ANNUAL REPORT 2024

huridocs

Our contribution to critical tech infrastructure is something organic and alive, like the living root bridges of the ficus tree in Northeast India. These bridges are strong yet flexible. This is how I envision our work, intertwined with others, growing together across the digital divide, forming infrastructure rooted in resilience, equity, and care.

–Danna Ingleton,
Executive Director, HURIDOCS

Our mission

We strengthen the global human rights community
with documentation technology and strategies to secure justice.

Our vision

We strive for a world where information is the catalyst for positive change
and human rights are respected, equally.

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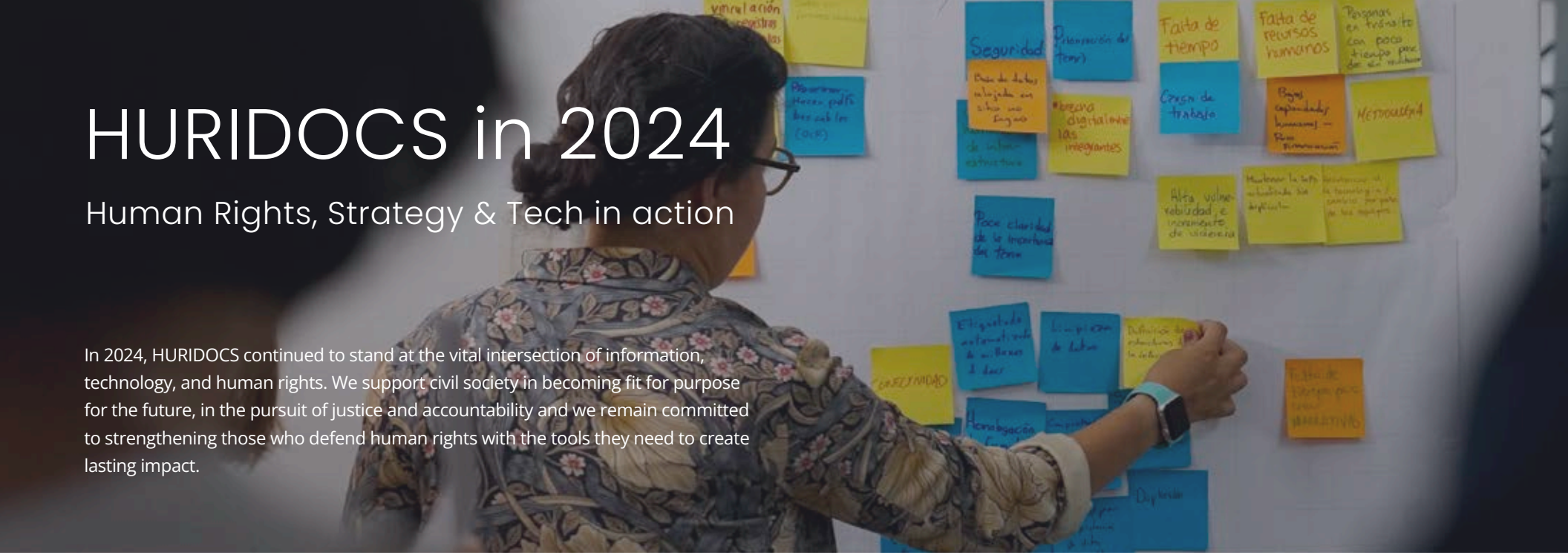


HURIDOCS in 2024

Human Rights, Strategy & Tech in action

In 2024, HURIDOCS continued to stand at the vital intersection of information, technology, and human rights. We support civil society in becoming fit for purpose for the future, in the pursuit of justice and accountability and we remain committed to strengthening those who defend human rights with the tools they need to create lasting impact.

Project development

73 partners & projects

38 countries & territories

370+ people trained

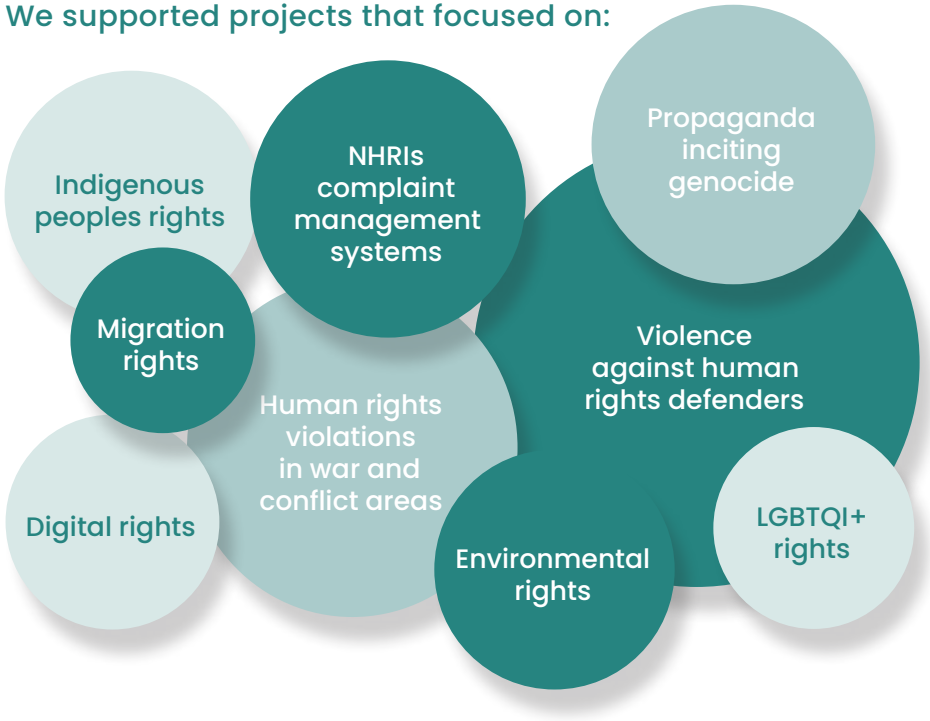
164 training sessions

Documentation Fund

As part of the Documentation Fund the HURIDOCS team directly supported **37 projects across the globe**, providing pro bono or subsidised services so that our partners can manage and secure vital human rights data for their missions-critical work.

huridocs documentation fund

We supported projects that focused on:



Tech development

Our Tech Team continued to strengthen **Uwazi, our flagship open-source documentation tool**, making it easier and more efficient for human rights defenders to manage their information. By using Uwazi, it reduces time spent on manual data processing and allows more focus on strategic litigation, advocacy campaigns, and gathering evidence on violations.

New key machine learning capabilities developed in 2024

Automatic short text translations

PDF document layout analysis

Life metrics of Uwazi

3700+ Users

400+ Databases

500k+ Files

1.7M+ Records

HURIDOCS at key global human rights events

HURIDOCS continued to be well-positioned as a thought leader on human rights documentation in global events such as:

- 56th Human Rights Council side event
- Google.org Impact Summit
- Amnesty Digital Verification Summit
- Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders

Looking ahead

A letter from our Executive Director Danna Ingleton, on what lies ahead for HURIDOCS.

As I look back on 2024, I am filled with a deep mix of emotions. It was a year marked by profound insecurity, heightened fear, and growing turmoil—driven by the rise of authoritarianism and the unmistakable signs of late-stage capitalism. Around the world, we witnessed pivotal elections that pulled many nations further from the path of respecting human rights. We endured floods, fires, droughts, wars, genocide, disinformation, and the systemic erosion of freedoms—a perfect storm of intersecting crises.

And yet, there is always another side. Amid the darkness, we also saw brilliant flashes of hope: powerful acts of solidarity, collective strategy, and unwavering activism. Across the globe, civil society came together, learning from the past, organising in the present, and envisioning a future grounded in justice and dignity. People raised their voices and took action, from their homes to the streets to the corridors of power.

Throughout 2024, HURIDOCS remained steadfast in our mission: to strengthen the global human rights community through documentation technologies and strategic support. We partnered with 73 new organisations and projects, creating tailored Uwazi instances to meet their unique data and documentation needs. We maintained over 400 Uwazi instances for our existing partners and collaborated closely with other leaders in the documentation field to meet the moment with collective strength.

One of HURIDOCS' greatest strengths is that we are not only about technology—we are human rights activists. Our solutions are developed by and for civil society, with a deep understanding of the rapidly evolving contexts we face. We bring not only tools, but values, experience, and commitment.

Looking ahead, I don't see our contribution to critical tech infrastructure as just code or hardware. I see it as something organic and alive, like the living root bridges of the ficus tree in Northeast India. These bridges grow slowly, shaped by the hands and wisdom of communities. They are strong yet flexible, capable of withstanding harsh conditions. This is how I envision our work, intertwined with others, growing together across the digital divide, forming infrastructure rooted in resilience, equity, and care.

I close this letter with deep gratitude. To our staff, board, partners, donors, and the broader HURIDOCS community: thank you. Your dedication, passion, and activist spirit are the reason HURIDOCS continues to thrive and make an impact.

In solidarity,

Danna Ingleton

▲ Danna Ingleton, HURIDOCS Executive Director, during her mission to Chiapas and Mexico City, to meet local partners and networks.

Letter from the board

A letter from the Chair of HURIDOCS' board,
Grace Kwak Danciu

Dear HURIDOCS community and supporters,

2024 was a year marked by both deep challenges and profound achievements. The global human rights landscape continues to evolve in ways that make HURIDOCS' work more vital than ever. Authoritarianism is on the rise, space for civil society is shrinking around the world, and human rights defenders are facing increased risks as they fight for freedom and justice. As board treasurer Georgios Damtsas reflected: "In a very difficult political environment for human rights, where the world increasingly rewards the powerful and everything becomes transactional, I am inspired that HURIDOCS continues to fulfil its mission of protecting human rights, through empowering human rights defenders wherever they are. Accurate information and evidence are more important than ever, and HURIDOCS will be there, for the long term."

Amid these challenges, the HURIDOCS team progressed with exceptional focus and dedication throughout the year. As board secretary Meskerem Geset observed: "Witnessing HURIDOCS advance with a strong management team, dedicated staff, robust strategy, unique innovation, and sustainable organisational culture is very fulfilling. The resilience and commitment of HURIDOCS' leadership and the entire team have been instrumental throughout the year, reinforcing the relevance of HURIDOCS' mission more than ever in a challenging global context."

This year, we also find ourselves at the dawn of the age of artificial intelligence. AI is reshaping every aspect of our lives, and its implications for human rights are profound. HURIDOCS has been at the forefront of responsibly applying AI to human rights documentation since 2020, and we remain committed to using this technology in an open-source, ethical, and innovative manner.

As AI continues to evolve, we are determined to ensure that it serves to advance the work of human rights defenders, rather than constrain it.

Board member and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Oleksandra Matviichuk's words remind us of the vital role that information and technology play in advancing human rights: "Last year, half of the people on the planet went to elections. But we must not forget that 80% of people live in unfree or partially free societies. They cannot vote freely and decide their future. Freedom in the world is under global attack. The rapid development of technology, particularly AI, raises new questions about its use by authoritarian regimes. Therefore, the work of organisations such as HURIDOCS, which combines knowledge of technology and the protection of human rights, has a significant meaning."

Looking ahead, HURIDOCS remains steadfast in its mission to stand as a dedicated partner to those who defend human rights, leveraging technology to provide tools that protect and amplify their work. We are dedicated to maintaining our commitment to open-source innovation, advancing the responsible use of AI, and supporting human rights defenders in their fight for justice.

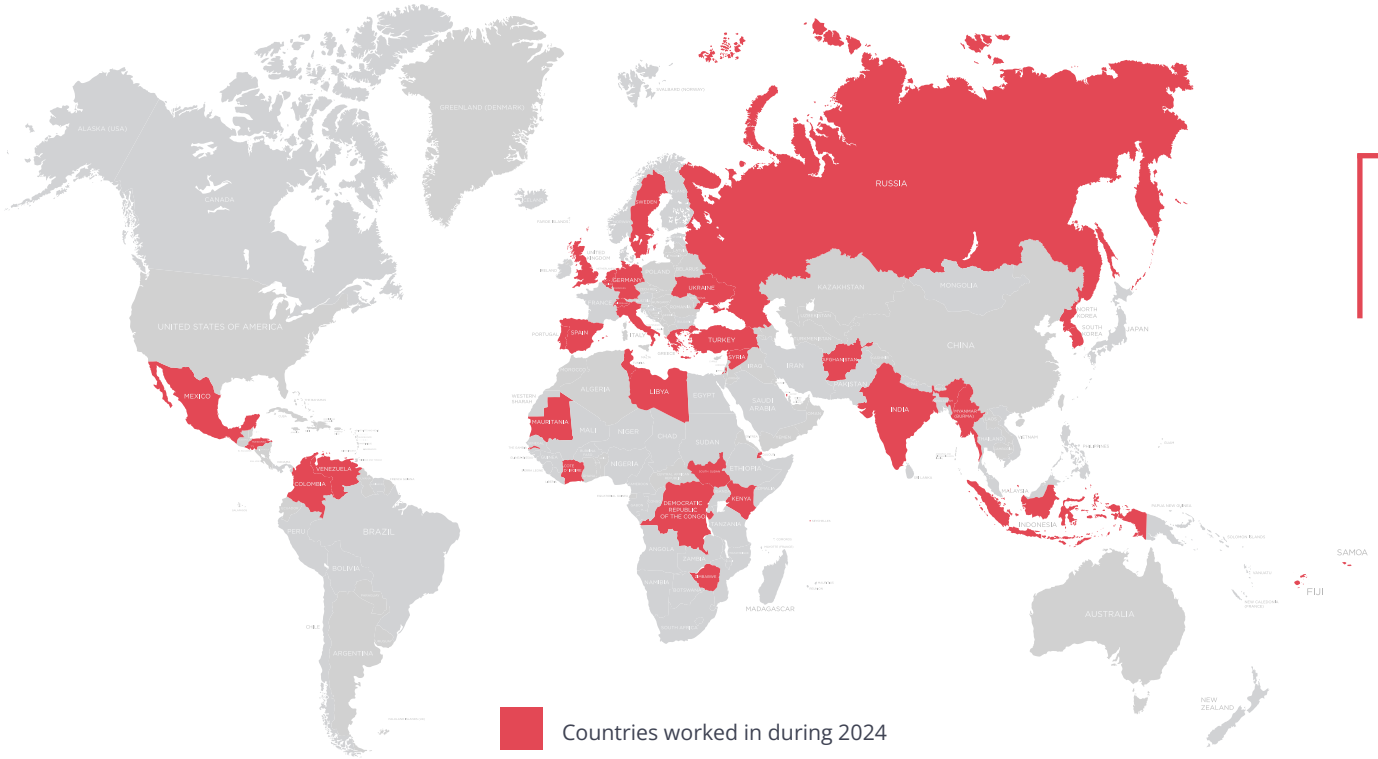
We extend our deepest gratitude to the HURIDOCS staff, partners, funders, and supporters who have contributed to this year's successes and to the enduring strength of the organisation. Your efforts and support make all of this possible. Together, we can ensure that the tools we provide continue to serve those who fight for justice, accountability, and human dignity.

Sincerely,

Grace Kwak Danciu

▲ Grace Kwak Danciu, chair of the Board, guides a brainstorming session during the Tech Team Retreat in November, 2024.

Programmes and partnerships



HURIDOCS worked with 73 partners and projects, in 38 countries and territories.

Work streams

- Human rights violations in war or conflict areas
- Violence against human rights and land defenders
- NHRIs complaints management systems
- Propaganda inciting genocide
- Environmental rights
- Indigenous peoples rights
- Migration rights
- Digital rights
- LGBTQI+ rights

▲ Salva Lacruz, Programme Manager at HURIDOCS, in a meeting with civil society partners in Chiapas, Mexico.

Project highlights

During 2024, HURIDOCS supported 73 projects across 38 countries and territories.

Our dedicated Programmes Team works closely with partners across six regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, while also working on international projects.

We support organisations in developing clear strategies to manage their information effectively, offering personalised support from needs assessment and database design to Uwazi training and capacity building.

Our Programme Managers and Officers guide partners through every stage of the project lifecycle: needs assessment and planning, implementation and monitoring, and final evaluation and knowledge sharing. This bespoke approach ensures that we develop best practices while also strengthening our partners' documentation efforts to enhance their impact on the human rights landscape.

> *Our specialist teams worked across Africa, the Americas, Asia Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Europe, Northern Africa, and the Middle East.*

Africa
South Sudan

Project: Documentation of human rights violations
Partner: Human Rights and Development Organisation (HUDO)

HURIDOCS partnered with the Human Rights and Development Organisation (HUDO) to build a Uwazi-based database to document human rights violations in South Sudan. The platform, set to launch publicly, organises and presents data on violations by type, gender, age, time, and location, enabling clearer analysis of trends over time.

Through a series of workshops and a collaborative discovery phase, HURIDOCS supported HUDO in identifying key needs, developing an implementation plan, and creating a data structure tailored to their documentation goals. The result is a dual-instance system, both public and private, to support different levels of use and data access. In addition to designing the structure and visual identity of the platform, HURIDOCS provided training on using Uwazi effectively so they could populate the instance with data gathered in the field. The project aims to strengthen evidence-based advocacy and increase visibility of the human rights situation in South Sudan.

> *We are delighted to express our gratitude and appreciation to the HURIDOCS team, who worked hard to translate our thoughts and imagination into the HUDO database. We believe the idea is well presented in a very organised and easy way for both uploader and site visitors.*
>
> **–Bushra Rahama,**
> **Executive Director, HUDO**

▲ Ximena Arrieta Borja, HURIDOCS Programme Officer, training civil society organisations in Chiapas, on the use of Uwazi.

Americas
Mexico

Project: The Observatory of Human Rights Defenders in Chiapas
Partner: A coalition of more than 20 civil society organisations in Chiapas

HURIDOCS partnered with a coalition of local organisations and defenders to develop **The Observatory of Human Rights Defenders in Chiapas**, El Obse, a public Uwazi database that documents violence, threats and attacks against human rights, land and peace defenders in the region. As violence reaches critical levels in Chiapas, the Observatory serves as both a documentation tool and a collective space for protection and advocacy.

The first stage of the project focused on trust-building and information sharing about the project, and included the set-up of a bespoke Uwazi instance for each organisation. This included a needs assessment, training for the defenders on Uwazi, and data migration. Thereafter, the next steps focused on securing funding and support to consolidate the individual Uwazi instances into a state-wide Observatory. Given that this was the first time a coalition like this had formed in Chiapas, this phase needed to remain rooted in trust and participatory processes. For HURIDOCS, this stage involved maintaining support for all the individual instances while also facilitating the participatory process of designing the public instance of El Obse.

Through ongoing partnership and capacity building on documentation practices, the project will continue to evolve to meet the specific needs of those on the ground. In the medium term, El Obse aims to involve more organisations across Chiapas to reflect greater diversity of voices and territories. Long-term, it envisions expanding to the broader southeast region of Mexico, or even nationwide.

> *When building El Obse, HURIDOCS took the time to show us and modify the technology in order to respond to the reality of the organisations and human rights defenders in the state. The one-on-one work with HURIDOCS helped us make this project our own over the past two years, responding to the needs and realities on the ground rather than just offering the infrastructure. This has been very helpful because it allows the project to flourish and ensures its continuity.*
>
> **–Karla Jiménez Montoya, CoLibres - Movilidades Libres y Elegidas**

Asia Pacific
Fiji

Project: Improvement of complaints management system
Partner: Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission (FHRADC)

The Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission was established to promote, protect and fulfil human rights for all in Fiji, and it has been a pivotal institution in fostering a human rights culture within the country. Recognising the need for an efficient complaints management system, the Commission partnered with HURIDOCS to implement a database in Uwazi in 2020.

Over time, both HURIDOCS and the Commission identified areas for improvement to fully leverage the database's capabilities. While the initial configuration in 2020 and 2021 laid the groundwork, further efforts were needed to deepen the understanding and use of Uwazi among staff.

The HURIDOCS team conducted a five-day workshop in Fiji in February 2024. The workshop aimed to have a clear understanding of the pain points and challenges of the initial configuration of their Uwazi database. Secondly, it sought to find an alternative solution to the existing complaints work-flow that was simple, functional and sustainable.

The HURIDOCS team configured a new set of templates and structures that were tailored to the Commission's current needs and day-to-day operations, so that it could be completely integrated into their daily operations and reflect their current scope of work.

After several days of group work and practice, the Commission expressed confidence and ease in using the new system as well as being able to update key categories of data to reflect the current human rights landscape

▲ Natasha Todi, former Programme Manager at HURIDOCS, facilitating discussions at the FHRADC training workshop in Fiji.

> *The comprehensive training and the co-development of the database have allowed us to build a system suitable to our needs. This has been a good opportunity to not only learn about Uwazi but to recognise the challenges within the team and amend aspects that didn't work in the past.*
>
> **–Loukinikini Lewaravu, Director of FHRADC**

Northern Africa and the Middle East
Palestine

Project: Rapid Response Documentation during the war in Gaza
Partner: Several human rights organisations (names withheld)

Between December 2023 and March 2024, HURIDOCS supported three Palestinian human rights organisations responding to the war in Gaza by helping establish rapid documentation systems to capture ongoing violations. Despite coinciding with our annual break, our team remained actively engaged in this pro bono project due to the urgency of the situation, demonstrating our commitment as part of the global human rights community.

Together with our partners, we developed a shared data structure tailored to urgent documentation needs. This was implemented across two cloned Uwazi instances, with a third instance requiring a custom data structure due to its specific context. Training covered the use of Tella for mobile data collection, Preserve for safeguarding digital evidence, and Uwazi for structuring and analysing information. HURIDOCS met daily with one partner to address urgent challenges and conducted an in-person training in Egypt to consolidate the learnings.

> *I speak on behalf of everyone at the organisation when I say I am extremely grateful for the support that you and the team have offered us. The HURIDOCS team have been committed to doing everything they could to ensure our project benefited from a smooth and reliable system for capturing and managing evidence.*
>
> **–Anonymous**

Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Russia

Project: Unmasking Russian Propagandists
Partner: Crimean Human Rights Group

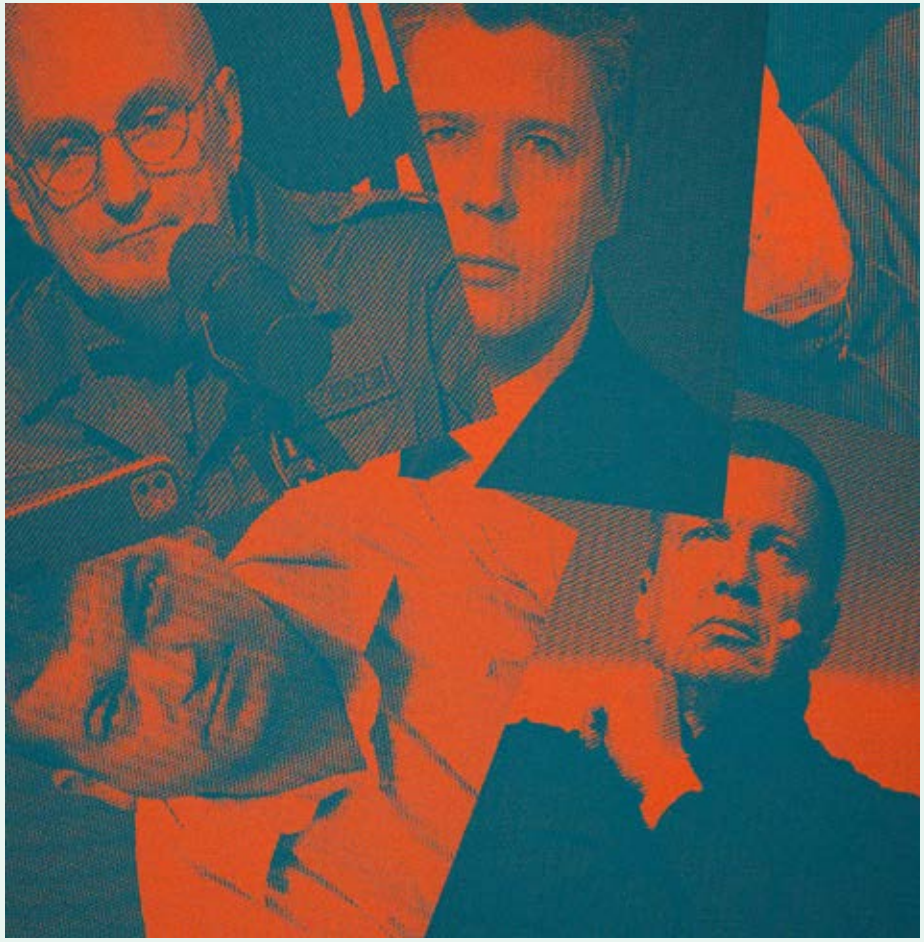
HURIDOCS collaborated with the Crimean Human Rights Group and NGO Change Together to build a Uwazi database that documents public calls to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes disseminated through Russian media during the ongoing war against Ukraine. These statements reflect a dangerous trend of incitement and propaganda.

As part of this collaboration, HURIDOCS helped organise and structure the data to support analytical visualisations, create links between data points, and facilitate storytelling and advocacy. The platform enables users to explore quotes from media figures, identify the media outlets involved, and understand the networks contributing to the spread of these narratives.

Unmasking Russian Propagandists is part of a broader campaign aimed at informing international audiences, pushing back against Russian state narratives, and demonstrating the global impact of information warfare, including its influence on elections and policy debates far beyond Ukraine.

The project also supports advocacy for improved regulation of information crimes and digital platforms, and for stronger accountability mechanisms for incitement to genocide and other serious international crimes.

> *The evidence from the database is transferred to the Ukrainian National Police and the Prosecutor General's Office. We also sent a submission to the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry into violations in Ukraine about the places where Crimean journalists are being held.*
>
> **–Iryna Sedova,**
> **Media Coordinator of the Crimean Human Rights Group**



Europe
Various countries

Project: Trans Murder Monitoring (TMM) and Anti-Trans Violence (ATV)
Partner: Transgender Europe and Central Asia (TGEU)

HURIDOCS continued its long-standing partnership with TGEU to create two public databases documenting trans murders and anti-trans violence. This project built on TGEU's private Uwazi database, expanding the scope to include violence against trans people in Europe and Central Asia. The aim was to raise awareness, support advocacy, and amplify the voices of those affected by such violence.

Key activities included a needs assessment, data modelling, Uwazi setup, content federation, data migration support, data visualisation, and webpage development. TGEU's database administrator was trained to manage the federated system, ensuring the sustainability of the platform. The project highlights trans murders and violence through interactive maps and charts, showcasing the ongoing human rights violations faced by the transgender community.

The **Trans Murder Monitoring** (TMM) project tracks global trans murders, with over 5,000 cases recorded and annual updates released ahead of Trans Day of Remembrance. The **Anti-Trans Violence** (ATV) project focuses on violence in Europe and Central Asia, with an emphasis on incidents affecting trans people from marginalised communities.

> *Trans Europe and Central Asia has been working hand-in-hand with HURIDOCS to elaborate an instance on the Uwazi platform to collect cases of violations of human rights of trans people throughout the world, and specifically the region of Europe and Central Asia. I am in love with Uwazi and grateful for HURIDOCS' technical support and human-oriented approach. Uwazi is an amazing tool that helps to highlight tendencies, something that can be easily overlooked in our research project.*
>
> **–Amanita Calderón-Cifuéntes,**
> **HIV Research and Advocacy Officer, TGEU**

International
Various countries

Project: SOS-Defenders
Partner: World Organisation Against World Torture (OMCT) and the SOS Defenders network

HURIDOCS collaborated with OMCT and the SOS-Defenders network to build a multi-lingual Uwazi database to document arbitrary detentions of human rights defenders (HRDs) worldwide and to coordinate joint action among civil society organisations and other partners for their liberation.

Arbitrary detentions of HRDs are on the rise as civil space shrinks and governments adopt restrictive laws, criminalising peaceful protest and other legitimate human rights work.

In response to this growing crisis, **SOS-Defenders** serves as a platform to document and collect global cases of human rights defenders who have been arbitrarily detained or who are at risk of detention in retaliation for their legitimate activities in defence of human rights.

Aimed at journalists, researchers, human rights institutions and states, the user-friendly platform provides up-to-date, systematised information on the number and profiles of all HRDs arbitrarily detained and at risk of detention in selected countries.

Currently, SOS-Defenders focuses on 10 countries where the phenomenon is prominent, such as Belarus, Iran and Nicaragua, and in countries where the network counts with local partners who are experienced in this line of work.

This database enables storytelling, statistical summaries and online research, while it also features existing campaigns to free HRDs. The public database is available in five languages (English, Spanish, French, Russian and Arabic) and is the pilot use case of Uwazi's new automatic translations feature.

> *What we liked about working with HURIDOCS was that they are not just an IT supplier; they are a partner who understands the field.*
> *They are developing technology from a human rights point of view, using open-access tools that align with our values and objectives.*
>
> **–Giuseppe Scirocco,**
> **Human Rights Analyst, OMCT**

As the medium-term goal is to reach global coverage, there is continuous training on the use of Uwazi and data management as new partners join this initiative. HURIDOCS has already led training to organisations in English, Spanish, French and Russian.

▲ The HURIDOCS Tech Team at the Tech Team Retreat held in the Dominican Republic, November 2024.

Technical development

Our Tech Team enhanced Uwazi's performance, security, and usability—delivering new features and strengthening the foundation for future growth.

In 2024, our Tech Team, comprising experts in front-end and back-end development, infrastructure, UX, and machine learning, has made substantial progress in strengthening Uwazi and its new features.

The front-end team completed major UI updates, enhancing pages, relationships, and settings, and began integrating machine learning features like topic classification and paragraph extraction. The back-end team advanced work on a new data model while resolving long-standing issues and successfully absorbed responsibilities after staff changes through strategic restructuring.

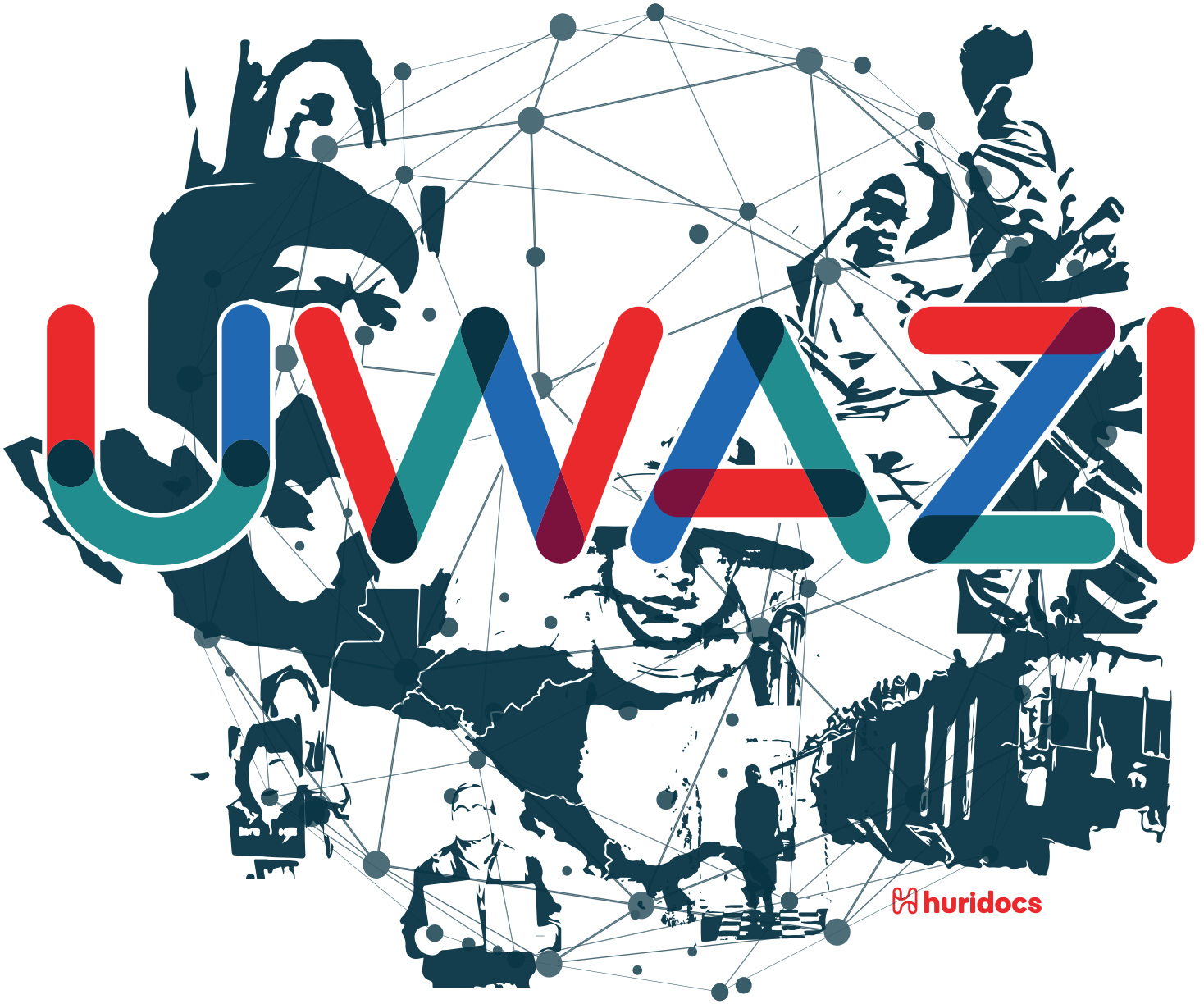
Infrastructure efforts focused on automation, monitoring, and resilience. A major milestone was the launch of the Uwazi Manager, a tool that improves hosting oversight and billing capabilities. The team also implemented new observability tools and reinforced defences against security threats, including DDoS attacks.

Machine learning development accelerated, with significant progress in document segmentation, information extraction, and automatic translation. Public ML models gained strong traction, and work began on Named Entity Recognition to further automate data structuring.

Security was strengthened through a comprehensive audit funded by the Open Technology Fund, which identified and resolved critical vulnerabilities. A new Data Protection Plan was launched alongside internal security training.

Internally, the team improved work-flows, closed over 200 backlog items, and hosted a successful Tech Team Retreat to realign priorities and strengthen collaboration. Despite team transitions, we remained focused on stability, innovation, and delivering a better user experience across Uwazi.

> *We stayed focused on stability, innovation, and delivering a better user experience across Uwazi.*


JWAZI
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Uwazi updates

Key updates in 2024 include machine learning features, full Tella integration with Uwazi, and strengthened security.

> *During and beyond election periods, Uwazi increases transparency, provide verified data, and enable rigorous monitoring of digital platforms and public discourse, thereby helping to safeguard electoral processes.*
>
> **–Digital Public Good Alliance (DPGA)**

New ML features

Automatic translations

An automatic text translation feature for short texts, which enables the automatic translation of textual information in database entities to a number of other languages.

This feature utilises machine learning and supports 23 languages. This feature is already being used in SOS-Defenders for translating content in 5 different languages: EN, AR, ES, FR, RU.

Metadata extraction

Leverages machine learning to analyse PDF and text documents, identifying and extracting specific metadata fields based on predefined examples.

This feature covers Information Extraction, Entity extraction, and Topic Classification in the same feature, as the output could be a text, date, number, or a select/multi-select option.

Tella and Uwazi integration

The Tella mobile app (developed by Horizontal) is now fully integrated with Uwazi, enabling users to connect to a server, document offline with drafts and pause-resume features, and link records using Uwazi's relationship property.

Security audit

Uwazi underwent a third independent security audit as part of our commitment to maintain and strengthen the security of our flagship tool.

Conducted by Assured Security Consultants and funded by the Open Technology Fund (OTF), this in-depth audit identified and addressed key vulnerabilities. Two critical issues were found and promptly rectified.

Highlights from 2024

- The Digital Public Good Alliance recognised Uwazi as a digital public good (DPG) that makes significant contributions to protect democracy.
- The Tech Team improved Uwazi's stability and performance, with 139 bug issues closed in 2024.
- We published 16 private and public Uwazi pages projects (microsites) for various partners.

Security Working Group

HURIDOCS continued to enhance the organisation's resilience and digital security through various initiatives.

In 2024, the Security Working Group continued strengthening the organisation's resilience and digital security posture through a number of initiatives and projects. The key highlight was an in-depth independent security audit of our flagship tool, Uwazi.

The audit was performed by Assured Security Consultants, a boutique consultancy firm based in Sweden, with support from the Open Technology Fund and their Security Lab, which funded the security audit. This is the third independent security audit of Uwazi and forms part of our commitment to maintain and strengthen the security of our flagship open-source tool. The audit found Uwazi to have a high level of security overall, while highlighting a range of medium to low-risk vulnerabilities that our team addressed promptly. We are grateful to Open Technology Fund and to the team at Assured who did an excellent job in performing the audit.

As a technology-focused NGO, HURIDOCS strives to support the open-source tool ecosystem not just by developing and improving our flagship tool Uwazi, but also by using and relying on the tools and solutions created by our allies: organisations and groups who share our mission to support internet freedom, human rights and justice globally. As such, last year we evaluated a number of open-source tools and services to make some of our activities and operations more autonomous, security and cost-effective, and decided to swap several proprietary services for open-source and self-hosted solutions.

Apart from these efforts, HURIDOCS' Security and Tech Teams continue to regularly review and update its organisational, operational and infrastructure security procedures, measures and policies, to make sure they are robust enough to tackle and mitigate new and emerging risks and threats stemming from the continuously evolving and unpredictable nature of the digital space.

We make sure our security procedures, measures and policies, are robust enough to tackle and mitigate new and emerging risks and threats stemming from the continuously evolving and unpredictable nature of the digital space.

Research and collaboration

We supported partners to strengthen their documentation practices amid increasing challenges and threats.

In 2024, human rights documentation continued to be shaped by overlapping crises, political instability, and accelerating digital threats. Amid these challenges, we observed a steady and deliberate shift toward practices that are flexible, resilient, and grounded in care.

At HURIDOCS, this meant supporting partners working on enforced disappearances, digital repression, transitional justice, and the protection of environmental and Indigenous defenders. Many built or refined systems for managing complaints, organising legal casework, or safeguarding collective memory. These weren't isolated initiatives. They were part of a broader shift toward aligning documentation more closely with intersecting strategic goals of litigation, advocacy, and long-term organising.

What stood out most this year was not a rush toward innovation, but a focus on the infrastructures that sustain the work. Many partners moved from reactive modes to long-term planning.

They laid foundations for documentation that is not only technically sound, but also strategically aligned—designed to rapidly respond to crises while enduring and flexible to support justice over time.

Rather than chasing new technologies for their own sake, our partners prioritised thoughtful design. Some used machine learning to process large datasets with clear intentions. Others invested in workflows that worked in low-connectivity or high-risk environments. There is a stronger emphasis on figuring out not only how to collect data in shrinking civic spaces, but also on how to use such data to tell stories that matter in ways that will have an impact.

As a partner, HURIDOCS remains focused on building with and not just building for. The documentation systems we support are shaped by the lived realities of those who use them. We are thankful to continue learning from and alongside these communities we have the pleasure of being welcomed to. And it is in this commitment to co-creation, care, and continuity we believe the greatest impact lies.

As a partner, HURIDOCS remains focused on building with and not just building for. The documentation systems we support are shaped by the lived realities of those who use them.

OTF Information Controls Fellowship Programme

Dr Tomiwa Ilori joined HURIDOCS in October 2024 as part of the Information Controls Fellowship Programme (ICFP), an initiative by the Open Technology Fund (OTF). The ICFP cultivates research, outputs, and creative collaboration on topics related to repressive internet censorship and surveillance.

As a Senior ICFP fellow hosted by HURIDOCS, Tomiwa's work focuses on the understanding and enhancement of digital security tools for human rights defenders (HRDs) in Sub-Saharan African contexts, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Senegal, and Zimbabwe. Tomiwa investigates how HRDs use digital security tools, their safety needs, and how developers can adapt these tools to better serve HRDs in highly repressive and surveilled contexts.

Events

In 2024, HURIDOCS continued to be a thoughtleader in the sector, by participating in diverse events and international conferences.

February

Our Programmes Team held a **training to NHRIs** in Fiji and Samoa, on Uwazi to improve their compliant management systems.

May

The Executive Director undertook a **mission to Mexico City and Chiapas** to meet local partners and networks.

June

Our Tech Lead presented Uwazi on **GitHub's podcast Open Source Friday.**

June

The Executive Director was invited as a guest speaker at a 56th **Human Rights Council side-event** organised by the South Korean permanent mission in Geneva.

June

HURIDOCS joined the **Transitional Justice Working Group at an international conference** on enforced disappearances in North Korea, co-hosted with the Human Rights Center from Yonsei University in Seoul.

July

Our Senior Documentalist was a guest on the J**ustice Visions Podcast** hosted by the Human Rights Centre of Ghent University.

September

We participated in the inaugural **Google.org Impact Summit.**

September

HURIDOCS' Director of Programmes presented Uwazi at the **Amnesty DVC Summit.**

November

Our Executive Director represented HURIDOCS at the **30th Martin Ennals Award** Ceremony in Geneva.

November

We co-hosted the **Policy Dialogue Forum 2024** in Ankara, the capstone of the project's first stage with Turkish civil society, supported by the European Commission.

September

HURIDOCS Security Lead attended **Team CommUNITY's Global Gathering** in Estoril, Portugal.

November

HURIDOCS, the Geneva Human Rights Platform (GHRP) and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) hosted **the Third Expert Roundtable on Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases (DHRTTDs).**

December

HURIDOCS hosted a webinar in celebration of **Human Rights Day** titled 'Protecting those on the frontlines'.

February

Training NHRIs in Asia Pacific

HURIDOCS visited Fiji and Samoa for **workshops to support local human rights institutions** in strengthening their Uwazi databases. In Fiji, we worked with the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission (FHRADC) to review pain points in the initial system setup and develop a simpler, more sustainable complaints workflow. In Samoa, we partnered with the Ombudsman's Office to assess the initial configuration, update the database to current needs, and plan for future data visualisation work. The project was done in collaboration with the Pacific Community (SPC) and the team also provided onboarding sessions to new and existing staff to ensure smooth adoption of the improvements.

May

ED's visit to Mexico City and Chiapas

Our Executive Director visited Mexico City and Chiapas, the southernmost state of Mexico, to meet with partner organisations who are using our tool Uwazi. The goal was to learn more about their experiences with Uwazi, their local contexts and what 'fit for purpose' means to them. Being able to securely share information across organisations working on a plethora of issues is crucial, whether our partners are working on migration, displacement, women's rights, Indigenous rights, the right to food or other issues. In response, HURIDOCS supported our partners to build bespoke Uwazi databases to meet their context-specific needs.

▲ Danna Ingleton during her mission, meeting with local partners in Chiapas, May 2024.

Best practices and learnings
Databases for Enforced Disappearances
FAD
AHRDO
Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization
HAFIZA MERKEZI
TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE WORKING GROUP
International Conference
COMBATING NORTH KOREA'S CRIME OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE
Documentation, Accountability and Sanctions
26 June 2024 (Wed) 10:00-17:30

▲ Hyebin Bina Jeon, Programme Officer and Bono Olgado, Senior Documentalist, during their presentation at TJWG's international conference, held in Seoul.

June

HURIDOCS at TJWG events

Our long-standing partner, the Transitional Justice Working Group (TJWG), co-hosted the **international conference** on 'Combating North Korea's Crime of Enforced Disappearance: Documentation, Accountability and Sanctions' with the Yonsei University's Graduate School of International Studies. HURIDOCS' Hyebin Bina Jeon, Programme Officer and Dr Bono Olgado, Senior Documentalist, were invited as guest speakers at the conference to present on HURIDOCS' strategic role with partner civil society organisations to enhance their documentation efforts and led an in-depth workshop for practitioners the following day.

June

GitHub's Open Source Friday

Uwazi was featured on **Github's podcast Open Source Friday**, where HURIDOCS' Tech Lead Rafael Pólit presented the history of HURIDOCS and how Uwazi was launched nine years ago, as a way to further embrace technology for human rights documentation. Then Rafael showcased several public databases built in collaboration with human rights defenders around the world.

June

56th Human Rights Council

On June 27, 2024, HURIDOCS Executive Director Danna Ingleton was a guest speaker at the Human Rights Council 56 side-event hosted at the Palais des Nations. The event called **Digital, Media and Information Literacy: A Key Element of a Human Rights-based Approach to Artificial Intelligence**, was organised by the Republic of South Korea's Permanent Mission in Geneva, and co-sponsored by the Polish Mission in Geneva and UNESCO. The event delved into digital, media, and information literacy (DMIL) within the context of Artificial Intelligence in promoting human rights.

July

Justice Visions Podcast

Our Senior Documentalist, Bono Olgado and Sophia Bijleveld Milosevic from the Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organisation (AHRDO), joined the **Justice Visions podcast**. In the episode called Reimagining memorialisation and documentation in Afghanistan, they shed light on memorialisation and documentation efforts in Afghanistan, and reflect on the merits and challenges of arts-based approaches and how this was adapted to the **Afghanistan Memory Home Museum**.

▲ Matel Sow presenting on Uwazi and Preserve at the Amnesty DVC Summit in Geneva, September 2024.

September

Amnesty DVC summit

HURIDOCS attended Amnesty International Digital Verification Corps (DVC) summit in Geneva to discuss open-source and other new methodologies for documenting human rights violations. Our Director of Programmes, Matel Sow, presented a demo of HURIDOCS' flagship documentation tool, Uwazi, its integration with the mobile app, Tella, and our new tool to safeguard digital evidence, Preserve.

▲ HURIDOCS participated in Team CommUNITY's Global Gathering, held in Portugal, September 2024.

September

Global Gathering

From 27 to 29 September 2024, HURIDOCS attended Team CommUNITY's **Global Gathering** in Estoril, Portugal, an annual event that brings together digital defenders from across the globe fighting surveillance, censorship, and other issues sitting at the intersection of human rights and technology. HURIDOCS hosted a booth where we shared key developments about our flagship tool Uwazi, as well as showcased its integration with the mobile app Tella, developed by our long-term partner Horizontal.

We also took the opportunity to participate in a variety of circles and conversations centred around key challenges and issues related to the interaction of digital security and technology. HURIDOCS also participated in the OrgSec Village, a Global Gathering satellite event, where along with our colleagues from across the globe, we discussed the importance of preparing our organisations for AI, mapped out organisational security gaps and needs, identified strategies for mutual support, and explored new digital security resources created by community members.

September

Google.org Impact Summit

On 4 September 2024, Danna Ingleton attended the inaugural Google.org Impact Summit. The event was hosted by Google.org, the philanthropic arm of Google, that brings together leaders and experts in the social impact sector to discuss the application of technology, particularly AI, for social good.

This summit was focused on the positive uses of AI for social change and brought together Google's AI accelerator projects, other grantees, related donors and many others.

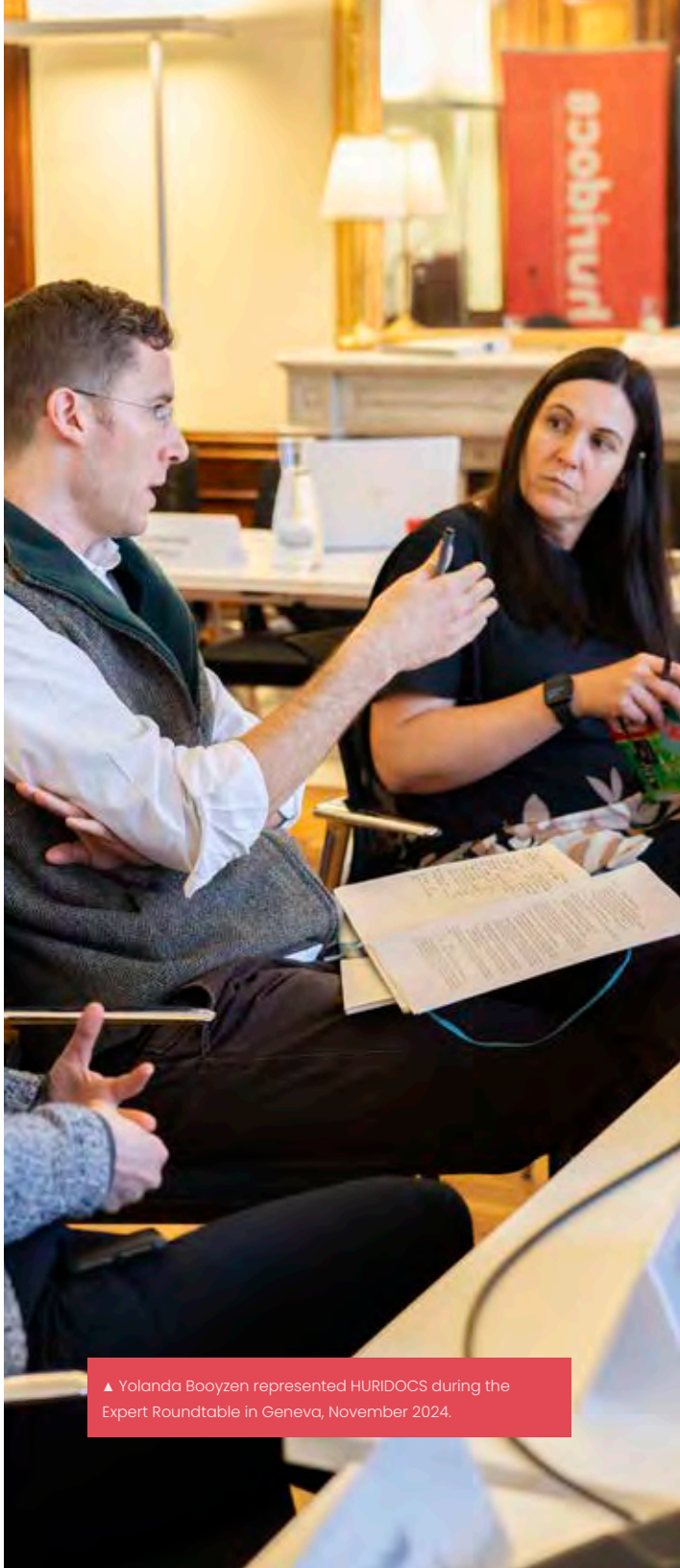
November

Third DHRTTD Expert Roundtable

On 4 November 2024, HURIDOCS joined the Geneva Human Rights Platform (GHRP) and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to host the **Third Expert Roundtable** on Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases (DHRTTDs).

The theme of this year's roundtable was on interoperability through the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). The discussions continued the following day at the 2024 Annual Conference of the Geneva Human Rights Platform where HURIDOCS participated and co-sponsored Workshop 4.

This workshop followed the discussions from the roundtable, and focused on 'Human rights and sustainable development: Advancing monitoring and collaboration through digital tools'.



▲ Yolanda Booyzen represented HURIDOCS during the Expert Roundtable in Geneva, November 2024.

November

Policy Dialogue Forum 2024

On 14 November 2024, the **Policy Dialogue Forum** in Ankara marked the capstone of the first cycle of sub-grantees participating in the EU-funded project on the economic, social, and cultural (ESC) rights of minorities in Türkiye. Co-led by HURIDOCS and our local partner, the Association for Monitoring Equal Rights (AMER), the event brought together civil society organisations, policymakers, and local government representatives to share the outcomes of field research conducted by sub-grantees.

The Forum fostered solution-oriented dialogue among stakeholders, with a focus on protecting and promoting the ESC rights of children in the country. The following day, HURIDOCS and AMER hosted a feedback session with sub-grantees to reflect on lessons learned and discuss next steps.

▲ Lucía Gómez, HURIDOCS Programme Manager, at the Policy Dialogue Forum, held in Ankara, November 2024.

Jury Members
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
Brot für die Welt
fidh
FRONT LINE DEFENDERS
huridocs
icj
International Service for Human Rights
Organised by
With the support of
VILLE DE GENÈVE
MARTIN ENNALS AWARD
With the logistical support of
octoprod.ch

▲ Danna Ingleton representing HURIDOCS during the 30th Martin Ennals Award Ceremony, among other members of the Jury.

November

Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders Ceremony

HURIDOCS took part in the **30th anniversary of the Martin Ennals Award (MEA) Ceremony** in Geneva, with Executive Director Danna Ingleton attending on behalf of the organisation. As a proud member of the MEA Jury, HURIDOCS joined in honouring the 2024 laureates: **Zholia Parsi** (Afghanistan) and **Manuchehr Kholiqnazaro** (Tajikistan), recognised for their exceptional courage in defending human rights and the dignity of their communities.

Although the laureates could not attend the ceremony in person, Gerald Staberock (OMCT) accepted the award on behalf of Manuchehr Kholiqnazaro, and Philippe Currat (Chair of the MEA) received it on behalf of Zholia Parsi. The award showcases the vital role of human rights defenders and the importance of continued international solidarity.

December

Human Rights Day Webinar

On 10 December, HURIDOCS hosted a webinar titled **Protecting those on the frontlines**, marking Human Rights Day with an exploration of the critical role that documentation and technology play in safeguarding human rights defenders who continue to face unrelenting threats.

The event highlighted four initiatives led by human rights defenders from various regions, all supported by HURIDOCS. These projects emphasised the importance of collective action as vital responses to threats and as tools for advancing justice and liberation.

The guest speakers included Karla Jimenez from Colibres, who showcased the **Chiapas Observatory**; Giuseppe Scirocco from OMCT, who presented **SOS-Defenders**; Manon Louis from the Border Violence Monitoring Network, who discussed **Detention Landscapes**; and Oliver Windridge from TAPOL, who highlighted **Papuans Behind Bars**.

▲ Members of the HURIDOCS Tech Team brainstorming on how to streamline processes and tasks, as part of its retreat held in the Dominican Republic, November 2024. .

Finance and Funders

In 2024, HURIDOCS had a budget of 2.04 million USD, representing a decline compared to 2023, which was 2.29 million USD.

As the landscape of human rights funding continues to evolve, we remain dedicated to refining our funding strategies while staying aligned with our core mission and vision. The trust and collaboration of our donors and partners motivate us to maintain our role as steadfast supporters, offering vigilance, guidance, and counsel in their efforts. We are deeply grateful to the following donors for their invaluable contributions, which have played a crucial role in furthering HURIDOCS' mission and empowering our partners' work:

- Canton of Geneva
- Capital Group
- City of Geneva
- Däster-Schild Foundation
- European Commission
- Google.org
- Internews
- Irene M. Staehelin Foundation
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein
- Oak Foundation
- Patrick J. McGovern Foundation
- Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Temenos

Google.org

Google's mission of organising the world's information to make it universally accessible and useful resonates closely with HURIDOCS' vision of using information as a force for good.

Since 2019, Google.org has supported HURIDOCS through grants and technical expertise to leverage AI ethically to increase access to human rights information. Their documentation tool, Uwazi, now boasts machine learning features that help human rights defenders quickly organise, analyse, and access crucial information, saving valuable time and reducing the burden of manual tasks.

We are eager for HURIDOCS to continue with their vital work of building documentation technology for the human rights community, and for their partners to harness these features to increase awareness about human rights and promote justice.

–Alex Diaz,
Head of AI for Social Good,
Google.org

Patrick J McGovern FOUNDATION

When we build better tools to make sense of data, we make it easier to stand up for justice. HURIDOCS AI-powered system regroups human rights violation data to better understand patterns of violence.

Our partnership with HURIDOCS advances our mission to empower populations at the frontlines of vulnerability.

–Vilas Dhar,
President,
Patrick J. McGovern Foundation

▲ The HURIDOCS DevComms had its kick-off meeting in Geneva at the start of 2024

Internal updates

In 2024, we refined how we work within and across teams to better serve our mission.

Development and Communications Team

Traditionally, the work of HURIDOCS has been divided between the Programmes Team, who collaborates closely with partner organisations on human rights documentation projects and strategic support, and the Tech Team, who takes the lead on software development, product management, infrastructure and technical support. At the start of 2024, the Development and Communications (DevComms) team was established to create a combined team for cross-cutting positions and to build synergies between the fundraising, communications, security and documentation functions.

Through interdisciplinary collaboration, the DevComms team focuses on organisation-wide issues that intersect with communications, organisational security, knowledge production, documentation practices, and finances.

The DevComms team was established to create a combined team for cross-cutting positions and to build synergies between the fundraising, communications, security and documentation functions.

Creating a strategic pillar that supports various functions will help HURIDOCS build on the legacy of the past 42 years to continue its crucial support to the human rights community by using information as a catalyst for positive change.

The goal of the DevComms team is to:

- Strengthen the organisation's identity
- Increase HURIDOCS' visibility and the work of its team
- Raise awareness about our technology solutions
- Promote a robust security culture
- Build and strengthen HURIDOCS standards, methodologies and approaches
- Contribute to the financial health and stability of the organisation
- Foster relationships with academia, peers, digital security community, donors, partners and field leaders
- Promote well-being through team building and belonging
- Amplify the impact of our partners' wor

Although nascent, the DevComms team is committed to identifying and strengthening links across the organisation and to build relationships with the broader community.

Programmes Team

Our Programmes Team has traditionally organised its work regionally, with Programme Managers (PMs) and Programme Officers (POs) providing close support to partners across Africa, the Americas, Asia Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East. This regional structure offers several advantages: it aligns with partner time zones for smoother communication, leverages our team's diverse language skills (including French, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Arabic, and Korean, in addition to English), and benefits from our team members' on-the-ground experience and contextual knowledge.

However, years of experience highlighted areas for improvement. To address these, we piloted a restructuring of our internal organisation, processes, and partner support in the third quarter of 2024. This refined approach maintains the benefits of regional expertise while addressing identified challenges.

The key change involves shifting the PMs' focus to project phases within the lifecycle (needs assessment, implementation, and closure). While POs continue to manage regional relationships, PMs now oversee POs based on these specific project phases. This allows for greater harmonisation across regions, strengthens our methods for supporting partner documentation, facilitates global trend analysis, and enhances our team's expertise with Uwazi. We've also refined our internal processes to foster better collaboration and iteratively adjusted them to achieve a good balance.

By the end of 2024, we reached a consensus that this new approach is effective for both our team and our partners. The cross-regional and thematic overview it provides enables us to develop standardised best practices, including data models, information classification methods, glossaries, and training materials.
Our ongoing learnings further influence Uwazi's development roadmap, as well as our fundraising and communications strategies. In 2025, we will continue to support partners in analysing collected information to advance advocacy, litigation, memory and justice initiatives, and progress assessments.

Fundraising and donor relations

The newly established DevComms team provides continuous and tailored support for all our fundraising efforts. To this end, the team has developed a fundraising management protocol and system to rejuvenate and foster past and current donor relationships while seeking to cultivate new partnerships that will increase impact and innovation. By streamlining these efforts, the overall HURIDOCS team is better supported to maintain key partnerships and seek new avenues for collaboration. Sustainability is of utmost importance and a key driving force behind our efforts to connect with foundations and organisations that share our vision of using information for change. By ensuring HURIDOCS is healthy and fit for purpose, we are able to better support our partners and allies with their Theory of Change, advocacy work and research.

One of the key highlights of our fundraising efforts during this year was to strengthen the HURIDOCS Documentation Fund, which was officially launched in 2023. The fund was created so that civil society groups and human rights defenders can access pro bono or subsidised work with HURIDOCS.

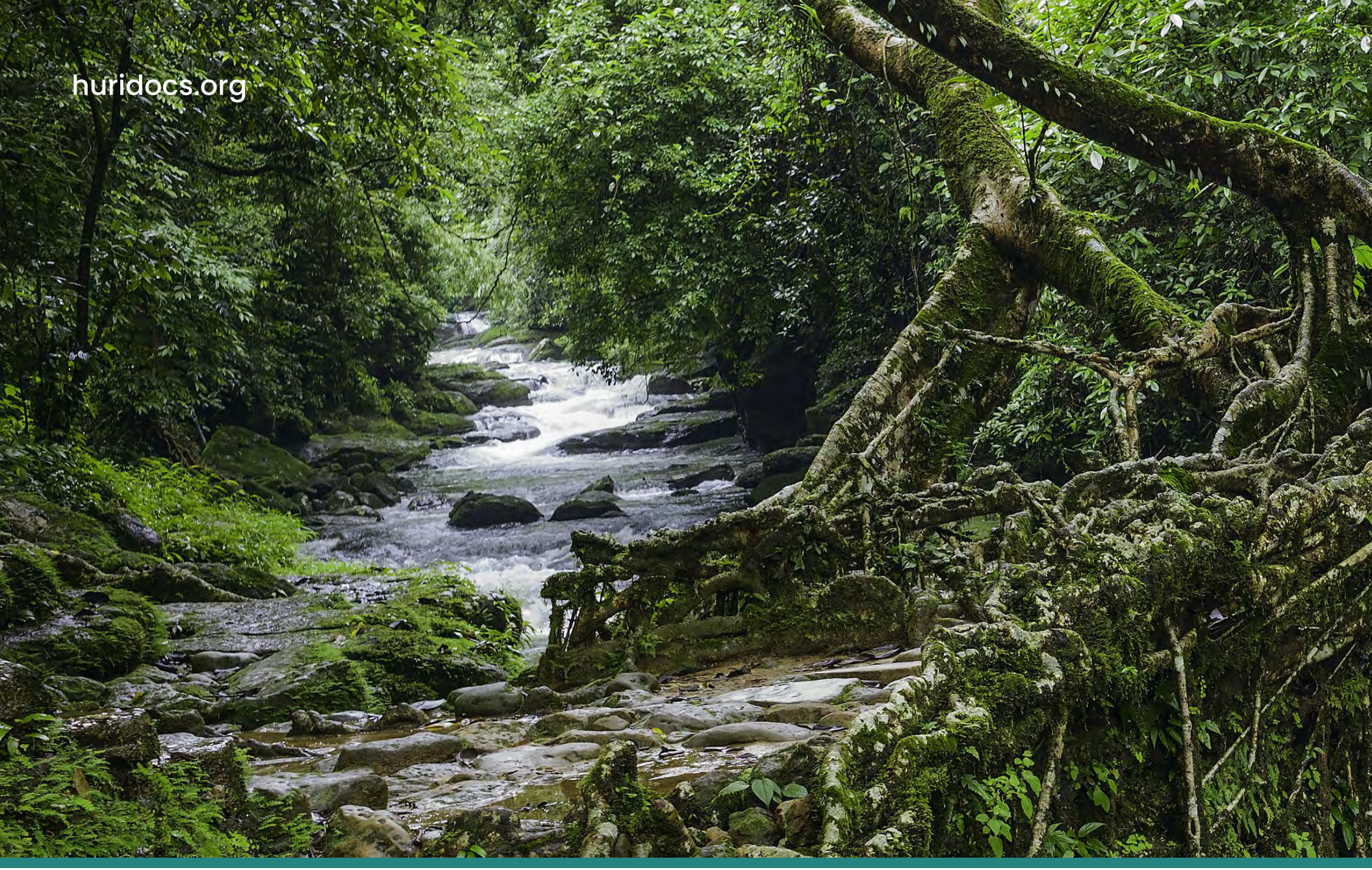
This enables them to conduct thorough documentation work and to systematise this critically important data securely and efficiently.

The Irene M. Staehelin Foundation, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Däster-Schild Stiftung, the Canton of Geneva and the Swiss Mission in Ukraine supported HURIDOCS to deliver impactful and sustainable documentation technology solutions and strategies to partners who advocate for justice and accountability. During 2024, we have supported 37 pro bono or subsidised projects through the Documentation Fund, and our aim is to continue supporting organisations in need.

HURIDOCS remains committed to the needs of its partners and will respond with innovative solutions to the current challenges around supporting impactful human rights work.

HURIDOCS is in a unique position to strengthen the increasingly decentralised and diverse human rights movement of the future by creating sophisticated open-source technology that supports information infrastructure and providing strategic advice on how documentation can contribute to human rights work

HURIDOCS stands as a success story of the past 40 years. As we continue to lead in human rights documentation and evidence, and as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) reached its 75th anniversary, the human rights sector looks ahead to the next 25 years. HURIDOCS will remain a vital contributor to supporting and underpinning the work of a dynamic and ambitious human rights ecosystem.



HURIDOCS Annual Report 2024

Photo credits: Salva Lacruz (p. 7 and p. 37), Juan Manuel Cornejo (p. 9, p. 20, p. 21, p. 41 and p. 46), Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission (p. 15 and p. 30), Transitional Justice Working Group (p.32 and p.33), Geneva Human Rights Platform (p. 36), Virtual Routes.org (p. 36), Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders (p. 38).

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