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JUNE 2009 UPDATE

Dear friends,

You are no doubt aware of the alarming news coming from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) over the last few months. Local and international relief workers have called the security and humanitarian situation "catastrophic."

This latest wave of violence, which began in earnest last fall, has been hitting Fund grantees directly. Nearly all the Fund's Congolese grantees are located in the East, where volatile combinations of local and foreign militias are terrorizing the local populations. Fund grantees who have publicly denounced human rights violations by government forces and rebel militias are now being targeted.

So powerful are their voices in getting worldwide attention that militia members have come to their homes looking for them. One Fund grantee who denounced rampant sexual violence was shot and then attacked with a machete. Other grantees were forced to flee and live in exile in Uganda for several months this past winter. Fortunately they have returned to the DRC and are now rebuilding their destroyed offices and continuing their work.

The Fund responded to this crisis through its emergency fund -- often processing requests in less than two days -- and by coordinating assistance with other funders from around the world.

In addition to its regular grants, the Fund has sent approximately \$20,000 in emergency response grants to secure the safety of the activists it supports in the DRC. The security situation on the ground changes rapidly, and we anticipate that the need for swift responses from the Fund will continue. We have also arranged for Fund grantees to receive security training.

Weak governance, a \$144 million illicit mineral market, and an abundance of dense, vast forests have made eastern Congo a haven for regional warlords. Thus,



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June 2009: Fund passes \$15 million mark

Since grant-making began in 2003, the Fund has supported more than 220 human rights groups in sixteen countries.

- » [See our 2008 grants list](#)
- » [See our spring 2009 grants to Congo](#)

Grantee Profile: SOPROP

Challenging abuse in eastern Congo.

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despite the stunning January 23 arrest of renegade general Laurent Nkunda, eastern Congo is far from peaceful -- and Congo's government often takes actions that exacerbate the culture of impunity.

Congo's parliament passed a law in early May granting amnesty for nearly two dozen illegal armed groups, as part of a peace deal. The law, which pardons acts of war and insurgency, applies to homegrown rebels and militias in North and South Kivu Provinces, where one million people have been displaced by fighting since late 2006. Further, United Nations experts confirmed that a former warlord who is wanted by the ICC for recruiting child soldiers -- Bosco Ntaganda, known as "the Terminator" -- is playing a prominent role in a new joint operation by the Congolese national army and the U.N. These actions do not bode well for a population that desperately needs accountability and rule of law.

Despite the danger, talented Congolese human rights activists are -- quite literally -- risking their lives in pursuit of the rule of law and, eventually, peace. In this e-update, I'd like to share some of the stories of the Fund's grantees in eastern Congo who are challenging those who commit gross human rights abuses with impunity. Their courage in confronting such brutal abuses of power offers a much-needed message of hope.

Regan Ralph
Executive Director

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Previously profiled grantee: BVES

Defending children's rights in Congo

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Fund for Global Human Rights **2008 Grants List**

Algeria

Association Culturelle AMUSNAW / Collectif de Femmes du Printemps Noir (Collective of Women of the Black Spring)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization whose activities include providing women experiencing violence with legal support and educating Algerians about the rights of Amazigh (Berber) women.

Association de Protection Contre le SIDA/ APCS (Association of Protection Against AIDS)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include medical, social, and legal support to people living with HIV/AIDS and campaigns to promote their rights.

Association Nationale des Familles des Disparus/ ANFD (National Association of the Families of the Disappeared)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting cases of forced disappearance committed by government security forces and pressing for the establishment of an independent truth commission to investigate disappearances.

Collectif des Familles de Disparu(e)s en Algerie / Association SOS Disparus (Collective of Families of the Disappeared in Algeria)

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include supporting families of the disappeared to demand information and justice through human rights documentation and national and international campaigns to create an independent truth commission.

Djazairouna

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include helping the families of victims of armed Islamist groups to seek justice and facilitating access to government services for children affected by the Algerian conflict of the 1990s.

NB: Not all grantee lists are complete. Some grantees prefer not to be identified out of concern for their security.
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Burundi

Association des Femmes Juristes du Burundi/ AFJB (Organization of Female Jurists in Burundi)

\$10,000 For its project to generate support in southeast Burundi (Bukemba and Giharo) for policies that protect and promote women's land rights.

Association des Juristes Catholiques du Burundi/ AJCB (Organization of Catholic Burundian Legal Practitioners)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal aid to victims of human rights violations and promoting land reform.

Association pour la Paix et les Droits de l'Homme/APDH (Peace and Human Rights Organization)

\$10,000 For its project to provide mediation services and legal aid to victims of land rights violations and to promote equitable access to land.

Ligue Iteka

\$10,000 For its project to provide mediation services and legal aid to protect women's and refugees' land rights in southwestern Burundi (Bururi and Rumonge).

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Arche d'Alliance

\$15,000 For general support of this organization's activities, including human rights documentation and education, legal aid to rape survivors, and monitoring of traditional courts for discrimination against women.

Association des Jeunes Femmes du Maniema /AJFM (Maniema Young Women's Association)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization that promotes women's and children's rights through grassroots organizing, education and legal aid in Maniema province.

Bureau pour le Volontariat au Service de l'Enfance et de la Santé /BVES (Volunteer Office in the Service of Children and Health)

\$30,000 For support of this organization which promotes the rights of children affected by armed conflict and mentors grassroots organizations in monitoring, documenting, and reporting on children's rights violations in eastern Congo.

Centre d'Etudes Juridiques Appliquées/ CEJA (Center for Applied Legal Studies)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization which promotes the rule of law by documenting, monitoring and reporting human rights violations and corruption, and promoting judicial reform.

Centre de recherche sur l'Environnement, la Démocratie et les Droits de l'homme/ CREDDHO (Research Center on Environment, Democracy and Human Rights)

\$5,000 For CREDDHO's project to promote citizens' involvement in holding elected officials accountable for protecting their economic, social and cultural rights.

Centre National d'Appui au Développement et à la Participation Populaire, Antenne du Kivu/ CENADEP (National Center for Support of Development and Community Participation)

\$5,000 For general support of this organization that seeks to promote the rights of people affected by the exploitation of natural resources.

Femmes Juristes pour les Droits de la Femme et de l'Enfant/ FJDF (Female Jurists for Women's and Children's Rights)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization which promotes women's rights through education, training, the media and legal aid.

Haki Za Binadamu Maniema (HBM)

\$15,000 For this organization's project to promote enforcement of existing laws by customary courts.

Initiative Congolaise pour la Justice et la Paix/ ICJP (Congolese Initiative for Justice and Peace)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization which seeks to challenge the culture of impunity in South Kivu by promoting justice reform, providing legal aid to rape survivors, and exposing public corruption.

Solidarité des Femmes de Fizi pour le Bien-Etre Familial/ SOFIBEF (Fizian Women's Solidarity for Family Well-Being)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization whose activities include grassroots organizing and education to promote women's rights as well as psychological, medical and legal support to survivors of sexual violence in Fizi, South Kivu.

Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégré/ SOFEPADI (Women's Solidarity for Peace and Integrated Development)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization which provides medical, social, and legal support to victims of sexual violence and works to improve the judicial system.

Solidarité pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix/ SOPROP (Solidarity for Social Promotion and Peace)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include education, training, documentation, and reporting to promote the rights of women and girls to stop sexual violence, and medical services.

Guatemala

Asociación Bufete Jurídico Popular/ Bufete (Public Legal Clinic)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing free legal services to the poor, violence-ridden communities of Rabinal as a nonviolent option for resolving land disputes, addressing domestic violence, and promoting community healing in the wake of the civil war.

Asociación Campesina Río Negro 13 De Marzo Maya Achi/ ASCRA (Association of Displaced People of Rio Negro)

\$20,000 For ASCRA's project to work with COCAICH to campaign for reparations from the Guatemalan government, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank for communities affected by the Río Negro massacre associated with the construction of the Chixoy

dam.

Asociación Coordinadora de Asociaciones y Comunidades para el Desarrollo Integral de la Region Ch'orti/ COMUNDITCH (Coordinating Committee of Associations and Communities for the Integral Development of the Ch'orti Region)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities challenge socially and environmentally destructive mining practices that undermine the rights of indigenous communities.

Asociación de Comunidades Desarrollo De Fray/ ACODEF (Association for Community Development of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing the government to protect land rights for rural, indigenous communities by purchasing unused land and distribute it to farming families.

Asociación de Mujeres de Ixqik/ Ixqik (Ixqik Women's Association)

\$15,000 For Ixqik's project in western Petén to provide legal services for survivors of gender-based violence and to conduct violence prevention outreach in rural communities.

Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Guatemaltecas Ixmucané/ Ixmucané (Ixmucané National Association of Guatemalan Women)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing indigenous authorities to respect and protect women's rights to inherit and own land and to participate in community decision-making in the Petén.

Asociación para el Desarrollo Integral San Miguelense/ ADISMI (San Miguel Association for Integral Development)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include organizing indigenous communities to challenge mining practices that threaten to displace them from their land and pollute the natural resources on which they depend for their livelihoods.

Asociación para La Promoción Y El Desarrollo De La Comunidad/ CEIBA (CIEBA Association for Community Development)

\$25,000 For CEIBA's project to promote human rights in two municipalities in Huehuetenango, through trainings for community organizations and municipal government officials.

Asociación Sinergia No'j/ Sinergia

\$20,000 For Sinergia's project to convene a series of strategy sessions for indigenous women's rights organizations and female land rights activists to develop a common platform and action plan to promote the rights of women to inherit, own and control the land on which they depend to support themselves and their families.

Asociación Unidad Indigena Campesina Del Norte/ UNICAN (United Association of Northern Indigenous Farmers)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing for agrarian reform that would respect and protect the land rights of rural, indigenous communities.

Centro Para Acción Legal En Derechos Humanos/ CALDH (Center for Human Rights Legal Action)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal support to indigenous communities to prosecute senior officials of two past administrations for genocide and other crimes against Guatemala's indigenous peoples.

Colectiva de Lesbianas Liberadas/ Lesbiradas (Collective of Liberated Lesbians)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting human rights abuses committed against lesbians and campaigning for the government to investigate the escalating rape and murder of women in Guatemala City.

Comision Pastoral Paz y Ecologia/ COPAE (Peace and Ecology Commission)

\$20,000 For COPAE's project to provide legal assistance to community leaders that have been detained for protesting mining operations that threaten to displace indigenous communities and destroy the resources on which they depend for their livelihoods.

Coordinadora Nacional de Viudas de Guatemala/ CONAVIGUA (National Committee of Guatemalan Widows)

\$20,000 For CONAVIGUA's project to provide training and ongoing technical assistance for its grassroots members in reporting human rights abuses and making proposals to the government, and to ensure that local concerns are incorporated into CONAVIGUA's national campaigns.

Fundacion de Antropologia Forense de Guatemala/ FAFG (Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation)

\$20,000 For FAFG's project to investigate the causes of increased violence against women in Guatemala City by conducting forensic analysis of the victims and by identifying patterns to the attacks, and to provide this information to women's rights organizations that are calling for the government to investigate the murders and prosecute those responsible.

Institute for Policy Studies - Asociación Trópico Verde/ Trópico Verde (Green Tropic)

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include challenging threats to indigenous peoples' land and resource rights in the Petén through grassroots organizing and national policy campaigns.

Instituto de Estudios Comparados en Ciencias Penales de Guatemala/ ICCPG (Guatemalan Institute for Comparative Studies in Criminal Science)

\$20,000 For ICCPG's project to promote women's access to justice by pressing the justice system to investigate violence against women committed by police officers and to prosecute those responsible.

Organizacion de Apoyo a una Sexualidad Integral Frente al Sida/ OASIS (Organization for Support of an Integral Sexuality to Combat AIDS)

\$15,000 For OASIS' project to promote the rights of lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals by

bringing legal charges against those responsible for the murder of LGBT Guatemalans.

Rights Action

\$30,000 For its project to provide funding and technical assistance to indigenous community organizations that are demanding that the Guatemalan government secure their consent before allowing mining operations to commence on or next to their traditional lands, and to convene a strategy session with community-based indigenous organizations to develop tactics to defend their land rights.

**Unidad de Proteccion de Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos – Guatemala/
UDEFEQUA (Human Rights Defenders Protection Unit)**

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting attacks on human rights defenders and providing security training to activists working in dangerous conditions.

Guinea

Association d'Appui au Développement des Initiatives Communautaires/ADIC (Organization to Support Community Initiatives)

\$5,000 For its project to promote women's access to identity cards, marriage and birth certificates to be able to vote, open a bank account, travel freely and inherit property.

Association pour la Défense des Droits des Enfants et des Femmes en Guinée/ ADDEF (Guinean Children and Women's Rights Organization)

\$5,000 For its project to challenge gender-based violence and discrimination in the counties of Coyah and Kindia in Basse Guinée.

Centre Guinéen de Formation et d'Education pour le Développement/ CEGUIFED (Guinean Center for Development Training and Education)

\$5,000 For its project to promote women's rights in Guinée Maritime through education and grassroots organizing.

Mêmes Droits pour Tous/ MDT (Equal Rights for All)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting violations of prisoners' human rights at Guinea's largest prison and providing prisoners with legal aid.

Organisation Guinéenne de Défense des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen/OGDH (Guinean Human Rights Organization)

\$10,000 For its project to hold its convention and provide financial support to its branches.

Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme/ RADDHO (African Organization for Human Rights)

\$15,000 For its project to provide capacity building assistance to Guinean human rights organizations to strengthen their strategic planning, budget management and evaluation skills.

India

Aneka

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, which seeks to foster and strengthen sexual minority and sex worker rights activism through training, mentoring, action research and alliance building.

ASTHA/Association of Strong Women Alone (ASWA)

\$27,000 For general support of this organization, which provides social services and legal aid, and conducts grassroots organizing to support the rights of "women alone" in Rajasthan.

Centre for Rural Studies and Development (CRSD)

\$20,000 For the general support of this organization, whose activities include empowering the rural poor to organize themselves and demand their rights to land, education, and to live in a society free of violence.

DISHA

\$35,000 For general support of this organization, based in Gujarat, which promotes the rights of the rural poor—primarily tribals—through human rights training, grassroots organizing, and policy reform, and for its project in collaboration with Patheya Trust, a new budget advocacy institute.

Elgar

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include legal aid, economic development, and grassroots organizing to promote the land/resource/labor rights of tribals in Maharashtra.

Jana Sanghati Kendra (JSK)

\$30,000 For its project in collaboration with Shramajivee Mahila Samity (SMS) and Paschinmbanga Khet Majoor Samity (PBKMS) to mobilize poor communities in support of their labor and land rights, and to expand legal protections for women from violence.

Jana Sanghati Kendra (JSK)

\$30,000 For its project in collaboration with Solidarity Center, which mentors promising activists across the country to strengthen legal protections and promote labor rights for the poor and for unorganized sector workers.

Magic Lantern Foundation (MLF)

\$20,000 For its project in collaboration with Dynamic Action Group (DAG), whose activities include legal/human rights training, human rights documentation, and campaigns to promote Dalit rights in Uttar Pradesh.

Mahila Jagran Kendra (MJK)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include legal aid, public campaigns, and grassroots organizing to promote the civil, political and economic rights of women in Bihar.

National Association of Street Vendors (NASVI)

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, which seeks to challenge pervasive violence and harassment against street vendors through legislative and media campaigns, grassroots organizing, and litigation.

People's Watch

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include human rights monitoring/documentation/reporting, legal aid, media work, and a national campaign to stop torture.

Safai Karamchari Andolan (SKA)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing for enforcement of the national ban on manual scavenging (whereby particular Dalit castes collect and dispose of human excreta).

Samarthan

\$22,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include grassroots organizing, media campaigns, and legal aid to promote the rights of the poor, including women, children, laborers, tribals, Dalits and nomadic tribes in Maharashtra.

SANGAMA

\$30,000 For its project in collaboration with Samatha, which seeks to promote the rights and welfare of Dalits, particularly women, as well as Adivasis, Muslims and other marginalized minorities in Karnataka through grassroots organizing, human rights education, crisis intervention, and policy campaigns.

SANGAMA

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include crisis intervention, HIV/AIDS education and services, human rights campaigns for sexual minority rights, and efforts to foster a growing movement of sexuality rights activists in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Andhra Pradesh.

Sampada Grameen Mahila Sanstha (SANGRAM)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, which seeks to promote the rights of sex workers, sexual minorities, youth and other vulnerable groups and challenge the stigma and violence that fuel the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Sanhita

\$15,000 For its project in collaboration with Pratyay Gender Trust, whose activities promote the rights of sexual minorities in West Bengal, including access to information and health care services, documentation of human rights abuses, crisis intervention, and campaigns to challenge violence and discrimination.

CARE Trust

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, which seeks to challenge discrimination against poor women-headed households and fisher folk in areas of Tamil Nadu devastated by the 2004 tsunami.

Subhi Association for Women with Disabilities (SAWD)

\$5,000 For SAWD's project to undertake exposure visits and other capacity building efforts to promote the rights and welfare of disabled girls and women in West Bengal.

Mahila Shram SEWA Nyas

\$20,000 For its project in collaboration with SEWA MP, which seeks to promote women's rights to a livelihood, labor protections, and health care, and to challenge violence and discrimination in exercising those rights.

Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) Trust

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting women's rights to work, education, and healthcare in the state of Gujarat.

SUTRA

\$18,000 For its project in collaboration with Ekal Nari Shakhti Sangathan (Association of Strong Women Alone) to promote the property, land and labor rights of widows and single women in the state of Jharkhand.

Utthan

10,000 For Utthan's project to promote women's economic, social, and civil rights in Gujarat by promoting the rights of women to livelihoods, and their access to, and management of, natural resources.

Vidhayak Sansad

\$40,000 For general support of this organization which seeks to promote the rights of tribal poor to land, livelihoods and justice in Maharashtra through grassroots organizing, human rights training, legal action, and public campaigns, and for its project to mentor emerging labor rights groups.

Vikalp

\$16,000 For general support of this organization, which promotes the rights of women in Gujarat through grassroots campaigns, social action groups, economic programs, and public interest litigation.

Yakshi

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include human rights training and civic education for Adivasi youth and women to foster networks of community human rights groups at the local and state (Andhra Pradesh) levels, and legislative campaigns to promote tribal rights to land and livelihoods.

Liberia**Action for Community and Human Development (ACOHD)**

\$12,000 For ACOHD's project to promote women's rights in southeastern Liberia by helping female victims of violence seek justice in the customary and statutory legal systems.

Association of Disabled Females (ADFI)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting discrimination and violence against disabled women and children, publicizing such abuses, and pressing for concrete changes at the local and national levels to afford disabled persons greater rights.

Association of Environmental Lawyers of Liberia (AELL)/Green Advocates

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include building the capacity of rural communities to monitor, document and report environmental rights violations, and pursuing litigation to enforce environmental and human rights laws.

Association of Environmental Lawyers of Liberia (AELL)/Green Advocates

\$36,000 For its project to build a national movement to defend and promote the right to a healthy environment by providing funding and technical support to an environmental justice network comprised of five community-based organizations in south and southeastern Liberia.

Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include legal and media campaigns, training, and civic education on the rights of women and children.

Community Humanitarian Advocacy Development Organization (COHADO)

\$12,000 For general support of this organization, which promotes women's rights in rural communities in Bong County by educating women about the rape law and helping female victims of violence bring legal charges against their attackers.

Foundation for Human Rights and Democracy (FOHRD)

\$25,000 For its project to highlight corruption and its impact on human rights, raise awareness among policymakers and the public about these issues, and propose reforms in the management of national resources, peace building and reconstruction efforts.

Forestry, Logging and Industrial Workers Movement for Labor Justice (MOLAJ)

\$10,000 For MOLAJ's project to promote labor rights of workers in extractive industries by educating logging and mining workers about their rights and pressing the Liberian government to promote labor rights in concession agreements with multinational corporations.

Justice and Peace Commission (JPC)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing documentation of human rights abuses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, training paralegals to promote peaceful conflict resolution, and providing legal aid to torture survivors in rural areas.

Liberia Democracy Watch (LDW)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting public policies that protect human rights and providing civic education to rural communities to help them hold the government accountable for fighting corruption.

Movement for Peace and Reconciliation in Liberia (MOPAR)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting women's rights and participation in public life, and facilitating peace-building processes in Sinoe County through human rights training, reporting, and community organizing.

Prisoners Assistance Program (PAP)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include monitoring prison conditions in Monrovia and in rural areas to document human rights abuses and campaigning for government policies that would prevent torture.

Women and Children Advocacy (WOCAD)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, which promotes women's rights in rural Grand Cape Mount County by educating communities and traditional leaders about the dangers of early marriage and gender-based violence.

Zorzor District Women Care (ZODWOCA)

\$5,000 For general support of this organization, which seeks to promote women's economic and civil rights and challenge discrimination through rights education, community organizing, and conflict resolution.

Mexico

Asociacion Jalisciense de Apoyo a Grupos Indigenas A.C./ AJAGI (Jalisco Indigenous Support Association)

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing for the establishment of an indigenous-controlled protected nature reserve to protect the land rights of the Huichol people.

Centro Apoyo al Trabajador/ CAT (Workers Support Center)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include educating workers in the maquila sector about their labor rights, training them in how to secure those rights, and documenting government violations and abusive corporate practices to present as evidence before national and international courts.

Centro de Derechos de la Mujer de Chiapas, A.C./ CDMCH (Chiapas Women's Rights Center)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing indigenous leaders and municipal authorities to respect and protect women's right to inherit, own and control the use of land.

Centro de Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres AC/ CEDHEM (Women's Human Rights Center)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal aid to female victims of violence and campaigning for state policies that increase women's access to justice.

Centro de Derechos Humanos Victoria Diez AC (Victoria Diez Human Rights Center)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing for public policies that prevent and punish gender-based violence in the state of Guanajuato.

Centro Derechos Humanos Fray Matias de Cordova (Fray Matias Human Rights Center)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting human rights abuses and providing legal aid to Central American migrants in the Mexico - Guatemala border region.

Centro Mexicano de Derecho Ambiental/ CEMDA (Mexican Environmental Law Center)

\$20,000 For CEMDA's project to bring national and international legal cases to promote the right to a healthy environment, and to provide human rights organizations and local communities with training in how to use environmental law to defend human rights.

Centro Mujeres (Women's Center)

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include mentoring young female community leaders, providing training on health rights for service providers and government representatives, and pressing for government policies that protect and promote reproductive and sexual rights.

Colectivo de Atencion para la Salud Integral de la Familia/ CIFAM (Collective for Family Health)

\$20,000 For CIFAM's project to promote youth sexual and reproductive rights, including access to information and health care services, for marginalized urban and rural communities in Chiapas.

Comisión de Derechos Humanos y Laborales del Valle de Tehuacán/ Tehuacán (Human and Labor Rights Commission of the Tehuacán Valley)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting abuses committed against young, indigenous workers in the state of Puebla.

Elige Red de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivas/ Elige (Choose)

\$20,000 For Elige's project to promote youth sexual and reproductive rights in Mexico City by educating young people about their rights and pressing city agencies and government to guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Foro para el Desarrollo Sustentable, A.C./ FORO (Forum for Sustainable Development)

\$20,000 For the Forum's project to promote land and environmental rights in Chiapas by helping indigenous communities to challenge land privatization and development projects that threaten their ability to earn their livelihoods through the sustainable use of natural resources.

Frente Civico Sinaloense, A.C. / Frente Civico (Sinaloa Civic Front)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include monitoring prison conditions, documenting human rights abuses committed by the police, and pressing for public policies that would prevent the use of torture in the violence-ridden state of Sinaloa.

Humanidad Sin Fronteras A.C./ Humanidad (Humanity without Borders)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting human rights

abuses committed by the police and promoting the rights of migrants in the northern state of Coahuila.

Instituto de Derecho Ambiental/ IDEA (Institute for Environmental Law)

\$20,000 For IDEA's project to promote the right to a healthy environment by providing legal assistance to communities affected by the pollution of Lake Chapala and to activists targeted for harassment and violence for refusing to be displaced by the construction of hydroelectric dams.

Instituto para Seguridad y la Democracia/ INSYDE (Institute for Security and Democracy)

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include challenging police abuse and corruption by building civil society capacity to monitor, analyze and develop concrete proposals for public security reform.

Justicia para Nuestras Hijas/ Justicia (Justice for Our Daughters)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal aid to the families of victims of gender-based violence in Chihuahua, and working to raise the national and international profile of this human rights crisis.

Maderas del Pueblo del Sureste, A.C./ Madras del Pueblo (Southeastern People's Land Association) \$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include helping communities to challenge development projects that threaten to displace communities and destroy the natural resources on which they depend for their livelihoods.

Mexico Solidarity Network

\$20,000 For its project to provide legal training to community-based, indigenous human rights defenders who work to facilitate access to justice for their communities and challenge discriminatory judicial practices.

Otros Mundos, A.C. (Other Worlds)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities including pressing local governments to protect the economic, social and cultural rights of indigenous communities by providing access to drinking water and electricity.

Proyecto de Derechos Economicos, Sociales y Culturas/ PRODESC

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal support to organizations in Puebla to challenge labor rights abuses before national and international courts.

Red de Comunicadores Boca de Polén/ Boca de Polén (Boca de Polén Communication Network)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include educating indigenous communities about threats to their land rights posed by infrastructure development projects and promoting women's rights by pressing traditional leaders to hold perpetrators of violence against women accountable.

Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles, "Todos los Derechos para Todos y Todos"/ Todos ("All

Rights for All” Human Rights Network)

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include building the capacity of its fifty-seven member organizations based throughout the country and feeding the local concerns and proposals of its members into the national policymaking debate.

Servicios del Pueblo Mixe A.C./ SerMixe (Service to the Mixe People)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include protecting indigenous land rights by challenging aspects of the government land privatization program that undermine rights and promoting access to safe drinking water.

Tlachinollan Human Rights Center/ Tlachinollan

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting and prosecuting legal cases on human rights violations against indigenous people in the state of Guerrero and conducting workshops for indigenous communities on human rights and conflict resolution.

Morocco

Association Amal pour la Femme et le Développement/ Amal (Amal Association for Women and Development)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal support to female victims of violence in El Hajeb and mentoring community-based organizations in isolated surrounding rural areas.

Association Beni Znassen pour la Culture, le Développement et la Solidarité/ ABCDS (Beni Znassen Association for Culture, Development and Solidarity)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting and reporting human rights violations against sub-Saharan migrants at the border with Algeria, and providing them with humanitarian and legal aid.

Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc/ ADFM (Democratic Association of Moroccan Women)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing technical assistance to local women's rights organizations and compiling local documentation of violence against women in order to press for the full implementation of laws promoting women's rights.

Association des Jeunes Avocats à Khemisset/ AJAK (Khemisset Young Lawyers Association)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include educating judges, lawyers and civil society organizations about laws protecting the rights of women, migrants and children; promoting the independence of the judiciary, and providing legal aid to victims of discrimination.

Association El Amane pour le Développement de la Femme (El Amane Association for Women's Development)

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing for the full implementation of the revised Mudawana (Family Code) in Marrakech and surrounding rural areas by educating women about their rights, facilitating access to the legal system, and working with other human rights organizations to inform policymakers about continuing violations of women's rights.

Association Homme et Environnement/ HE (Man and Environment)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include helping poor communities to challenge infrastructure development projects that threaten their rights to a healthy environment, to water and to livelihoods, as well as providing humanitarian and legal support to sub-Saharan migrants.

Association Marocaine des Déficients Moteurs/ AMDM (Moroccan Association for Disabled People)

\$10,000 For general support of this disability rights organization, whose activities include education, pressing for legal and policy reforms, and providing medical, social and legal support to people with disabilities.

Association Marocaine des Droits Humains/ AMDH (Moroccan Association of Human Rights)

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include mobilizing 8,000 grassroots members across the country to demand government policies protecting human rights, and its new project to promote the right to water.

Association Tawaza pour le Plaidoyer de la Femme/ ATPF (Tawaza Association for Women's Rights)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include educating women on the rights recognized by the revised Mudawana and providing legal assistance to female victims of violence.

Forum Marocain pour la Verité et la Justice/ FMVJ (Moroccan Forum for Hope and Justice)

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing psychological and legal support to victims of serious human rights abuses committed between 1956 and 1999, and promoting institutional reforms that will prevent such state-sponsored abuse from recurring.

Groupe Antiraciste d'Accompagnement et de Défense des Étrangers et Migrants/ GADEM

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include challenging violations of migrants' rights through education, monitoring/documentation/reporting, mentoring, and campaigning for policy reform.

Initiative pour la Protection des Droits de la Femme Meknès/ IPDFM

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal support to female victims of violence and pressing local and regional authorities in Meknes to implement laws that protect women's rights.

La Ligue Démocratique pour les droits de la femme-Ouarzazate/ LDDF (Democratic League for Women's Rights)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal and psychological support to female victims of violence and promoting new legal protections for women.

Réseau Amazigh pour la Citoyenneté/ Réseau (Amazigh Citizenship Network)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting government policies that respect and protect the rights of Tamazigh-speaking Berber communities.

Tafoukt Souss pour le Développement de la Femme/ Tafoukt (Tafoukt Souss Women's Development)

\$10,000 For general support of this women's rights organization, whose activities include human rights education, awareness campaigns and capacity building of human rights defenders.

Pakistan

Democratic Commission on Human Development (DCHD)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include training and documentation/dissemination of human rights issues and abuses at the community level.

Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP)

\$30,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include education, training and community outreach to promote civic participation and women's economic and social rights in Balochistan.

Interactive Resource Center (IRC)

\$20,000 For IRC's initiative to help communities produce documentaries and popular theater performances across the country to document human rights problems and foster dialogues and campaigns to resolve them.

Labor Education Foundation

\$15,000 For its project to support Bhatta Mazdoor Union, whose activities include promoting the rights of Pakistan's 1.8 million brick kiln workers, who as bonded laborers are denied the most basic labor rights.

MAUJ

\$20,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting the rights of local communities that have been forcibly displaced by large infrastructure development projects.

Noor Education Trust (NET)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal aid, safe shelter and psycho-social services to women experiencing violence in the North West Frontier Province.

Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, based in Sindh province, which seeks to promote the rights and welfare of fisher folk communities through human rights education, grassroots organizing and policy reform.

Panah Trust

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal, safe shelter and psycho-social services to women experiencing violence in Sindh Province, and promoting women's access to justice.

Pirbhat Women Development Society

\$5,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal assistance to women victims of violence, as well as awareness-raising campaigns on human rights and women's rights.

Potohar Organization for Development Advocacy (PODA)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization which provides training and mentoring to grow and strengthen rural women's networks to challenge violence and promote the rights to education, health, and livelihoods.

Vision

\$30,000 For general support of this organization which promotes the rights and welfare of sexual minorities, sex workers, children, and other marginalized groups through outreach, crisis intervention, and litigation.

War Against Rape (WAR)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization whose activities include providing legal aid and crisis intervention support to survivors of domestic violence and rape, and public campaigns to stop violence against women.

Philippines**Philippine Human Rights Information Center/ PhilRights**

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include helping affected communities challenge destructive mining practices that undermine their land and resource rights.

Task Force Detainees of the Philippines/ TFDP

\$10,000 For the general support this organization, whose activities include documenting human rights violations, training human rights defenders, and pressing for government policies to prevent and punish torture.

Women's Legal Bureau/ WLB

\$10,000 For general support of this women's rights organization, whose activities include pursuing test case litigation and building the capacity of women to challenge gender-based violence in their communities.

Sierra Leone

Action for Community Task, Sierra Leone (ACT-SL)

\$5,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting the implementation of national legislation that protects women's and children's rights in the isolated, rural Pujehun District by training police and government officials and promoting access to justice.

Amazonian Initiative Movement (AIM)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include grassroots organizing and health education to reduce threats to women's rights and welfare in northern Sierra Leone.

Center for Democracy and Human Rights (CDHR)

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting women's rights and economic, social and cultural rights in northern Sierra Leone by helping female victims of violence access the justice system and training communities to monitor and inform the allocation of government resources for essential services.

Community Advocacy and Development Movement (CADEM)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting the rights of indigenous and rural communities that have been displaced by strip mining operations in southern Sierra Leone.

Defense for Children International, Sierra Leone (DCI)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization whose activities include documenting human rights abuses committed against children in the justice system and promoting the implementation of policies that defend children's rights.

Dignity Association (formerly Sierra Leone Lesbian and Gay Association)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include working to end violence and discrimination against LGBT Sierra Leoneans through public education and outreach to government officials and medical service providers.

Foundation for International Dignity (FIND)

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include training refugees and internally displaced persons in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea to promote and defend their rights and to facilitate peaceful conflict resolution between refugees and host communities.

Kailahun District Development Foundation

\$10,000 For general support of this organization which trains community activists in eastern Sierra Leone to hold the government accountable for promoting economic rights by allocating sufficient resources to basic services and presses for greater participation by women in local governance.

Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting economic, social and cultural rights by monitoring the government's provision of basic services to poor, rural communities.

Sierra Leone Court Monitoring Program (SLCMP)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting judicial accountability by monitoring criminal proceedings within the national court system, Anti-Corruption Commission, Special Court and local customary courts.

United for the Protection of Human Rights (UPHR)

\$5,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include organizing women's committees in ten chiefdoms in Port Loko to reduce customary practices that violate women's rights and to mobilize women to demand the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations.

Women's Action for Human Dignity (WAHD)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization which challenges traditional practices that prevent girls from being educated and helps women seek justice for violence through customary and statutory legal systems.

Thailand

Center for Protection and Revival of Local Community Rights/ CPRLCR

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing legal aid to victims of rights abuses and building capacity of affected communities to defend their own rights.

Environmental Litigation and Advocacy for the Wants/ ENLAW

\$10,000 For general support of this environmental rights organization, whose activities include pursuing test case litigation, documenting court proceedings, providing legal aid to victims of abuses, and mentoring a new generation of environmental rights lawyers.

Foundation for Community Educational Media/ PRACHATAI

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include publishing independent news and analysis on human rights to promote freedom of expression.

Human Rights and Development Foundation/ HRDF

\$10,000 For HRDF's Migrant Justice Program, whose activities include pursuing test case litigation, documenting abuses, and strengthening the capacity of communities to monitor, report and document abuses of migrants' labor rights.

Thai Center for Labor Rights/ TCLR

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include building the capacity of Thai and migrant workers to promote and protect their own labor rights.

The Council of Work and Environment Related Patient's Network of Thailand/ WEPT

\$10,000 For general support of this labor rights organization, whose activities include pursuing test case litigation and bulding the capacity of workers to monitor rights violations.

Uganda

Action for Women and Awakening in Rural Environment (AWARE-Uganda)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization located in the economically-deprived, volatile Karamoja region whose activities include human rights education, legal aid, and grassroots organizing.

Action Group for Health, Human Rights and HIV/AIDS (AGHA)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization which promotes the right to health through training, human rights education, and legislative and policy reform.

Association for Reorientation & Rehabilitation of Teso Women for Development (TERREWODE)

\$5,000 For general support of this organization which aims to improve the livelihoods and status of women through grassroots organizing, human rights education and training in Teso region (eastern Uganda).

Concerned Parent Association (CPA)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization which seeks the release of child soldiers and promotes peace building efforts to resolve the armed conflict in northern Uganda.

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)

\$10,000 For its project to provide security training and psychological counseling to human rights defenders in Uganda.

Human Rights Focus (HURIFO)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization which promotes human rights in northern Uganda through documentation, reporting, education, and legal support.

Isis–Women’s Cross-Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization which promotes women’s participation in peace and reconciliation processes and provides ongoing training, technical assistance, and networking support to women’s rights activists in Central and East Africa.

Lady Mermaid Bureau (LMB)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization which seeks to protect the rights of sex workers in Kampala.

Law and Advocacy for Women in Uganda (LAW-U)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization which promotes women’s rights by undertaking strategic litigation and providing legal aid to women victims of violence and discrimination in Uganda.

National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization whose activities include defending the rights of communities affected by large infrastructure projects, promoting transparency and civil society participation in sustainable management of natural resources, and strengthening local organizations’ capacity to promote environmental justice.

National Women's Association for Social and Educational Advancement (NWASEA)

\$5,000 For general support of this organization which promotes women's rights through increased participation of women in local government, adult literacy, and women's rights awareness campaigns.

Platform for Labor Action (PLA)

\$15,000 For its project to protect girls engaged in petty trading in Lira District in northern Uganda against sexual assault.

Refugee Law Project (RLP)

\$15,000 For its project to provide legal aid and counseling to refugees in Uganda and support to Ugandan failed asylum seekers.

Soroti District Association of NGOs/CBOs Network (SODANN)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization whose activities include documentation of human rights violations, capacity-building of local organizations and conflict resolution between the Teso and Karamoja communities.

Teso Women Peace Activists (TEWPA)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include promoting women's rights through grassroots organizing, human rights monitoring/documentation/reporting, legal aid and policy reform.

Grants for 2009

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Arche d'Alliance

\$20,000 For general support of this organization's activities, including human rights documentation and education, legal aid to rape survivors, and monitoring of traditional courts for discrimination against women.

Association des Jeunes Femmes du Maniema /AJFM (Maniema Young Women's Association)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization that promotes women's and children's rights through grassroots organizing, education and legal aid in Maniema province.

Bureau pour le Volontariat au Service de l'Enfance et de la Santé /BVES (Volunteer Office in the Service of Children and Health)

\$30,000 For support of this organization which promotes the rights of children affected by armed conflict and mentors grassroots organizations in monitoring, documenting, and reporting on children's rights violations in eastern Congo.

Centre d'Etudes Juridiques Appliquées/ CEJA (Center for Applied Legal Studies)

\$20,000 For general support of this organization which promotes the rule of law by documenting, monitoring and reporting human rights violations and corruption, and promoting judicial reform.

Centre de Recherche sur l'Environnement, la Démocratie et les Droits de l'Homme/ CREDDHO (Research Center on Environment, Democracy and Human Rights)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting human rights violations in North Kivu and grassroots organizing to hold elected officials accountable for protecting economic, social and cultural rights.

Centre National d'Appui au Développement et à la Participation Populaire, Antenne du Kivu/ CENADEP (National Center for Support of Development and Community Participation)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization that seeks to promote the rights of people affected by the exploitation of natural resources.

Conseil Régional des Organisations Non Gouvernementales de Développement/ CRONGD (Regional Council of Non-Governmental Development Organizations)

\$15,000 for CRONGD's project to document the violations of economic and social rights of communities affected by the exploitation of natural resources in Mbuji-Mayi.

Femmes Juristes pour les Droits de la Femme et de l'Enfant/ FJDF (Female Jurists for Women's and Children's Rights)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization which promotes women's rights through education, training, the media and legal aid.

Groupe Hirondelles-Bukavu

\$10,000 for general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting and reporting violations of LGBT rights and educating human rights organizations about LGBT rights.

Haki Za Binadamu Maniema (HBM)

\$20,000 for general support of this organization, whose activities include documenting and reporting human rights violations in Maniema province and educating local communities and customary courts about women's rights.

Initiative Congolaise pour la Justice et la Paix/ ICJP (Congolese Initiative for Justice and Peace)

\$40,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include pressing the government to reform the justice system and providing legal aid to rape survivors in South Kivu, and for its project, in collaboration with Protection International, to provide security training to Congolese human rights organizations.

Réseau des Défenseurs des Droits Humains en Afrique Central/ REDHAC (Central African Human Rights Defenders Network)

\$10,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include providing support to human rights defenders in danger and educating national authorities on their obligation to protect them.

Solidarité des Femmes de Fizi pour le Bien-Etre Familial/ SOFIBEF (Fizian Women's Solidarity for Family Well-Being)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization whose activities include grassroots organizing and education to promote women's rights as well as psychological, medical and legal support to survivors of sexual violence in Fizi, South Kivu.

Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral/ SOFEPADI (Women's Solidarity for Peace and Integrated Development)

\$15,000 For general support of this organization which provides medical, social, and legal support to victims of sexual violence and works to improve the judicial system.

Solidarité pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix/ SOPROP (Solidarity for Social Promotion and Peace)

\$25,000 For general support of this organization, whose activities include education, training, documentation, and reporting to promote the rights of women and girls to stop sexual violence, and to fight corruption.

Grantee Profile: *Solidarité pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix (SOPROP)*

Challenging abuse in Eastern Congo

Escaping marauding militias has become a daily exercise for people in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Regional warlords have taken up residence in Congo's lush, dense, and massive forests along the far eastern border of this vast country. Thus, despite the January 23 arrest of renegade general Laurent Nkunda, who is believed responsible for countless atrocities, several other rebel factions remain at-large. The FDLR, which counts alleged perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide among its members, and Joseph Kony's so-called Lords



Resistance Army, a Ugandan rebel force known for abducting children that has been at-large for more than twenty years, both operate in the area.

Civilians have been left in the crossfire since the conflict began fifteen years ago. Almost every armed group—rebel militias, government, foreign forces—that have passed through Congo's borders, cities and villages stand guilty of raping, looting and killing civilians. In 2008 alone, more than one million people were displaced by the fighting.

In this photo, SOPROP staff visit an internally-displaced persons (IDP) camp in Mugunga, in eastern DRC's North Kivu province. Camps like these are highly unstable places: education is often nonexistent, as is security, proper hygiene, and access to food. Since the war began, more than 5.4 million people have been killed by murder, massacre, preventable disease, and other consequences of violence and displacement. SOPROP visits the IDP camps to document the conditions, facilitate resources, and press the government to protect its citizens.

With government largely absent from the lives of millions of Congo's citizens, local organizations have bravely risen to the challenge of speaking up for those whom the powerful want to silence. Operating in Congo's North Kivu province, which borders Rwanda and Burundi, **SOPROP** (*Solidarité pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix* / Solidarity for Social Promotion and Peace), a Fund grantee, has emerged as one of the area's leading human rights organizations challenging impunity for violence in this war-torn area and providing treatment to victims of human rights abuses.

SOPROP and other human rights groups in the area have documented abuses against civilians by both rebel forces and Congo's military and police. They also regularly denounce the rampant corruption within the military and justice systems that starts in Kinshasa, Congo's capital and filters down to the local level. Needless to say, when bribes and extortion are the cost of doing business with corrupt government officials, judges, and soldiers, Congo's poorest citizens suffer the most.

A key part of SOPROP's work includes promoting legal reforms to foster the rule of the law. Thanks to SOPROP's documentation and advocacy, reports of torture by police and other



government officials are down dramatically in Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu. SOPROP educates newly-elected officials on their job responsibilities, national laws, and conflict resolution methods. SOPROP also pushes national and regional justice mechanisms to bring perpetrators to account.

In this photo, local women in Goma stage a protest asking for peace in November 2008. The conflict in eastern Congo has been marked by horrific sexual violence against women and girls. Over the last ten years,

hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped.

SOPROP spends a considerable amount of time and resources responding to the crisis of violence against women. SOPROP investigates and records incidents of sexual violence and torture, runs several medical centers, and works with women to form local women's rights organizations. For survivors of sexual violence, SOPROP provides medical, psychological, and legal support, and also runs vocational training centers and micro-credit programs that promote economic self-sufficiency. In 2008, the Fund assisted SOPROP in obtaining funding from MIVA (an organization that provides vehicles to non-profit organizations) to purchase an ambulance to provide medical support to sexual assault survivors in isolated rural areas. "We work directly with survivors of sexual violence or torture. Meeting their needs is sometimes overwhelming," says Didier Kamundu Batundi, SOPROP's director. "But, at the same time, we push hard to create a culture of justice and accountability – one that respects the rights of ordinary citizens – to change the status quo."

Operating in one of the most dangerous places on earth, SOPROP activists display tremendous courage and singular determination to expose human rights violations committed by brutal militia forces and hold them accountable. The Fund will continue to support them as they lead the effort to end a culture of impunity for violence in eastern Congo.

June 2009

Grantee Profile: BVES

When BVES first opened its doors in 1992, its children's center was little more than a metal shack with a tarp roof. Still, it was the only place to go in this part of the Congo for several hundred Tutsi children fleeing the Rwandan genocide just across the river. BVES took these children in, provided food, medical care, and shelter, and a haven from the chaos just a few miles away. Fifteen years later, Bureau pour le Volontariat au Service de l'Enfance et de la Santé (BVES) (Volunteer Office in the Service of Children and Health) has become the main organization in the region working on child rights and has become the **lead advocate for the release of children recruited by armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.**



In the photo to the left, former child soldiers hold a poster stating: "Never again these uniforms for children."

Armed conflict in eastern Congo has fractured thousands of families and led to the enlistment of 30,000 children as soldiers, porters and sexual slaves. Ten thousand of these children are in the province of South Kivu, where BVES operates. Nearly every armed group in the region—including government forces—has recruited and forcibly conscripted children. Both boys and girls have been used in combat, and BVES and others have documented cases of child soldiers as young as six years old.

BVES promotes the rights of marginalized children (street children, imprisoned children, and children who are refugees, displaced, and former soldiers) with local authorities and the international community. BVES operates centers that help these children to rejoin their communities after being abducted by armed groups or orphaned by war, and provides psychological and medical services. Many released child soldiers and refugee children return to their villages as orphans. They often return to a situation where they have no access to health care, social supports, or opportunities to develop a trade or skill. They often have missed years of school, have extreme behavioral challenges, and face suspicious neighbors. Girls face a particularly difficult situation as they may return with children as a result of rape to families who reject them; in many parts of Congo, their rape and forced service is considered to bring the families shame.

For years, BVES operated its shelters with an all-volunteer staff and with in-kind contributions from UNICEF, the World Food Program, and the International Red Cross. BVES offered relief services with in-kind contributions but was not in the position to tackle the root cause of the children's situation: the widespread conscription of children as soldiers. **In 2005, the Fund for Global Human Rights gave BVES its first-ever outside financial support.** The Fund's support allowed BVES to increase dramatically their documentation and advocacy, train other organizations to advocate on behalf of children, and convince military commanders and rural villagers not to recruit children to join military forces.



In the photo to the left, children wear shirts saying: "A ball, not an army for me."

Despite the challenges, BVES has had astounding results. **Due in large part to their documentation and advocacy, child recruitment is now a crime under Congolese military and national law, and armed groups have released thousands of children.** BVES has negotiated directly with militias for the release of children, and has trained

community leaders to do so as well. Once released, BVES assists the children to reintegrate into society.

Today, BVES works with the UN and international human rights organizations to pressure the militia and the Congolese national army to stop using children in armed service. Through its shelters and vast local network, BVES gathers and reports timely information concerning the names, locations and activities of armed groups recruiting children. BVES staff members undertake this work at great personal peril – and BVES Director Murhabazi Namegabe is a tireless activist who continues his work in the face of direct threats on his life. BVES and its network work in isolated rural areas where warlords are dominant and human rights violations pervasive. **By virtue of their activities—gathering incriminating data on armed groups—the staff and volunteers are at constant risk.**

BVES operates with minimal funding, yet maximizes its potential for impact thanks to tireless leaders who actively collaborate and coordinate with other groups to defend the rights of children.

February 2007