

THE FIGHTS OF OUR TIME

DEAR FRIENDS,

This year of dramatic upheaval has been unlike any other in our lifetimes.

As we write this letter, the COVID-19 pandemic has killed more than 1 million people and upended the lives of billions more worldwide, disrupting your life and the lives of people you know and love.

At AJWS, we understand from our 35 years of responding to humanitarian disasters that this pandemic is mapped onto a world already riven by conflict, oppression and inequality: The climate crisis is progressing at a breakneck pace, domestic violence is rising at alarming rates, authoritarian rulers are threatening democracies, and the forces of hatred grow louder, bolder and more deadly.

These are the fights of our time, and our time demands that we take action.

At this moment of crisis, our mission is more relevant than ever, with more people in more places needing us to take up our Jewish obligation of "tikkun olam"—repairing the world.

Thanks to your support, courageous activists and grassroots organizations in the 18 countries we serve are standing up to ensure that their communities have what they need to survive COVID-19—and they are building powerful social movements to fight injustice around the globe. And here at home, our Advocacy team is working to pressure the United States government to uphold our nation's promise to defend—rather than trample—human rights around the world.

We are deeply committed to forging a future in which every person can live to their full potential in democratic societies with dignity and the full range of human rights.

Together with you, we are building a more just and equitable world.

We are proud to share this annual report with you, and we hope that the stories that follow will inspire you during these unprecedented times. Thank you for your support in 2020 and beyond.

With our deepest gratitude,

Robert Bank

President and CEO

Bradley Abelow Chair of the Board of Trustees

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CONNECTION AND SOLIDARITY A group of girls from Jeevika Development Society (JDS), an organization that empowers women and girls to be leaders in their families and communities in India, wave goodbye to an AJWS supporter after a grantee visit. Photo by Sasithon Pooviriyakul

Guring these very troubling and unusual times, we feel even more committed and inspired knowing that AJWS is out there offering assistance to the most vulnerable people in the world. It has never been clearer to me that we—all races, genders, nationalities, all humankind—must work together for our common good and our continued existence on this planet.

—AJWS DONOR, NEW YORK CITY

CHAMPIONING HUMAN RIGHTS

AROUND THE GLOBE

AJWS invested \$33.7 million* in our grantmaking and social change strategies in 2020. We supported 519 social justice organizations fighting poverty and promoting human rights in 18** countries. And throughout the year, these organizations and the movements they're a part of tackled the most pressing issues of our time—from gender inequality to the climate crisis, from genocide to the humanitarian crisis of COVID-19.

*Including \$2.1 million invested through a donor-advised fund administered by AJWS.

**The list below is not comprehensive due to security concerns.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC EL SALVADOR GUATEMALA

HAITI

MEXICO

NICARAGUA CRANTE

AFRICA

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO KENYA LIBERIA SENEGAL

UGANDA

Z4
GRANTEES

ASIA

BURMA
CAMBODIA
INDIA
INDONESIA
SRI LANKA

THAILAND

232

CROSS REGIONAL GRANTEES: 27

BREAKING BARRIERS In India, Feminist Approach to Technology (FAT) empowers girls to develop their leadership skills and pursue studies in science, math, engineering and technology. Photo by Sasithon Pooviriyakul



IN 2020, AJWS SUPPORTED **519** ORGANIZATIONS FIGHTING TO...

SEXUAL HEALTH & RIGHTS

END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY

STOP CHILD MARRIAGE

EMPOWER ADOLESCENT GIRLS

DEFEND LGBTQI+ RIGHTS

ENSURE THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF SEX WORKERS

185
GRANTEES

LAND, WATER & CLIMATE JUSTICE

PROTECT INDIGENOUS AND RURAL LANDS

MITIGATE IMPACTS OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS

STOP HARMFUL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

REDUCE HUNGER AND ENSURE FOOD SECURITY

158
GRANTEES

CIVIL & POLITICAL RIGHTS

BUILD PEACE

PROMOTE DEMOCRACY

CHALLENGE AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

DEFEND RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

EMPOWER WOMEN LEADERS

161
GRANTEES

ER & HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

RECOVER FROM TSUNAMIS AND EARTHQUAKES

REBUILD AFTER STORMS, FLOODING AND MUDSLIDES

AID COMMUNITIES
DISPLACED BY DROUGHT,
HUNGER AND CONFLICT

15
GRANTEES

COVID-19

Since COVID-19 emerged, AJWS has supported our grantees to aid communities with essential needs, stop the spread of infection and defend human rights under fire.

BUILDING MOVEMENTS

FOR JUSTICE

To fight injustice and build a more just, equitable and peaceful world, we are committed to strengthening powerful social movements. That's why, through your support, we've invested deeply in thousands of activists around the world, strengthened the organizations they run and facilitated collaboration among them. With your help, these activists are creating strong movements for social change that are tipping the scales toward justice.

40%

OF OUR GRANTEES ARE **YOUNG ORGANIZATIONS** FOUNDED WITHIN 5 YEARS OF THEIR FIRST AJWS GRANT

91%

OF OUR GRANTEES **ENGAGE IN ADVOCACY** TO ADVANCE LAWS AND POLICIES TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

76%

OF OUR GRANTEES ARE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL, NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL **NETWORKS OR COALITIONS** THAT WORK TOGETHER TO EFFECT MORE CHANGE—AND 46% OF OUR GRANTEES ARE LEADERS IN THESE MOVEMENTS

AJWS GRANTEES BELONG TO 38 SOCIAL CHANGE MOVEMENTS WORLDWIDE, INCLUDING:

WOMEN'S RIGHTS	CLIMATE JUSTICE	RACIAL, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS
SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS	LAND RIGHTS	MINORITIES' RIGHTS INDIGENOUS
	WATER RIGHTS	PEOPLES' RIGHTS
LGBTQI+ RIGHTS		YOUTH RIGHTS
	AGRARIAN REFORM	CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS
SEX WORKERS' RIGHTS	FOOD SOVEREIGNTY	PEACE AND DEMOCRACY



Around the world, AJWS's **28** IN-COUNTRY EXPERTS (like Mareme Bodian, in Senegal, pictured on the right with Program Officer Tabara Ndiaye) support our grantees to develop their strategies, leadership, financial security, fundraising, programs and risk management—to increase their capacity to make a difference.









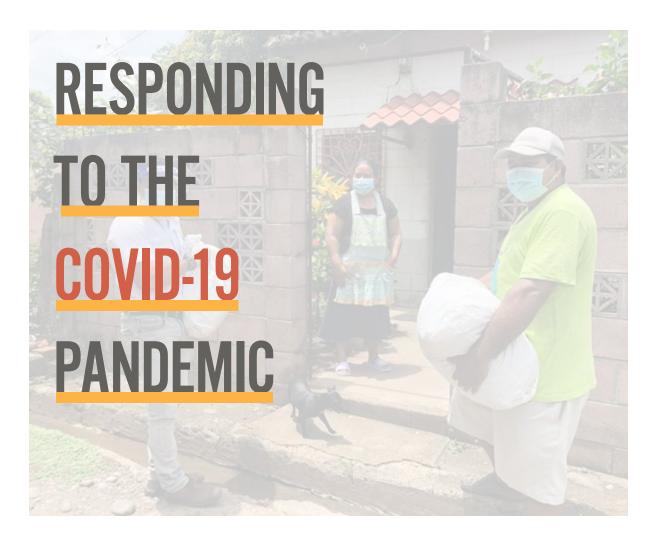
WORKING
TOGETHER
TO BUILD
A MORE
JUST AND
EQUITABLE
WORLD





FROM LEFT: AJWS grantees in India, Thailand and Kenya raised their voices in 2020 to fight for justice. Photos by Sara Hylton, courtesy of AJWS grantee and Christine Han

CLOCKWISE



covid-19 has struck a devastating blow in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, disrupting and destroying lives everywhere. The pandemic has posed an existential threat to all the vulnerable communities AJWS serves—and it has magnified inequality between rich and poor, fueled flare-ups of bigotry, increased sexual violence against women and girls, and exacerbated the unchecked rise of authoritarianism.

But in the face of fear, we acted.

AJWS's courageous grantees around the world ensured that their communities could protect themselves and survive this crisis.

RUSHING TO THEIR AID When tropical storm Amanda struck El Salvador in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic, AJWS grantee Unidad Ecológica Salvadoreña (UNES) delivered food and personal protective equipment to affected communities. Photo courtesy of UNES

RISING TO A NEW CHALLENGE

With your generous support, AJWS mobilized swiftly and nimbly to provide our grantees with the resources to weather this storm. Armed with 35 years of experience responding to humanitarian disasters and human rights crises, we were able to address their immediate needs during this pandemic—and together with you, we will continue to stand by them in the long-term.

Addressing urgent humanitarian needs

...by enabling organizations to provide threatened communities with desperately needed aid. Our grantees have distributed emergency food, personal protective equipment and other essentials, and they are ensuring that people can access key services, like reproductive health care, legal aid and psychosocial support.

Spreading life-saving information to flatten the curve

...by funding networks of local journalists and activists to broadcast accurate COVID-19 safety information via newspapers, radio, loudspeakers and social media. As trusted messengers, our grantees are reaching remote communities and others cut off from accurate information about the virus. AJWS also developed a toolkit on preventing infection in 10 languages.

Protecting human rights under attack

...by battling discrimination that bars minorities from hospitals, oppressive laws passed under the guise of containing the virus, and domestic violence against women that has flared during lockdowns. Our grantees are also urging governments to follow through on their promises of relief aid—and we are amplifying their advocacy in Congress, the State Department, and among fellow funders and international institutions.

Building more sustainable communities

...by supporting them to become more resilient—developing alternative sources of income, producing their own food, accessing local markets to sell homemade goods and more. During a year of massive job loss, AJWS grantees are helping their communities survive this crisis—and become better prepared for whatever lies ahead.

The changemakers AJWS supports are no strangers to upheaval—they pivot adeptly in times of disaster and during new attacks on human rights. Now, with COVID-19 threatening their survival, our grantees are once again responding nimbly to a changed world. They are reaching communities left out by governments and large aid organizations, among them Indigenous Peoples, the rural poor, ethnic minorities and LGBTQI+ people.

Read stories of their courageous COVID-19 response on the following pages...

AIDING MIGRANT WORKERS DURING LOCKDOWN



WHEN INDIA'S Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that the country would enter lockdown on March 24th with only a few hours' notice, millions of people were completely stranded.

For hundreds of thousands of migrant workers from some of India's poorest communities who had travelled to faraway cities for work, opportunities disappeared in the blink of an eye—and they were left with no income, sometimes hundreds of miles from their home villages.

Seeing the immense need of these migrant workers forced to return home, AJWS grantee Humsafar sprang into action, distributing emergency food packages to workers as they fled the city of Lucknow on foot. Since the organization operates a support center for women and girls in crisis, they also provided food to survivors of abuse and joined the national movement of gender rights organizations supporting domestic abuse survivors throughout the crisis.

As India's lockdown began to ease, Humsafar made clear that it would never waver. "This was not just a struggle against COVID-19. This is a struggle for social and economic justice. A struggle for feminist principles. A struggle to build a more inclusive society. And for as long as it takes, we are in this fight together." 44

We listened to the desperate calls for help rising from our city ... and we simply couldn't wait.

People were starving. For some Indians, lockdown means giving up a few things. For others, it is the challenge of keeping body and soul together.

—HUMSAFAR TEAM



ENSURING SURVIVAL When millions of migrant laborers were left stranded during India's COVID-19 lockdown, AJWS grantee Humsafar—a support center for women and girls—sprang into action, distributing emergency food to workers as they fled the city on foot. Photos courtesy of Humsafar

BROADCASTING LIFESAVING INFORMATION

IN RURAL UGANDA, where electricity and internet access are unreliable and illiteracy is high, accurate sources of information can be hard to come by. That's why, for years, AJWS grantee National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) has run a trusted community radio station that tackles the issues that rural communities face.

Today, their work is more urgent than ever. With misinformation about COVID-19 running wild in the country, NAPE has turned their station into a true lifeline—working with public health officials to educate rural families about this deadly virus and how to protect themselves.





TOP: Photo by Jonathan Torgovnik; BOTTOM: Courtesy of NAPE

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It can be difficult to help other people while we live under these conditions, but we're together in this crisis and we won't leave anyone behind.

—HARRIS ABDUL, DIRECTOR OF WALHI

TACKLING A DISASTER WITHIN A DISASTER

IN 2018, a devastating earthquake and tsunami tore through Palu, Indonesia, killing over 4,300 people and displacing tens of thousands more. Two years later, when COVID-19 struck, most of the disaster's survivors were still living in makeshift camps with scarce food, water and medical care.

To help them weather this new crisis, AJWS grantees **Sulteng Bergerak** and **Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (WALHI)**—which had been fighting for the government to rehouse Palu's displaced survivors since 2018—worked together to build a coalition that provided life-saving education and protective equipment to this neglected group, and they pressed the government to provide the aid it promised.



ABOVE Sulteng Bergerak's director, Adriansa Manu (center), meets with his staff to discuss tsunami relief. Photo by Allison Joyce



I want to ensure that when we say never again, we really mean it. Not only that it's never again for us, but never again for anyone else...We have to make sure we look outward, which is not only a nice thing to do—it's a mitzvah.

—RABBI FELIPE GOODMAN, TEMPLE BETH SHOLOM, LAS VEGAS, AJWS GLOBAL JUSTICE FELLOW

DEMANDING JUSTICE FOR THE ROHINGYA PEOPLE AT THE HAGUE

FOR DECADES, the Rohingya people of Burma faced state-sponsored persecution because of their ethnicity and religion. And in 2017, the Burmese military launched a genocide against them—forcing 740,000 people to flee from fire, mass murder and rape. AJWS responded to the crisis immediately—and we've continued to apply the full force of our advocacy to bring justice to the Rohingya people.

Two and a half years after these atrocities unfolded, the Rohingya people finally achieved a first step toward restitution.

In December 2019, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague held its first hearing on the Burmese military's crimes against the Rohingya people. Addressing a packed crowd near the court, Rohingya activist Yasmin Ullah declared: "This case is important because we get to reclaim our humanity."

A month later, ICJ judges unanimously ordered Burma to "take concrete steps to prevent the genocide of the Rohingya people." They said the country must preserve the evidence of past attacks, and as the years-long case advances, they must file a progress report with the Court every six months.

For years, AJWS's Advocacy team and grass-tops leaders in our community—including rabbis and cantors from across the country—have advocated in the halls of power to demand safety and justice for the Rohingya people and all persecuted ethnic and religious minorities in Burma. There is still much work to be done to ensure a safe and dignified future, but AJWS will continue to fight alongside this community until that future is secured. Still, the Court's rebuke of the Burmese government made it crystal clear: The international community is watching.

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The [Rohingya] community has never experienced a free and fair trial, and this experience is making them feel as if they are reclaiming their humanity for the very first time. They feel that the wheels of justice are finally turning for them. They know this is just the beginning, making the enormity of the moment truly palpable.

—TENZIN PALKYI,
AJWS SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR,
quoted in The Washington Post,
December 2019

PREVIOUS PAGE Setera (right) and her daughter survived unspeakable violence at the hands of the Burmese military in 2017. They are still waiting for justice. Photo by Alison Wright



IN A YEAR WHEN many women and girls were locked down during the pandemic with their abusers, domestic violence spiked. Activists around the world supported by AJWS continued to fight pervasive gender-based violence, and together, they changed laws and found innovative ways to reach isolated women, girls and LGBTQI+ people—helping to make their communities safer places to live and thrive.

GIRLS TAKE CHARGE Sonia Dandapath, 18, is a champion kickboxer who faced sexual violence when she was young. Through AJWS grantee Nishtha, which facilitates girls' collectives, she learned to speak out against abuse and violence—and today, she is a leader and advocate in her community. Photo by Sara Hylton

CRIMINALIZING RAPE, ONCE AND FOR ALL

FOR YEARS in Senegal, the crime of rape was dismissed by both the public and the courts as the equivalent of a misdemeanor. Convictions were rare—and even when rapists were found guilty, their sentences were usually lenient.

But AJWS grantee Association des Juristes Sénégalaises (AJS), a group of women lawyers who promote and protect human rights, refused to let the past dictate the future. In January 2020, AJS led a massive movement to change the legal code—and they won.

The movement was ignited after several horrific cases of women raped and murdered in Senegal made headlines in 2019. Under public pressure—and with growing demonstrations from grassroots organizations all over the country—Senegal's President Macky Sall spoke out, declaring his intention to change the laws. AJS worked closely with members of parliament, both men and women, to criminalize rape definitively.

The day the new law was set to be discussed in parliament, AJS and its sister organizations in the movement rallied their supporters to hit the streets. Thousands of people showed up to march toward the parliament in Dakar. Dressed in white, they held signs demanding justice for women and girls who had been victims of sexual violence. Thanks to the massive support they garnered for the new law, AJS expected it to pass—but they were surprised and elated when it was approved unanimously.

Now, thanks to the work of AJS and its allies, rape convictions carry a minimum of a 10-year sentence and a maximum of life in prison—a serious punishment befitting the horrendous crime.



ABOVE: Awa Tounkara, AJS's Project and Training Manager.
Photo by Christine Han FOLLOWING PAGE: On the day of the
parliamentary vote that led to Senegal's new law criminalizing rape,
AJS's members dressed in white, along with thousands of women who
joined the movement for change. Photo courtesy of AJS



RESPONDING TO SPIKES IN VIOLENCE WROUGHT BY THE PANDEMIC

When COVID-19 swept through Senegal, AJS knew the crisis would intensify violence against women—as it did in so many countries around the world. Fearing the worst, the members of its team felt called to act—and they deftly pivoted their work. AJS opened phone lines for women in crisis, distributed food to ease the strain on families, and launched a radio campaign to raise awareness of violence against women.





RAISING THEIR VOICES In West Bengal, India, girls rally for their rights to education and to be free from violence, with AJWS grantee Nishtha. Photos by Sara Hylton

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When something happens to one of us, the group can save us. Nishtha gives women emotional strength.

—MINA DAS, DIRECTOR OF NISHTHA

LOCKED DOWN, BUT NEVER SILENT

"Men and women are equal!"
"Let us read, let us study!"

THESE ARE just some of the chants shouted by over 200 girls and young women in West Bengal, India, in a rally organized by AJWS grantee Nishtha in February of this year. They were proudly marching and making their voices heard through the narrow streets of their rural village—a place where women are often encouraged to be silent.

A few weeks after the rally, India imposed one of the world's largest and strictest lockdowns to slow the spread of COVID-19. But the lockdown had vicious side effects: Domestic violence surged, as food shortages and lost income made household stresses skyrocket, and many women were trapped at home with abusive partners or family members.

Though they could no longer march through the streets during the

COVID-19 lockdown, Nishtha's community knew they had to raise their voices—literally.

Nishtha started a "Shout Out Loud" campaign, organizing hundreds of girls to scream if they experienced or witnessed violence. When other girls heard the commotion, they would join in—generating a blast of noise throughout their neighborhoods. The campaign stopped attackers in their tracks and gave young women a sense of solidarity amid the isolation of lockdown.

With over 13,000 members, Nishtha (which means "determination" in Bengali) organizes girls' "collectives"—safe and inclusive spaces, led by girls, for girls, to support each other through life's challenges and learn about human rights.

The collectives save girls' lives. Domestic violence, child marriage and gender inequality are prevalent in West Bengal, and they're predicted to keep rising during the pandemic, according to the UN Population Fund. That's why Nishtha is continuing to do what it has done tirelessly since 1983: fight to stop violence, keep girls in school and help them avoid unwanted marriages, so they can live bright futures of their own choosing.

IN DELHI, INDIA, a 30-year-old woman, eight months pregnant and short of breath, died after being turned away by eight separate hospitals because she lived in a COVID-19 red zone—and she was not the only one. When another young woman in labor was denied emergency entry to multiple hospitals, she turned to AJWS grantee **SAMA Resource Group for Women** for help. The SAMA team jumped into action—quickly documenting over 40 similar cases.

Seeing the dire need for change, SAMA petitioned Delhi's High Court to demand that women's access to prenatal and maternal healthcare be respected as a human right. In a matter of weeks, SAMA won this battle when the court ordered the city "to make sure that no barriers are faced by pregnant women and their family members residing in hot spots during the lockdown."

EMPOWERING GIRLS TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN PATHS

IN 2020, AIWS supported 70 grantees in India to reach over 140,000 adolescent girls and young women by organizing collectives groups that provide safe spaces for girls to connect with peers, practice leadership skills and learn about their bodies and their rights. Through their leadership in these collectives, our grantees empowered young women and girls to challenge limitations placed on them by their families and society, pursue education and careers, and most importantly, determine their own futures.

On the global stage, we deployed research by our grantees to influence fellow grantmakers and policy experts alike to shift their approaches to addressing the harmful practice of child, early and forced marriage—deepening their support for addressing root causes like gender inequality and taboos against girls' sexuality.

In January, the Child, Early and Forced Marriage and Sexuality Working Group—co-chaired by AJWS—and The Kendeda Fund convened a gathering of over 50 major funders and organizations, including the Ford Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF and the Open Society Foundations. Several AJWS grantees, including The YP Foundation and Feminist Approach to Technology in India, and TICAH in Kenya, used this influential gathering—a rare

opportunity to engage in open dialogue with some of the largest funders in the world—to share insights and challenges in their work to advance girls' rights.

Following the convening, both funders and experts expressed their appreciation for the depth, openness and timeliness of the conversations—an important step in influencing other funders to invest in the kind of organizations and approaches AJWS supports in reducing child, early and forced marriage.

TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN INDIA, AJWS SUPPORTS:

70 GRANTEES

3,500 GIRLS' COLLECTIVES

140,000 GIRLS REACHED

35 RESEARCH PROJECTS

700+

FELLOW FUNDERS AND EXPERTS CONVENED IN 2020 TO ADVANCE GIRLS' RIGHTS



RIDING FREE Girls ride bikes in West Bengal, India—a sign of growing autonomy in a community where their mobility is often restricted. These girls are standing up for their rights in "collectives" run by AJWS grantee Nishtha. Photo by Sara Hylton

PROMOTING GLOBAL LGBTQI+ RIGHTS

IN DECEMBER of 2019, members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate introduced the Greater Leadership Overseas for the Benefit of Equality (GLOBE) Act—landmark legislation that champions LGBTQI+ rights worldwide. AJWS secured cosponsors for the bill and worked closely with congressional offices to guarantee that our grantees' needs were reflected in the legislation—ensuring comprehensive access to HIV care and influencing U.S. foreign policy to be inclusive of LGBTQI+ people. Now, as our LGBTQI+ grantees confront COVID-19, AJWS is fighting to ensure that the GLOBE Act will be considered and passed as a key and necessary part of the United States' response to the global pandemic.



RECLAIMING PRIDE In 2019, Thai LGBTQI+ activists and several AJWS grantees organized the first Chiang Mai Pride Parade in 10 years—after the last one was derailed by vitriol and threats of violence. Despite the risks, the LGBTQI+ community courageously returned to the streets and made their voices heard loud and clear. Photo by Allison Joyce



THROUGHOUT 2020, AJWS's grantees battled discrimination, abuses of power and other devastating injustices that have been cruelly exacerbated by COVID-19. They fought unjust laws proposed under the guise of containing the virus, countered the misinformation spread by governments that muzzle the press, and demanded that governments make good on their promises to deliver aid to the most vulnerable people.

ABOVE Sri Lankan police use excessive force to disinfect a homeless man before transporting him to a COVID-19 isolation center. Photo by AP Photo/Eranga Jayawardena

SECURING FREEDOM FOR WRONGFULLY IMPRISONED LGBTQI+ YOUTH

ON THE MORNING of March 29th, 2020, at the Children of the Sun Foundation homeless shelter outside Kampala, Uganda, a group of LGBTQI+ youth were inside, obeying the country's strictly enforced nationwide COVID-19 quarantine.

Suddenly, the district's mayor and his local police force burst into the shelter, rounded up 23 young people and hauled them off to the police station without explanation. Two days later, a local court charged them with committing "a negligent act to spread disease" and sent them to prison—utterly sealed off from the world and barred from speaking to lawyers.

Longtime AJWS grantee Human Rights
Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF)

came to their aid, waging a complex legal battle as the youth were held without bail and brutally harassed by police and prison authorities.

After 52 days of legal roadblocks, they were finally granted a hearing—and their hopes were realized: Uganda's Director of Public Prosecutions formally withdrew all charges. A month later, Uganda's High Court ruled that the youth were denied inalienable human rights—and awarded each of them substantial restitution.

"This case has made me more resilient. It's reenergized my passion and quest for justice for the most marginalized and vulnerable in society," says HRAPF program director Patricia Kimera.



FREEING INCARCERATED YOUTH Attorneys from HRAPF speak to Ugandan press outside the local courthouse, where they successfully secured justice for the 23 LGBTQI+ youth who were unjustly imprisoned. Photos courtesy of HRAPF

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You must do everything possible to attain justice for your clients—and do it without fear or shame.

—PATRICIA KIMERA, HRAPF PROGRAM DIRECTOR AND LEAD COUNSEL



IT'S A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

This mass arrest was the latest chapter in Uganda's long history of discrimination against its LGBTQI+ citizens—most egregiously, through the country's 2013 Anti-Homosexuality Act, which allowed courts to sentence people to life in prison for engaging in consensual same-sex relationships. In 2014, HRAPF attorneys and a coalition of dozens of human rights groups appealed to Uganda's Constitutional Court and successfully overturned that law.

In both 2014 and today, while our Ugandan grantees were fighting in their country, AJWS's Advocacy team was fighting behind the scenes, working with the United States government and allies from around the world to pressure Ugandan authorities to change course. Activists believe that the powerful combination of tireless local legal advocacy with intense global pressure—applied by AJWS and others—tipped the scale toward justice.

DEMANDING GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

GUATEMALA HAS long struggled with a vast gap in wealth between rich and poor, and rampant government corruption. Unsurprisingly, when COVID-19 hit, Guatemala's government failed to provide the aid it promised its citizens, or vital protective equipment for medical professionals. Adding insult to injury, Guatemala's Congress then introduced a bill that would reduce employers' obligations to their employees, decimating

workers' rights and forcing even more people into poverty.

But AJWS grantee-partner Otra Guatemala Ya (OGY) could not let this stand. In May 2020, OGY was part of a movement of social justice groups that organized a demonstration outside Congress to protest the proposed bill, the treatment of medical staff and the scarcity of resources. Their signs decried the government's culpability in spreading illness and death: "It wasn't coronavirus, it was the State!" Following the protest, the Guatemalan Congress suspended the bill indefinitely.

OPPOSING THE "COMMISSION ON UNALIENABLE RIGHTS"

IN MARCH 2020, AJWS enlisted more than 300 lewish rabbis and cantors from across the country to leverage their power as faith leaders and sign on to a letter to Secretary of State Pompeo opposing the Trump administration's dangerous "Commission on Unalienable Rights." In the name of elevating "religious freedom," this Commission is actually imposing a narrow view on the scope of human rights that the United States will promote in its diplomacy—undermining the rights of women, LGBTQI+ people and other vulnerable communities around the world.

To fight the Commission, AJWS also collaborated with other organizations to draft and send a subsequent interfaith letter to Pompeo, signed by over

50 religious organizations and more than 400 interfaith leaders. In May, we joined 167 organizations and individuals in calling for the disbanding of the Commission. And in July, *The Washington Post* published an op-ed by our Director of U.S. Advocacy critiquing the Commission. To this day, we continue to fight this Commission and its intolerant approach to global human rights together with other progressive religious groups.



The United States was—and must continue to be— dedicated to the proposition that unalienable rights are universal.

—RORI KRAMER, AJWS DIRECTOR OF U.S. ADVOCACY, *quoted in* The Washington Post, *July 2020*



IN 2020, THE CLIMATE CRISIS and exploitative development projects continued to ravage our environment. At the same time, Indigenous communities all over the world were unjustly uprooted from their homes by those who wished to plunder their lands for profit. In response, AJWS's grantees persisted in their fights to protect ecosystems, ensure equal access to natural resources and defend the lands that rightfully belong to Indigenous Peoples. Even in the face of new and increasing challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, they continued their struggle for ongoing access to the earth's endangered natural resources.

FIGHTING FOR CLEAN WATER FOR ALL

FOR YEARS, AJWS grantees have waged a courageous battle to protect El Salvador's dwindling supply of clean water. Despite our grantees' powerful recent victories—including helping to secure a groundbreaking decision by the government in 2017 to ban all metal mining to prevent poisonous, water-polluting runoff—over 1.1 million Salvadorans still lack access to safe drinking water.

When COVID-19 reached El Salvador, it laid bare a devastating truth: Existing inequities guaranteed that the poor and vulnerable would suffer the worst consequences of the pandemic. Handwashing recommendations are impossible to follow when entire communities can't access clean water. This injustice only deepened the country's economic divide: People who already suffered from extreme poverty were unable to protect themselves against this deadly new threat.

In response, five AJWS grantees (ACUA, FESPAD, UNES, ADES, Foro del Agua) rose to this challenge. They helped found the National Alliance Against the Privatization of Water—a

coalition to bring clean water to all people in El Salvador—and promptly launched an online campaign to amplify the voices of communities that lack safe water, using the Spanish hashtag #SinAguaElCovidAvanza, "Without Water, COVID Grows."

"Water is a human right for all," the coalition declared. "This vital liquid is necessary to overcome COVID-19. The State seeks to guarantee health to the population through the implementation of sanitary measures, but it has forgotten that the human right to water must be guaranteed first."

With AJWS's support, our grantees are at the forefront of this growing movement to guarantee this most basic human right for all.



MAKING WAVES In El Salvador, where over 1.1 million people lack access to clean water, a protester demands access to this crucial resource for all Salvadorans. Photo courtesy of UNES

CALLING FOR SHELTER

IN GUATEMALA, the community of Laguna Larga has been homeless since 2017, when the country's security forces violently displaced them from their land. They were forced to flee to a makeshift encampment straddling the border with Mexico—with little access to water, food, healthcare and basic sanitation. Since then, AJWS grantee Bufete Jurídico de Derechos Humanos has supported this community in their ongoing legal fight to reclaim their ancestral land.

This year, as COVID-19 tore through Guatemala, the Laguna Larga community's return home became more pressing than ever. That's why Bufete helped them appeal to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, an international body that investigates and issues recommendations on human rights violations in the Americas. Through this appeal, the community hopes to secure a provisional return to their village—where they can more easily prevent the virus's spread—and Bufete will continue to stand by them until their land is returned to them permanently.

In the meantime, AJWS grantee Servicios y
Asesoría para la Paz (SERAPAZ) has stepped up
to help from the Mexican side of the border. Since
2019, they have delivered basic food and medicine
to 111 displaced families—supplying the urgent aid
that Guatemala's government refuses to provide
and keeping the Laguna Larga community afloat.

SALWEEN PEACE PARK AWARDED UN PRIZE

In June, the Salween Peace Park in Burma—a project created by AJWS grantee **Karen**Environmental and Social Action Network
(KESAN)—won the United Nations
Development Programme's renowned Equator
Prize. This prestigious accolade celebrated
KESAN's work to protect and preserve the
park, a 2,000-square-mile ecosystem of
community forests and Indigenous lands
in eastern Burma. Since 2001, KESAN has
collaborated with Indigenous rural farmers to
defend their lands and promote sustainable
models for development.

Photo courtesy of KESAN



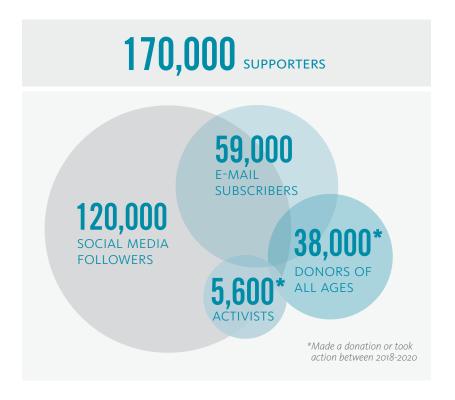




BUILDING A BETTER WORLD

TOGETHER

AJWS UNITES the power of our community across the United States and around the world.



In our joint fight to build a better world for all, our AJWS community is transforming millions of lives together.

If you made a gift to AJWS this year, we thank you.

Together, we've enabled 519 grantees in 18 countries to fight bigotry, demand justice and advance equality. We've provided communities around the world with the resources they need to save lives by slowing the

spread of COVID-19. We've aided refugees, helped defend Indigenous lands and precious ecosystems, and buoyed movements led by women, LGBTQI+ people and persecuted ethnic and religious minorities to end discrimination around the world.

Together, we are taking on the fights of our time.

As we enter the new year, we will continue to champion the rights of the most vulnerable people and repair the brokenness in our midst. We are ever grateful for your partnership as we fight for a world where all people may live and thrive, side by side, with dignity.

MEETING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS

OF PHILANTHROPIC INTEGRITY

AJWS is a shining light in the nonprofit world ...

Making lasting, positive change is hard work, and

AJWS has proven its ability to rise to endless challenges

with thoughtful consideration and intellectual heft.

Their unwavering commitment to bettering the lives of

people everywhere is an inspiration.

—SUSAN LEBOVITZ-EDELMAN, EDELMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION, AJWS SUPPORTER

"FOUR STARS"

FROM CHARITY NAVIGATOR FOR 17 YEARS

ALL 20

OF BETTER BUSINESS
BUREAU'S STANDARDS FOR
CHARITY ACCOUNTABILITY

"A" RATING

FROM CHARITYWATCH (FORMERLY AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHILANTHROPY) SINCE 2004

PLATINUM

SEAL OF TRANSPARENCY FROM GUIDESTAR

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE At just 18 years old, Papri Barik (pictured below with her mother) leads a girls' collective in India. With the help of AJWS grantee Nishtha, she's been able to pursue an undergraduate degree—a turning point in her life. Papri wants to become a teacher to empower other girls to be strong decisionmakers in their families and communities. Photo by Sara Hylton



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

American Jewish World Service, Inc.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF APRIL 30, 2020

(with summarized comparative financial information as of April 30, 2019)

	2020	2019
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$10,837,309	\$6,167,601
Contributions receivable, net	17,250,703	21,610,112
Investments, at fair value	24,058,381	21,099,354
Prepaid expenses and other assets	826,791	680,438
Property and equipment, net	1,443,801	1,081,678
Total assets	\$54,416,985	\$50,639,183
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$1,062,138	\$794,112
Grants payable	2,428,537	3,205,198
Loan payable	2,132,540	-
Deferred rent	971,509	868,293
Unearned revenue	88,227	254,891
Charitable gift annuity obligation	361,468	187,297
Total liabilities	7,044,419	5,309,791
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	4,468,128	2,026,487
Designated for donor-advised fund	1,781,803	653,383
Board-designated for reserve fund	14,645,105	12,096,982
Board-designated for working capital fund	4,022,449	3,993,375
Total without donor restrictions	24,917,485	18,770,227
With donor restrictions	22,455,081	26,559,165
Total net assets	47,372,566	45,329,392
Total liabilities and net assets	\$54,416,985	\$50,639,183

AJWS's total assets vary year-to-year due to the timing of the receipt and usage of commitments and payments for multi-year grants.

American Jewish World Service, Inc.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AS OF APRIL 30, 2020

(with summarized comparative financial information as of April 30, 2019)

_	2020		2019	
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total	Total
REVENUES AND SUPPORT				
Contributions:				
Individuals	\$15,204,126	\$4,497,043	\$19,701,169	\$18,169,387
Donor-advised fund	3,240,000	-	3,240,000	3,438,300
Bequests	662,664	100	662,764	832,342
Foundations and corporations	1,246,364	18,568,757	19,815,121	15,920,921
Government agencies	585,474	-	585,474	331,447
Donated services and goods	558,018	-	558,018	404,449
Investment income, net of expenses of \$65,113 in 2020 and \$64,857 in 2019	61,230	(699)	60,531	710,604
Study tour fees and miscellaneous revenue	410,449	331	410,780	420,192
Net assets released from restrictions:				
Satisfaction of purpose restrictions	23,930,866	(23,930,866)	-	-
Satisfaction of time restrictions	3,238,750	(3,238,750)	-	-
Total revenues and support	49,137,941	(4,104,084)	45,033,857	40,227,642
EXPENSES				
Program services:				
Programs	27,771,197	-	27,771,197	30,122,911
Communications	3,591,083	-	3,591,083	3,587,028
Strategic learning, research and evaluation	2,361,018	-	2,361,018	2,352,068
Total program services expenses	33,723,298	-	33,723,298	36,062,007
Supporting services:				
Management and general	2,949,978	_	2,949,978	2,635,522
Fundraising	6,317,407	_	6,317,407	5,595,828
Total supporting services expenses	9,267,385	-	9,267,385	8,231,350
Total expenses	42,990,683	-	42,990,683	44,293,357
Change in net assets	6,147,258	(4,104,084)	2,043,174	(4,065,715)
Beginning net assets	18,770,227	26,559,165	45,329,392	49,395,107
Ending net assets	\$24,917,485	\$22,455,081	\$47,372,566	\$45,329,392

 $AJWS's \ revenue \ and \ expenses \ fluctuate \ year-to-year \ based \ on \ variations \ in \ multi-year \ gifts \ and \ the \ donor-advised \ fund \ (DAF).$

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Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York

Tracey and Michael Delfiner

Dorot Foundation

Eileen and Richard Epstein

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Joyce and Irving Goldman Family Foundation

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Marcy and Bob Haber

Ruth and Stephen Hendel

Jim Joseph Foundation

Cathy and Jim Koshland

The Morningstar Foundation

The Overbrook Foundation

Pears Foundation

Lawrence S. Phillips*

Righteous Persons Foundation

In Memory of Rose L. Shure* and Sidney N. Shure*

Judy and Jack Stern

Tikva Grassroots Empowerment Fund

Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund

Patricia Arnold and William Wardlaw

Carol K. Whalen Living Trust

Anonymous (10)

SPECIAL THANKS

To the law firms Proskauer; Paul Hastings LLP; and Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy LLP, for providing AJWS with pro bono legal services.

*Of blessed memory

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DRAWING ON THE POWER OF

JEWISH LEADERSHIP

EVERY YEAR, AJWS calls upon hundreds of influential rabbis and cantors from across the country to join us in advocating for human rights. These Jewish leaders use their networks and platforms to fight for justice by our side—and they inspire their communities to do the same. In 2019, 14 clergy members embarked on AJWS's Global Justice Fellowship—deepening their commitment to global human rights, leveraging their influence to speak publicly against human rights abuses, and advocating with elected representatives for just and equitable foreign policy.

In 2020, AJWS formed the Global Justice Chavurah, a virtual learning and action circle for clergy calling for justice and human rights in the developing world.

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In the times we're living through, it's important to pick up the megaphone and raise your voice.

> —RABBI SARAH MACK, TEMPLE BETH-EL, RHODE ISLAND



LESSONS IN GLOBAL SOLIDARITY AJWS Global Justice Fellows meet with activists in Guatemala, as part of a six-month training on advocacy and human rights. Photo by Christopher Dilts



GLOBAL JUSTICE FELLOWS IN 2020

429 ALUMNI FOSTERING ACTIVISM FROM PULPITS ACROSS THE U.S.

OF THE JEWISH ROHINGYA JUSTICE NETWORK MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

1,700 JEWISH CLERGY IN OUR ACTION NETWORK ACROSS THE U.S.



2019-2020 GLOBAL JUSTICE FELLOWS

RABBI DR. ANALIA BORTZ

RABBI CAPERS FUNNYE

RABBI COREY HELFAND

RABBI DAVID BAUM

RABBI ELYSE WECHTERMAN

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RABBI FELIPE GOODMAN

RABBI RACHEL GRANT MEYER

RABBI SARAH MACK

RABBI SUZANNE SINGER

CANTOR VERA BROEKHUYSEN

ADVANCING

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

THIS YEAR, AJWS, along with the entire world, watched as a Black man, George Floyd, was asphyxiated by a white Minneapolis police officer—recorded for all to view. Floyd's murder was the latest in a long list of modern-day lynchings against Black Americans by police officers and vigilantes—and it sparked an unparalleled public outcry. People all over the world rose up in the names of Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and too many others who have been murdered—hitting the streets to demand justice for these killings and calling for an end to the pervasive structural racism that privileges white people while profoundly devaluing the lives of Black people, Indigenous People and People of Color.

As an organization focused on supporting activists and social movements that fight bigotry and structural inequity in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, we understand that justice can only be achieved by dismantling systems of oppression—such as racism, sexism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and hatred of LGBTQI+ people.

And because AJWS's mission is to advance human rights around the world, we cannot remain silent as systemic racism rages here at home

That is why we stand in solidarity with the movement in the United States to amplify an indisputable truth: Black Lives Matter. We have joined letters and initiatives with allied organizations making our support of Black lives crystal clear, and through published articles and on our social media channels, we have expressed

our outrage over the entrenched racism that continues to plague our country.

We are also committed to upholding these values—which are part and parcel of our commitment to global human rights—within our own organization, and we view Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) work as a top priority for AJWS. Internally, too, AJWS must reflect the values we espouse.

Starting in 2019, AJWS began investing extensively in an effort to prioritize DEI. We formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group, and using a racial equity lens, we enlisted experts to guide us in developing a thoughtful work plan and DEI statement.

To inform this work, our staff and Board of Trustees completed a DEI audit to understand our challenges and priorities as an organization—and the findings of this audit are guiding our plans moving forward. In addition, AJWS carried out a pay equity audit, and we were pleased to learn that no systemic bias influenced how we pay our staff.

With help from our skilled consultants, we recently launched an exciting and

challenging learning initiative to help us better understand how racism manifests in our organization—and how we can make meaningful change within our walls. And in September, AJWS appointed a Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to lead this crucial work moving forward.

Because we understand that this work must be embraced at every level, AJWS's leadership has supported these efforts, and our Board of Trustees has formed its own DEI Working Group—engaging in reflection and education to create a DEI agenda along with our staff.

Ultimately, we strive to build a culture in which each member of our team is welcomed in their full humanity, treated equitably and with respect, and able to lead and thrive at AJWS. Our journey toward achieving diversity, equity and inclusion—both within and outside our organization—will take sustained, determined effort. We are fully dedicated to this pursuit of justice. **This, too, is our fight.**

BLACK BLACK MATTER

VALUES IN ACTION A protester in New York City stands up for Black lives. Photo by Shanluan, licensed under Creative Commons

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Thank you to our dedicated and longstanding Board members who completed their terms of service in 2020:

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Rabbi Elyse Frishman

Michael J. Hirschhorn

*Past chair

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Muhammad Irfan

Esther Lee

AJWS staff as of August 1, 2020. We express deep gratitude to former members of our staff who contributed greatly to AJWS's success this year.

^{*}Due to security risks related to human rights work, our 28 in-country experts are not listed here.

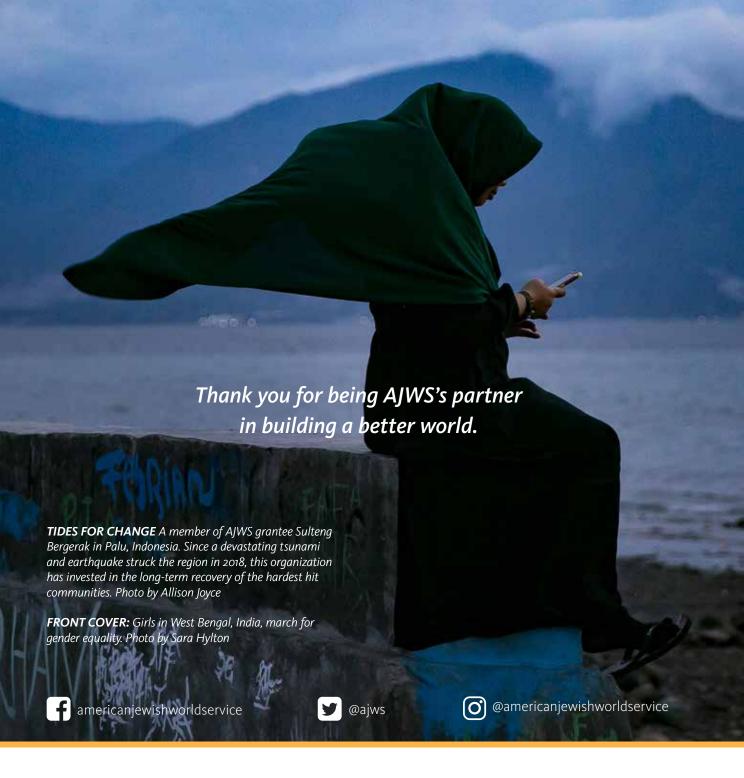


TRANSGENDER TRAILBLAZER In Thailand, the Thai Transgender Alliance (Thai TGA) is working to transform the way Thai society views and treats trans people. As Note, co-founder of Thai TGA (pictured front left) says, "We're helping people fight for their lives, for equality." Photo by Christoper Wise

THE FIGHTS ARE OURS. THE TIME IS NOW.



BECOMING ALLIES In Hampi, India, Prakash (left) and Venkatesh (right) learn about gender equality with AJWS grantee Sakhi Trust. Photo by Sara Hylton





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