

## [Supporting Defenders | Intense & Inspiring - Human Rights Defender Advocacy Programme 2018](#)

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**From** 11 to 22 June 2018, ISHR welcomed 14 committed human rights defenders from around the globe to the 2018 edition of its Human Rights Defenders Advocacy Programme (HRDAP). The unique programme equips defenders with the knowledge and skills to make strategic use of the international human rights system. It also provides an opportunity for participants to directly engage in lobbying and advocacy activities at the UN level to effect change on the ground back home.

The participants of [#HRDAP18](#), which coincides with the 38th Session of the Human Rights Council will have the opportunity to build networks in Geneva and around the world.  
[pic.twitter.com/CpE8sktSLY](https://pic.twitter.com/CpE8sktSLY)

— ISHR (@ISHRglobal) [June 14, 2018](#)

ISHR's Training and Advocacy Support Manager, Helen Nolan, explains that participants of this year's HRDAP hit the ground running, absorbing a huge amount of new information and skills, and immediately putting them into action.

'We're incredibly impressed by all that the defenders achieved during their intense two weeks here – it was a privilege to work with them,' said Nolan. 'From meeting with the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, to lobbying diplomats, the defenders made sure their issues were heard.'

'it is ironic that the [#Philippines](#) still holds the vice presidency of the [#UN](#) Human Rights Council's Bureau despite its flagrant disregard of [#HumanRights](#)' - conclusions from [#HRDAP18](#) [#HRC38](#)<https://t.co/AS7eyfyPs2> [@KalikasanPNE](#) [@Global\\_Witness](#) [@ISHRglobal](#) [@IneichenM](#)

— Helen Nolan (@Helen\_ISHR) [July 1, 2018](#)

The human rights defenders work on a wide range of areas - migrant rights, women's rights, business and human rights, the rights of LGBTI persons and human rights defender protection - in extremely different contexts: Australia, Bahamas, Botswana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Philippines, Peru, Russia and Tanzania.

HRDAP18 coincided with the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council. This meant that as well as receiving training on all the UN human rights mechanisms from a range of experts, participants were able to build networks in Geneva and around the world, lobby UN member States and UN staff, learn from each other's wealth of experience, and even deliver statements and provide testimony at the Human Rights Council itself.

Here is a taster of their many achievements & activities:

- Luisa Rios from Peru raised her voice for environmental, land and indigenous rights defenders at an [event](#) on **human rights defender protection policies**
- Defenders from Nepal, Indonesia and Malaysia [highlighted](#) the **closing civil society space for women human rights defenders** 20 years after the adoption of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders
- Linda Baumann from Namibia and other participants [called for](#) concrete protection measures tailored to meet the risks faced by **defenders protecting the rights of LGBTI persons**
- Defenders engaged in dynamic discussions **with 6 UN Special Procedures**: independent experts on freedom of assembly & association, extreme poverty, discrimination against women, health, business and human rights, and sexual orientation and gender identity
- Elena Levina drew the Human Rights Council's attention to **online violence against women human rights defenders** in [a statement](#) prepared with other participants
- Defenders from Botswana, Myanmar, Peru and the Philippines worked together to [sound the alarm](#) at the Council on the situation of persons defending **environmental and land rights**

'The ISHR team is incredibly lucky that these impressive human rights defenders have shared their expertise and stories with us,' said Nolan. 'The two weeks have inspired us, and we're thrilled that almost 100% of our participants were either extremely or very satisfied with the programme.'

'We'll be working with our new colleagues over the next year to keep turning action in Geneva into impact at home,' added Nolan.

And here we are, already wishing farewell to the 14 inspiring [#HRDAP18](#) participants who spent 2 weeks with us in Geneva! [@Helen\\_ISHR](#) 2 weeks of learning, sharing, networking and testifying & advocating at [#HRC38](#) ... but we'll stay in touch and keep on working together!  
[pic.twitter.com/tK5QmPIV9x](https://pic.twitter.com/tK5QmPIV9x)

— ISHR (@ISHRglobal) [June 22, 2018](#)

It is thanks to our generous donors - thanks to people like you and me - that the International Service for Human Rights can help human rights defenders like these in the struggle to make their goals a reality. [Donate now!](#)