our interventions and support in the strengthening of local social movements.

PI aims to apply JEDI principles throughout our operations. In security management, **we fight against unequal power relations and discrimination that specifically affects women**, both of which form the base of gender inequality.

We are cognisant of the imperative of decolonising and the ongoing struggle against racism and xenophobia. **We work towards a deracialised organisation that shares power, responsibility, and accountability across our offices.** We are also cognisant that abusive power can marginalise people and place them in vulnerable situations. PI therefore implements programmes that uphold JEDI principles, to make sure everyone is treated fairly.

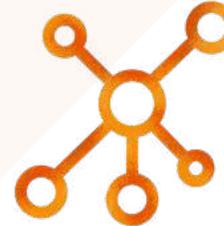


## PILLARS OF OUR WORK



### **Support, capacity building and strengthening**

We support HRDs to become more aware of their rights and to manage their protection (both preventively and reactively), and we provide psychosocial support.



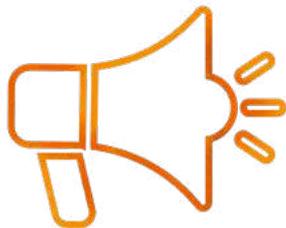
### **Networking and alliance building**

We join forces with others to share knowledge, build collective power, and form strategic partnerships.



### **Resource mobilisation**

We raise funds, mobilise and share resources with groups to ensure capacity strengthening and growth.



### **Advocacy and outreach**

We push for policy changes to protect HRDs and ensure the RDHR, and make sure our messages are delivered effectively.



### **Research**

We continually seek to innovate by developing new tools, analysing public policies for the protection of HRDs, and collecting data to support our advocacy efforts.

# 2 THE WORLD WE ARE IN

## OUR CURRENT REALITY

The adoption of the UN Declaration on HRDs in 1998 was a momentous step forward, and was followed by some countries recognising and safeguarding the rights of HRDs. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlighted the importance of prioritisation and the connection between the environment, and social and economic aspects to ensure sustainable development across the world. The people and the planet were placed at the centre of the SDGs. **Even so, people defending their rights continue to face injustice, human rights violations, and inequality.** The advances and commitments stemming from the adoption of the UN Declaration on HRDs have been consistently under attack and threatened from various fronts.



**W**e are experiencing a **crisis of democratic institutions** that continues to escalate militarisation, repression, authoritarianism, corruption, and impunity. Far-right politics or rightwing extremist agendas are spreading, **fostering narratives of hatred and discrimination that justify historical structures of oppression** such as colonialism, racism, patriarchy, xenophobia, and hetero-sexism. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, wars, steady narrowing of civic space, economic crisis, and unbridled natural resource extraction are exacerbating socioeconomic disparities and environmental degradation further heightening vulnerability among marginalised populations.

**The failure of state authorities to fulfil their duty to protect HRDs and the increasing defiance of powerful non-state actors compound the challenges faced by HRDs.** The complex interplay of archaic societal structures and injustices,

including insecurity, the presence of non-state actors, and pervasive stigmatisation, create a hostile operating environment for HRDs. Barriers such as repressive laws, policies, and judicial harassment further hinder HRDs from effectively defending human rights. Consequently, the number of HRDs and communities at risk continues to rise, necessitating urgent resources to enhance their protection and uphold their RDHR without fear of reprisal.

Funding remains a critical issue for our mission and our people. While significant financial resources have been invested by inter-governmental bodies, and by the philanthropic community and foundations, flexible and/or core funding is offered only by a handful of donors. **The scarcity of this flexible/core funding traps organisations in raising project funding and delivering on commitments, while preventing them from investing in institutional strengthening and staff wellbeing.**

## HOW WE WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE - MEANINGFUL IMPACT

**D**espite these challenges, opportunities for progress exist. As threats against HRDs escalate globally, so does the response, from a broader spectrum of actors including citizens' movements, young people, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, feminist movements, environmental activists, or anti-corruption advocates. Meanwhile, debates about business and human rights, due diligence, new technologies, climate justice, and more importantly, on public policies aimed at protecting the RDHR are creating space for structural changes. The resilience of HRDs and their commitment to peaceful resistance, offer hope for the global human rights movement in the face of formidable discriminatory forces.

To make real change, we need to **address the root causes of violence against HRDs**. To do so means adopting a **preventive approach to the protection of HRDs and their collectives** from an intersectional perspective, strengthening the participation of marginalised HRDs at risk, and mobilising networks and resources for their protection. **At the core of our work, this means advocating for enabling environments for the RDHR, countering**

**stigmatisation, fighting against criminalisation, and strengthening digital governance.**

The next few years are critical for HRDs across the world – we are committed to support them, to push for change, and to deliver on our key change promises



Mujer yanomami. © Victor Englebort/Survival

which are encompassed in our pathways. We aim to have meaningful impact in supporting HRDs and their collectives in their agency to make informed decisions about their protection and to defend human rights safely, while urging power holders to take all necessary actions to eliminate barriers, and to create and uphold enabling environments offline and online. Through these initiatives, we aspire to cultivate a culture of respect for human rights and ensure that HRDs and their collectives can operate safely and effectively in their pursuit of justice and dignity for all.

***We recognise that systemic and transformative change does not happen overnight. We are focusing on making meaningful and positive impacts in the next five years. We will take time to effectively and sustainably build our collective strength and power to continue to deliver on our long-term mission. We will work together to achieve our goals and our strategic objectives.***



# 3 OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

## PATHWAY 1 HRD-LED INITIATIVES

PI contributes to a future where HRDs and their collectives are increasingly able to lead initiatives that increase their protection and shape their environment. Each step, from targeted activities to strategic outcomes and desired impact, builds towards a reality where HRDs and their collectives are at the forefront of advocating for and exercising their RDHR.

◆ ***Pathways to Change - Immediate Outcomes***  
HRDs and their collectives strengthen their advocacy for their rights, equipped with greater awareness of the risks involved in their work and with more robust protection resources to prevent and mitigate threats and attacks. In collaboration with protection networks, they develop coordinated strategies to counteract the stigmatisation of defender groups and to shape public discourse about the defense of human rights. HRDs and their collectives harness their collective knowledge and research to create evidence-based policy recommendations, positioning themselves as informed advocates for change.

◆ ***Meaningful Impacts***  
**HRDs and their collectives deepen, reinforce, and diversify their protection networks, extending their spheres of influence.** These protection networks are resilient, and capable of mobilising quickly to support defenders in times of crisis. The influence of HRDs and their collectives transcends their immediate networks, allowing them to shape protection agendas at the national, regional, and international levels. HRDs and their collectives become pivotal architects of systems change designed to protect their RDHR.



## ENHANCED INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE PROTECTION OF HRDS AND THEIR COLLECTIVES FOR THEIR RDHR

PI sees a future where the courage of HRDs and their collectives is matched by the support of diverse state and non-state actors as well as institutions at multiple levels that can propel HRDs' mission forward. The change envisaged is one where HRDs and their collectives operate safely with institutional support and recognition through public policies that respect, protect, and fulfil the RDHR.

### ◆ *Pathways to Change - Immediate Outcomes*

The UN, regional human rights mechanisms, third countries and global networks of international institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs) pressure state actors and power holders to support HRDs and their collectives. Donors understand the risks and threats facing HRDs and their collectives and work towards fostering an enabling environment for the RDHR. State actors and protection actors are called upon to revisit protection policies, refining them with a lens focused on HRDs' realities, including digital governance for safer human rights defence. HRDs' cross-sector collaborations exert additional pressure on governments and state authorities, ensuring that the existence of an enabling environment for the RDHR becomes an ingrained part of policy discussions.

### ◆ *Meaningful Impact*

Key stakeholders such as diplomatic missions, donors and other institutional actors, acknowledge HRDs and their collectives, and integrate active support for them into their core operations and strategies. Comprehensive policies championing the protection of HRDs and their collectives are drafted and implemented by governments and state authorities, signifying a commitment that transcends rhetoric and manifests in action. **The RDHR, both offline and online, is championed and recognised as a cornerstone of democratic and just societies.**

## PATHWAY 3 | POWER-HOLDERS TACKLE EXISTING BARRIERS TO EXERCISING THE RDHR

PI foresees an enabling environment for the exercise of the RDHR so that all HRDs and their collectives can carry out their work safely, an environment in which power-holders understand and acknowledge existing barriers that prevent HRDs from exercising their RDHR. The pursuit of such an environment leads to the dismantling of systemic barriers through the adoption of stringent policies that help create an environment where human rights, fundamental freedoms, as well as social and climate justice, can be defended and actively championed by broader sectors of society.

### ✦ *Pathways to Change - Immediate Outcomes*

Immediate outcomes include increased dialogue and engagement between power-holders and HRDs, and greater recognition of the legitimacy and importance of HRDs' work. Dialogues result in the adoption of policies and mechanisms to protect HRDs, such as legislation safeguarding their rights, the establishment of national protection mechanisms, or the development of guidelines to safeguard HRDs' rights. The provision of support, such as legal assistance and efforts to promote access to justice, contributes to addressing systemic injustices faced by HRDs, ensuring that legal frameworks uphold their rights instead of criminalising their activism offline and online. Governments are urged to repeal legislation used to criminalise HRDs and to be stringent in fighting impunity for threats and attacks, fostering an environment where HRDs can carry out their crucial work without fear of reprisals.

### ✦ *Meaningful Impact*

The long-term outcome of this pathway to change is a **transformative shift in the relationship between power-holders and HRDs, characterised by mutual respect, cooperation, and support for HRDs and their collectives**. Through sustained advocacy and engagement to address disabling factors to the exercise of the RDHR, power-holders actively work to dismantle systemic barriers and create an environment where HRDs and their collectives can carry out their crucial work without fear of reprisals. These combined efforts lead to a society in which the RDHR is protected, celebrated and supported by everyone, as an essential pillar of democracy, justice and human dignity.

# 4 OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

(SO) AND KEY PRIORITIES TOWARDS ACHIEVING IMPACT

## SO 1 HRDS AND THEIR COLLECTIVES HAVE THE AGENCY TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS SAFELY

**HRDs are at the centre of everything we do.** Our work is centred on supporting and working in partnership with HRDs and their collectives around the world. We believe in a world where everyone has the RDHR. PI's focus is therefore on contributing to the continued strengthening of the safety, capacity, and agency of HRDs and their collectives. We work with them to assess what strategic activities can be undertaken to support them in dismantling power imbalances and levelling the playing field.



*In the coming five years, we will focus and invest resources on the following:*

### **1. SUPPORT THE AGENCY OF HRDS AND THEIR COLLECTIVES USING AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH**

We have developed our understanding of collective protection and have actively influenced some structural changes in protection mechanisms and policies that aim at ensuring a safe environment for all those who individually and collectively defend human rights. **Applying an intersectional lens to our work allows us to take into account the lived experiences of HRDs and assess how their intersecting identities affect their agency and protection.** It will enable us to identify and address the specific challenges and root causes of oppression and violence faced by HRDs and their collectives, and to promote more inclusive, tailored and effective protection practices. Over the next five years, we will keep working to strengthen the agency of HRDs and their collectives, while incorporating an intersectional perspective on the risks faced by HRDs and their collectives.

*Our success will mean that PI:*

- a.** Developed more comprehensive and intersectional protection management tools alongside HRDs and their collectives reflecting their realities;
- b.** Designed and implemented a number of protection tools and strategies tailored to the needs of HRDs and their collectives; and
- c.** Raised and invested more resources for outreach and communication tools that facilitated awareness-raising of the RDHR.



## 2. SUPPORT HRDs AND THEIR COLLECTIVES IN DEVELOPING PROTECTION NETWORKS

The effectiveness of our interventions is rooted in our robust partnerships and networks. **PI actively collaborates with HRDs and their collectives across multiple countries to establish and enhance their protection networks.** We have found that collectives that have been able to strengthen their internal and external networks have shown a greater capacity to confront threats and generate safer environments for their actions. Not only have they been able to strengthen their internal organisational processes, but they have also built connections and widened their workspace beyond the local level to the national and international levels.

### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Supported the strengthening of the capacities of HRDs and their collectives;
- b. Increased meaningful partnerships and developed stronger links and relationships with other like-minded organisations; and
- c. Expanded connections and impact at the local, national, and international spaces.

**+info.** Read our position paper on collective protection.



### 3. STRENGTHEN THE PARTICIPATION OF HRDS AT RISK WHO HAVE BEEN MARGINALISED

Everyone's voice should be heard, especially those who are often left out. We will work to increase the participation and inclusion of defenders who have been marginalised to ensure that their experiences and challenges are represented, and that they are actively involved and enabled to participate in spaces of dialogue, decision-making and policy-making. To do so, **we will actively include HRDs who have been marginalised in our activities, improve our working methods and develop inclusive tools and communication materials.** For instance, we will increase the accessibility of our activities and tools by investing in more translation, interpretation and accessibility needs for people with disabilities (PWDs).

#### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Raised and invested more financial resources to transcend language barriers;
- b. Developed accessibility guidelines and strategies to ensure PWDs can take part in what we do; and
- c. Supported more HRDs and their collectives to ensure their meaningful engagement and participation.



#### 4. SUPPORT THE BUILDING OF CROSS-MOVEMENT SOLIDARITY AT THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

Collective work and partnerships are one of PI's strengths. **We will continue to strengthen our collective power** and further develop our national, regional and international networks to pool resources – both in terms of skills and in financial capacity – to fulfil our global potential. We will also join new networks and alliances in areas where we need more knowledge and partnership.

##### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Maximised, pooled, and mobilised resources together with new and existing consortium partners;
- b. Increased effective and targeted advocacy and outreach efforts with more networks and alliances across the world; and
- c. Catalysed and contributed to building broader and more intersectional networks and movements that advocate for the RDHR across different thematic areas.



## so 2

# POWER-HOLDERS TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO CREATE AND UPHOLD ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS FOR THE RDHR

An enabling environment for the RDHR is essential for all HRDs and their collectives to carry out their work safely and without fear. This is particularly relevant and important for HRDs who face threats and are often at risk. The term enabling environment helps to encompass not only a legal perspective on the protection of HRDs, but also various social and political aspects that influence the agency of HRDs in practice. Recognising that a fully enabling environment will take decades to achieve, our goal for the next five years is to influence power-holders to acknowledge their roles and obligations in the protection and promotion of the RDHR and to urge them to take concrete action to create and uphold an enabling environment.

[+info](#) Read our position paper on enabling environment



*In the coming five years, we will focus and invest resources on the following:*

## 1. ADVOCATE FOR AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE RDHR

We will advocate for the creation of a safe and enabling environment for HRDs. This will require identifying and addressing disabling factors and exposing barriers that prevent defenders from enjoying their RDHR. Recognising the complexity of this task, **we will work collaboratively and coordinated efforts with partners and different stakeholders.**

*Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Contributed to the adoption of more public policies to protect the RDHR, through targeted advocacy to national governments;
- b. Increased engagements and relationships with national human rights institutions (NHRIs), and with international bodies and agencies, leading to increased influence and credibility; and
- c. Recognised and strengthened the capacities of partner HRDs and their collectives to influence power holders.



## 2. COUNTER STIGMATISATION

The safety and agency of HRDs are significantly affected by how they are perceived. Over the past decade, stigmatisation has been used to challenge the legitimacy of HRDs' struggles, affecting their safety and public support for their work.

**To tackle this challenge, we will improve our understanding of the tactics used to stigmatise HRDs in order to address them from an intersectional perspective.** The negative effects of stigmatisation often lead to increased threats and attacks against HRDs and their collectives, as well as reduced public support. The structure and impact of stigmatisation and smear campaigns should be analysed and addressed. **We will also rely on positive narratives and highlight the positive impact that HRDs have on society.**

### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Countered the negative characterisation of HRDs and promoted more positive narratives about them and their work;
- b. Reached a broader audience with clear public messages and impactful communication tools;
- c. Published research outcomes and developed innovative communication tools that promoted positive narratives about HRDs as a means of protection; and
- d. Trained and strengthened capacities on storytelling and narrative analysis of HRDs and key stakeholders.

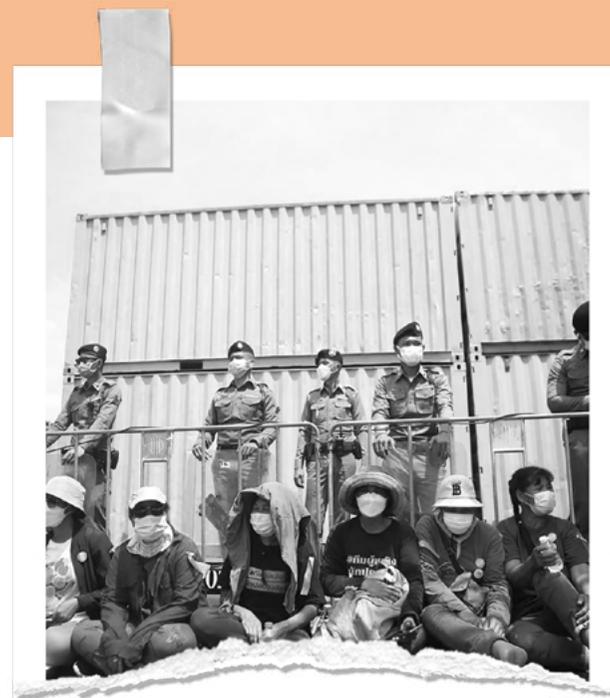


### 3. FIGHT CRIMINALISATION

Criminalisation is a complex issue that uses ambiguous criminal laws to target HRDs and their collectives and restrict their RDHR. The nature of criminalisation is two-fold: it is a process and an outcome. As a process, it takes place through police interventions, criminal investigations and proceedings, and even the conviction of HRDs. As an outcome, it has a negative impact not only on the work of individual HRDs, but also on the safety and well-being of their families, CSOs and the social movement. **We will support HRDs by urging governments to implement measures to end impunity and attacks against them.**

*Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Strengthened the access to justice for HRDs and their collectives;
- b. Mapped examples of criminalisation of HRDs and how these were addressed; and
- c. Advocated for and established accountability mechanisms that helped end impunity against HRDs and their collectives.



#### 4. STRENGTHEN DIGITAL GOVERNANCE FOR THE RDHR

Digital governance includes the norms, institutions and standards that shape the regulation of the development and use of digital technologies. **For HRDs and their collectives, digital governance is affected by the struggle between excessive control and repression by power-holders on one hand, and the need for open and safe spaces for everyone to voice their concerns and claim their rights on the other.** The coming years will be marked by the growing threat and influence of digitalisation, and the increasing relevance of cyber-threats to HRDs. We will assist HRDs and their collectives in influencing HRD-relevant policies on digital governance in their regions.

##### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Developed and published a Digital Governance Strategy Framework that supported HRDs and their collectives in assessing digital risks and developing protection strategies against digital and online threats;
- b. Supported HRDs and their collectives in shaping policies on digital assets and data privacy in their countries;
- c. Published public policies on digital/data protection on Focus Observatory resulting in stronger digital policies; and
- d. Worked with local and global tech-focused organisations to advocate for HRD-relevant public policies.



## **CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: PI IS A RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE, RESPONSIVE AND TRANSPARENT ORGANISATION**

In our last strategic framework, we committed to decentralise and bring our work closer to the HRDs and their collectives. Since then, we established regional hubs in Africa and Mesoamerica, laid the groundwork for opening a hub in Southeast Asia, expanded our operations in South America, and strengthened our support to HRDs and their collectives in Western Europe and Eurasia. We transformed some of our protection desks into country offices to establish a permanent presence in countries where our operations are politically and strategically needed.

We also sought to strengthen our internal processes to build a financially sustainable and resilient infrastructure, making the best use of our human and technological resources to deliver our mission. We are now moving towards a strategy that is more grounded, realistic and intentional. **For the next five years, we are committed to increasing our institutional strengthening efforts and investing in our people, putting them at the heart of our operations, while remaining true to our grassroots ethos.**



**In the coming five years, we will focus and invest resources on the following:**

## 1. DECENTRALISATION PROCESS

We will continue to evolve as a more decentralised organisation, with a clearer and more aligned understanding of what decentralisation means for us. **We remain true to our grassroots ethos, amplifying the voices of HRDs and their collectives, and seeking to make decisions where they matter most – close to HRDs.** We will become an organisation that works towards actively co-sharing responsibility, accountability and power. We will make strategic decisions together about what we can commit to and deliver.

We are cognisant that it takes time to collectively transform and internally effect systems change. We are therefore going to take stock of our past years, learn from our mistakes and accomplishments, and improve internally. We will develop policies and frameworks where needed, and strive to do better in areas we committed to improve on. We believe in our collective power to be the organisation we want to be and will partner with key donors, external consultants and partners who believe in us and in our work.

### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Revisited our decentralisation process, learned from it, and invested resources to implement plans;
- b. Reflected on our future, our structure and ways of working, and developed a plan of action;
- c. Agreed on a roadmap and articulated our vision of a decentralised PI; and
- d. Put in place a change management and accompaniment process to assist the people impacted by the change.



## 2. INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE AND PUTTING THEM AT THE CORE OF OUR OPERATIONS

We believe in the strength and power of our people who deliver on our mission. **Our people are our greatest resource and source of success.** We commit to making our people happy to be part of our organisation and putting in place more robust and people care centred policies and guidelines to ensure this.

### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Adopted and implemented a JEDI policy;
- b. Developed and rolled-out a people care and staff wellbeing framework; and
- c. Applied robust compensation principles across all offices and ensured living wages.



### 3. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

As we continue to decentralise, we are committed to allocating resources to strengthen our offices and improve our operational capacity. We will conduct a thorough assessment and review of our accountability and compliance systems, work processes and procedures to strengthen the way we work. Where necessary, we will develop and strengthen our sustainability and resilience management, while addressing the external challenges we face. **We aim to be a sustainable and resilient organisation in order to deliver on our programmes.**

#### *Our success will mean that PI:*

- a. Implemented a targeted fundraising strategy that made the organisation stronger, more resilient and sustainable;
- b. Strengthened our internal accountability and financial governance;
- c. Achieved a more robust resource mobilisation and re-granting environment; and
- d. Developed and implemented a monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) framework, and created a culture of learning, increased quality of work, and impact.



### Pathway 1

#### HRD-led initiatives

PI contributes to a future where HRDs and their collectives are increasingly able to lead initiatives that increase their protection and shape their environment.

### Pathway 1

#### Enhanced institutional support for the protection of HRDs and their collectives for their RDHR

PI sees a future where the courage of HRDs and their collectives is matched by the support of diverse state and non-state actors as well as institutions at multiple levels that can propel HRDs' mission forward.

### Pathway 1

#### Power holders tackle existing barriers to exercising the RDHR

PI foresees an enabling environment for the exercise of the RDHR so that all HRDs and their collectives can carry out their work safely, an environment in which power-holders understand and acknowledge existing barriers that prevent HRDs from exercising their RDHR.

**SO 1**  
HRDs and their collectives have the agency to defend human rights safely

**SO 2**  
Power holders take all necessary actions to create and uphold enabling environments for the RDHR



Read the Global Strategy Framework 2024 – 2028 online at:

[www.protectioninternational.org/global-strategy](http://www.protectioninternational.org/global-strategy)



**[www.protectioninternational.org](http://www.protectioninternational.org)**

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