



2020 HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IMPACT AWARDS [1st EDITION]

Introduction

On a daily basis, human rights defenders in their individual capacity or at organisational level work through often difficult circumstances to advance the rights of their communities. Despite these circumstances, some exceptional human rights defenders continue to exhibit endurance and resilience and thus the need to be recognized for their exceptionalism. The National coalition of human rights defenders in partnership with Defend Defenders has initiated this "2020 Human Rights Defenders Impact Awards" to celebrate the resilience of these amazing rights defenders and raise their profiles.

Background

The idea of the awards is to be able to award 5 Human Rights Defenders at regional level; Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern and Central with the central award being the overall award. The regions inform the Award Categories; however, the awardees must reflect gender parity.

The objectives of these awards are to;

1. Celebrate the exceptional work of HRDs in the promotion and protection of human rights despite the often-difficult circumstances;
2. Profile the work of HRDs and challenges they face in the course of their good human rights work at both grassroot and national level
3. Recognise and inspire resilience in human rights defenders for their protection

For the process to be as qualitative and transparent enough, a team of 5 human rights expert with both a national, regional and international human rights outlook were constituted into an Awards Advisory Committee. The team was composed of;

1. Kamadi Byonabye -Chairperson
2. Patricia Nduru -Secretary
3. Jill Kyatuheire - Member
4. Tabitha Netuwa- Member
5. Joseph Bikanda -Member

The Criteria of selection:

- **Nomination:**

On 18th November,2020 the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders Uganda and Defend Defenders issued a call for nominations for a period of two weeks calling upon nominators to nominate potential Impact Awardees. A total of 67 nominations were received through an [online google form](#). The call outlined the criteria for eligibility for nomination.

Only individual Human Rights Defenders could be nominated in the five categories.

- **Verification shortlisting and selection of final awardees**

An Award advisory committee receives the nominees and verifies their work through references provided and any attachments to the nominations and proceeds to shortlist per category two nominees. The committee proceeds to select the final five award recipients-could advise on runners-up.

- **Award ceremony**

At the Annual Commemoration of International Human Rights Defenders Day on the 9th of December, 2020 in the presence of grassroot and national CSOs, the UN, representatives from government, from the international missions, and the media who will cover the event.

Criteria

The following will be taken into consideration:

- Should have a central role in the human rights movement in the district or region where the person is active;
- Should have made exceptional contributions to the promotion and protection of human rights; and
- Could be in need of National visibility to improve the human right defender's protection
- For the regional awards, the human rights defender must be grassroots based?
- Demonstrable impact of the HRD's or the group's human rights work to the local community
- The role of the HRD or the group in promoting human rights, especially the rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups
- Demonstrated leadership, innovation and creativity in the human rights work of the human rights defender.

Six awards will be presented to the overall winners:

1. The HRD of the year award and;
2. Outstanding Grassroot Human Rights Defender-Eastern.
3. Outstanding Grassroot Human Rights Defender -Western
4. Outstanding Grassroot Human Rights Defender- Northern
5. Outstanding Grassroot Human Rights Defender -Southern
6. Outstanding Impactful Human Rights Defender -Central

The winners will receive

- A plaque with the recognition of the specific individual Human Rights Defender on it.