

Human rights Defenders in Colombia have played a crucial role historically and today, investigating and documenting human rights violations and promoting justice for victims of human rights violations, and peacebuilding in the context of the internal armed conflict. HRDs participated in the peace process with the FARC-EP, promoted the peace agreement and mobilized society to participate in its implementation. They have brought state crimes like massacres and the extermination of political movements to international courts and found truth, justice and reparation for victims.

They have nevertheless operated in a hostile environment, subject to threats, attacks, killings, defamation and persecution through the justice system.

Since 2002, the We Are Defenders Program has registered 1333 killings of Human Rights Defenders in Colombia. In 2022, according to the UNHCR's annual report on Colombia, 116 HRDs were killed because of their work, 682 were attacked, nevertheless only 5.2 % cases were solved. The situation in Colombia of HRDs, in spite of protection policies implemented by the Colombian Government, remains dramatic. It is therefore urgent to reduce impunity of the attacks against HRDs and to implement reforms to the deficient state protection programs and in particular make progress on the policy on guarantees for Human Rights Defenders with participation of civil society.