**Questionnaire for Civil Society by the**

**UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders**

**Mary Lawlor, August 2020**

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Ms. Mary Lawlor invites you or your organization to respond to the questionnaire below. Submissions received will inform the thematic report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of killings of human rights defenders, which will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council in March 2021.

The questionnaire and related concept cote on the report are available at OHCHR website in English (original language) as well as in French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic (unofficial translations): (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/SRHRDefenders/Pages/SRHRDefendersIndex.aspx>).

All submissions received will be published in the aforementioned website, unless you/your organization clearly indicated that you did not wish to have your input be made publicly available when submitting your response.

There is a word limit of 2500 words per questionnaire. Please submit the completed questionnaire to [defenders@ohchr.org](mailto:defenders@ohchr.org)

Deadline for submissions: **5 October 2020**

**Contact Details**

Please provide your contact details in case we need to contact you in connection with this survey. Note that this is optional. (edited for public release)

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| --- | --- |
| Type of Stakeholder (please select one) | Civil Society Group or Organisation  Individual human rights defender  Academic/training or research institution  Other (please specify): Organisation |
| Name of Stakeholder/Organization (if applicable)  Name of Survey Respondent | Odibu Foundation |
| Email |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Address |  |
| Can we attribute responses to this questionnaire to you or your organization publicly? | Yes  Comments (if any): |

**Questions**

Human rights defenders are persons, who individually or in association with others, work peacefully to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

1) Have you, any of your colleagues or your organization received online/offline threats and attacks since 1 January 2019 up 30 June 2020? No

2) If yes, can you please detail and in the case of Facebook preferably provide screenshot with URL?

3) Did any of these threats/attacks escalate into killings - can you please chart the path as you see it?No

4) Have any of your colleagues been killed since 1 January 2019 up to 30 June 2020? No

5) If so in what context did the killing(s) occur? Have there been any convictions for the killing(s)?

6) Do you normally report death threats? If so, where? Yes, in Ogoja Cross River State Nigeria

7) What in your/Organization’s experience has worked well to respond to death threats? And to prevent them from escalating into the actual killing(s) of human rights defenders?

We seek the promotion and protection of HRDs, civil and political rights as well as the realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

We have improved people's access to information, freedom and justice through increased respect for their civil and political rights.

We protect human rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

We worked towards preserving humanity in all circumstances and to strengthen the civil society, by protecting human rights violation like underdevelopment, economic pressures and various social problems.

We ensured the protection of human rights of Nigeria citizens, in Ogoja, Cross River State, South-South Nigeria by taking necessary steps for effective implementation of Human Rights Protection Act into matters relating to deprivation of human rights, denial Human Rights, and violation of Human Rights and also to call for stringent action against those who are responsible for perpetrating inhuman treatment and torture.

We fervently stand against violation of human rights, environmental degradation, injustice, inequalities, atrocities, racial discrimination, against women, torture and numerous human rights abuses and to elevate awareness on human rights issues in general amongst the bureaucratic wings in particular, so as to secure basic freedom to all Nigeria citizens.

Proper reorientation of community actors has been done to build marginalized women's confidence and regain their right.

We mobilize and strengthen communities leaders to come together and be the vanguard's and agents of change by ensuring decreasing in women's human rights abuses and domestic violence respectively in their communities, also take appropriate measures to tackle abuse and violence against women's particularly the rural dwellers are better communicated through town criers/village meeting, personal testimonies and church announcements indialects has been very important in stopping abuse and domestic violence against women's in their communities.

The right to assemble peacefully is a fundamental prerequisite for any open and self-governing society.

We protect and expand freedoms of association, expression and assembly by promoting protective norms at regional, State and local levels in northern Cross River State, Nigeria.

Our organization has won many cases against customs, police, politicians and many individuals.

Since inception our organisation have handled diverse case both legal/court cases and other unrelated court cases.

Human right defenders we routinely subjected to stigmatization, labelled as " anti- development," often quickly leading to criminalisation, threats and physical attacks.

Human rights abuses or violations in northern Cross River State, Nigeria are on the increase. This crime is condemnable and bad as it is, is been perpetuated by government officials, politicians and top people in the society, with a handful involving ordinary people. And a fight against this monster is being met by different oppositions, threat to life and livelihood, as well as physical harassments/violence on defenders by the perpetuators.

The more recent and recurrent risk, assault, illegal detention, arrest, assassination threats, physical attacks and all kinds of victimisation against us . We often Face higher risk just because we are human rights defenders.

One of the most commonly used strategies to silence and intimidate human rights defenders is the use of the judicial system. Judicial harassment wish include criminal charges, civil lawsuits or administrative proceedings. Accusations often used against HRDs range from violations of protect laws.

Many HRDs are convicted to very long prison terms, which are often also aimed at intimidating the broader human rights. Even in cases where HRDs are eventually acquitted, judicial harassment diverts time, energy and resources away from their human rights work.

Our works as human rights defenders becomes uncomfortable and frustrating, as those in power use all the tools at their disposal to injure, kill, detain, delegitimise and criminalise the work of those of us who dedicate ourselves to defending hope.

Article 22 of the African charter provides that, All peoples shall have the right to their economic, social and cultural development with due regard to their freedom, and that state shall have the duty, individually or collectively, to ensure the exercise of the right to development.

We human rights defenders are not enemies of the state, we are individuals who stand against injustice and take peaceful action to improve the human rights situation. Without our courage, our would is less fair, less just and less equal.

The reasons for this risk: This is on regular basis due to our unrelenting rights activities as referenced in our past and present works. We faced higher risks because our work as human rights defenders is to protect everyone's rights to freedom and justice through increased respect for their civil, cultural and political rights.

The Authors: Non- state actors, such as armed groups, individuals, politicians, state and local authorities.

The security measures have been implemented to date.(e.g. security reinforcements at office, revised routines, safe information management etc).

There have be a collaboration, holistic approach to safety for human rights defenders, we raise awareness about human rights abuses and violations against our human rights defenders and systemic violence and discrimination they experience.

We strengthen protection mechanisms and ensure more effective and timely responses to HRDs at risk.

And building civil spaces that are conducive to dismantling structural inequalities with out restrictions or obstacles.

We provide human rights defenders with tools and abilities to be able to improve their security and protection and also for the people that human rights defenders are working for or with (such as witnesses, rape, victims, etc). Emergency hotlines, safe houses and protective presence at HRDs offices or homes.

We get the security agents to protect us from attacks from culprits or armed groups from frustrating our work.

We called them to accompany as during our investigations this will resulted in paying them some fees, other logistics and reducing the risks we often faced on duties and our life will always be safe.

Security training on Risk Analysis and protection planning.

The training has helped us to facilitate knowledge, expectise and sharing of skills, to provide HRDs with additional information and tools that assist in addressing personal and organisational security and protection issues. Dealing with stress, the production of practical security plans geared towards each HRDs unique situation, and how to produce organisational security plans.