



Securing Justice

Physicians for
Human Rights

Annual Report 2016



Members of the Afghanistan Forensic Science Organization, which PHR helped establish in 2011, exhuming a mass grave in Bamyan province, Afghanistan as part of a 2016 PHR training in torture documentation and forensic anthropology.



Through Evidence, Change Is Possible

At Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), we know the power of scientific evidence to bring about change. Around the world, we are empowering doctors and nurses, lawyers, judges, police, and activists to expose human rights abuses using the credible and reliable evidence provided by medical examinations and forensic investigations.

Our work to document human rights violations, train others to do so, and speak out against injustices has galvanized organizations and activists – many for the first time – to join us in our global advocacy to protect human rights. We leverage our platform as a Nobel Peace Prize co-laureate and our reputation as a trusted resource. Our meticulously-corroborated data is relied upon by leaders at the highest levels of global policy making and humanitarian response.

In the following pages, we show you all that PHR did in 2016 to give survivors a voice and ensure that the torturers, rapists, and abusers who trample on human rights will one day pay for their crimes. Your critical support is helping us further the struggle for justice around the world and is now more important than ever. Thank you for standing with us.

Donna McKay
Executive Director

Kerry Sulkowicz, MD
Board Chair



Counting Our Successes



2,000
human rights
defenders

In the past two years, PHR has trained more than 2,000 human rights defenders in 11 different countries, from Afghanistan to Kenya to the United States –

including doctors, nurses, police officers, lawyers, judges, and human rights activists – to use forensic science to prevent human rights abuses.

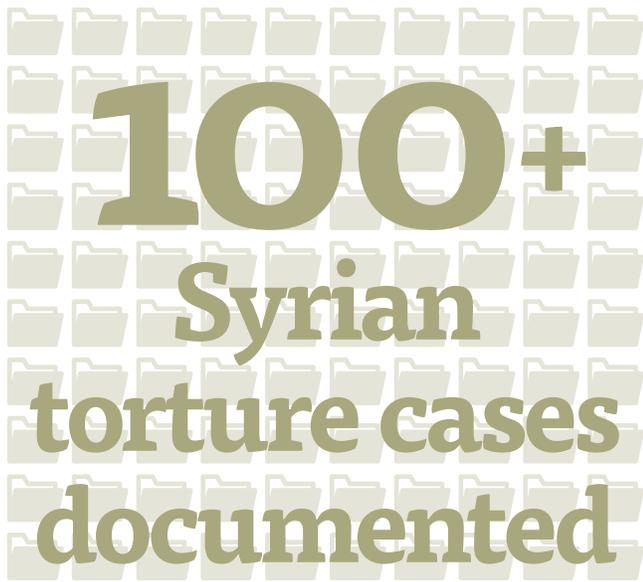
Dr. Ahmed Banasr Inspiring the Defenders

Forensic medicine expert Dr. Ahmed Banasr was so inspired by a 2013 PHR training on torture documentation that he went home and established the Tunisian Institute of Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Ill-Treatment. He says the training inspired him to work full-time on documenting torture, and to pass those skills on to others. This year, PHR held a highly successful regional training in Istanbul. Dr. Banasr was back – this time as a trainer.

“This training empowered us...
It was an amazing experience...
**This was the training that
changed my career.**”

*Dr. Ahmed Banasr, Tunisian professor
of forensic medicine, speaking of
PHR's training*





100+
Syrian
torture cases
documented

PHR has documented 100+ cases of torture and sexual violence that have occurred during the Syrian conflict and submitted them to the UN's Commission of Inquiry on Syria.



Ninety percent of reported U.S. asylum application outcomes are successful when they include a forensic evaluation performed by a PHR Asylum Network volunteer.



zero

The number of psychologists now permitted to work at Guantánamo Bay detention center, a ban catalyzed by PHR's 13-year campaign to end the U.S. torture program and the complicity of health professionals in aiding and abetting it.



40
years in
prison

In March 2016, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic was sentenced to 40 years in prison for war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity – a conviction based, in part, on PHR's forensic evidence of crimes committed under his command in Srebrenica more than 20 years ago.

Afghanistan's Mass Graves: Uncovering the Untold Stories

Evidence

The Afghanistan Forensic Science Organization (AFSO), which PHR co-founded in 2011 as the country's first independent forensic organization, worked with PHR to gather extensive documentation about mass killings that occurred in 1979 in Assadabad province, eastern Afghanistan, including GPS coordinates and photographs showing the location of mass graves.



Change

In October 2015, the Dutch national police arrested a former commander in the Afghan Army believed to have been involved in the mass killings. This was the first time that forensic evidence collected and preserved by AFSO contributed to the arrest of a suspect for crimes of this magnitude.

It was an emotional moment. In the summer of 2016, more than 35 years after the bodies of a group of Afghans were dumped into a mass grave in Bamyan province, two dozen Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)-trained Afghan forensic scientists carried out the country's first mass grave exhumation.

As the forensic workers dug, a skull emerged from the dirt. Then a shoe. Then a shin bone still enveloped in a trouser leg. All clues to the untold story of what had happened there so many years before.

The exercise was the culmination of an extensive PHR training program on torture documentation, forensic archaeological recovery, and analyzing and identifying human remains in Afghanistan, where decades of conflict have littered the country with mass graves. But the exhumation itself was carried out by the Afghanistan Forensic Science Organization (AFSO), Afghanistan's first professional association of male and female doctors, medical examiners, and forensic experts – a group that PHR co-founded in 2011 to advance human rights.

Since then, AFSO has grown into a strong independent organization which is a credible broker of scientific knowledge in



Afghanistan – a clearinghouse for all things forensic. With PHR's support, AFSO is raising awareness about torture in the country's prisons, leading a campaign to end so-called virginity testing, and documenting mass grave sites.

On August 17, 2016, at a moving ceremony following the exhumation, AFSO handed over the sets of human remains to the Governor of Bamyan province for a dignified burial officiated by the local mullah – demonstrating that science can bring a measure of closure to communities shattered by human rights abuses.

Above: A bullet lodged in a femur recovered during a PHR-supported mass grave exhumation in Afghanistan.

Right: Burial services for human remains unearthed during the grave exhumation.





"The training was very interesting and informative for me because I had never experienced exhuming mass graves before. I am very happy that in this cruel world still some people care about humanity and are eager to listen to untold stories."

Trainee at PHR's 2016 forensic anthropology training in Afghanistan

PHR trainers supervising a 2016 mass grave exhumation in Bamyán province, Afghanistan.

Securing Justice for the Smallest Victims



A little girl who was sexually assaulted in the Congolese village of Kavumu is cared for at the DRC's Panzi Hospital, which specializes in treating survivors of sexual violence.

They came at night, when the children were asleep. Over the course of three years, unknown assailants dragged dozens of young girls from their beds in the village of Kavumu, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and brutally raped and mutilated them, often leaving them bleeding in nearby fields. Most girls were under 12 years old – some were as young as 18 months.

But despite their horrific nature, the cases remained largely uninvestigated. During this time, PHR consistently advocated for a coordinated, effective investigation, and our experts provided technical assistance to police, lawyers, civil society leaders, and other key stakeholders. A local lawyer told us that one of his most important tools is the manual PHR developed to help identify and document evidence of sexual assault: “It’s my Bible,” he said.

In June 2016 came a long-awaited breakthrough: military authorities, in collaboration with civilian justice officials, arrested several key suspects in the rapes – bringing hope to the families and survivors of these atrocious acts that the serial crimes will stop and that they will finally have a chance at justice.

“PHR and [its partners] care about the survivors’ well-being. The survivors had deep emotional wounds and are benefiting tremendously from the support groups that were set up through the intervention of PHR and [its partners].”

Dr. Margaret Mak’anyengo, head of the Gender-Based Violence Recovery Center at Kenyatta National Hospital



PHR Board Chair Dr. Kerry Sulkowicz speaks with KNH’s Dr. Margaret Mak’anyengo.

Dr. Margaret Mak’anyengo Supporting the Expert Witness

PHR has worked closely with Dr. Margaret Mak’anyengo, head of the Gender-Based Violence Recovery Center at Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) as part of a unique, high-profile sexual violence case against the Kenyan government. PHR, three civil society organizations, and eight survivors allege that the government failed to protect victims of widespread sexual violence following the 2007 elections, and failed to investigate and prosecute the crimes and provide reparations. PHR has played a key role coordinating psychological examinations of the survivors, advising the psychiatric team, and supporting Dr. Mak’anyengo as she prepared to testify as an expert witness. It is the only case of its kind, and a testament to the change that medical evidence makes possible.

Breaking Torture's Sway in Central Asia

In Central Asia, where justice systems have long relied on coerced confessions and where torture is systematic and widespread, PHR partners with human rights activists to help create cultures of accountability and respect for human rights.

During the past five years, we have facilitated legal and administrative reforms, and, with our national trainers, have taught many hundreds of forensic experts, defense attorneys, prosecutors, and judges to use the Istanbul Protocol – UN standards for torture investigation and documentation that were developed with PHR's leadership.

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, ministries of health have officially recognized the Protocol and adopted Istanbul Protocol National Plans of Action. In 2014, two Kyrgyz police officers were sentenced to 11 years in prison for torturing several minors. This was the first case – ever – of criminal punishment under the torture statute. In 2015, PHR's Istanbul Protocol national trainer in Tajikistan submitted the first forensic medical evaluation of an alleged torture victim in that country using Protocol standards. And in May 2016, after sustained pressure by PHR and our local partners over the past several years, the



parliament of Tajikistan revised the Criminal Procedure Code to allow for independent forensic medical evaluations.

PHR's work in Central Asia has significance beyond the region; our experiences are the foundation for global efforts to promote state-based implementation of Istanbul Protocol standards. When we can see real progress in places where torture is so entrenched, we know our anti-torture efforts can make a difference around the world.

Members of a Kyrgyz special police force on parade in Bishkek. Photo: Vyacheslav Oseledko/ AFP/Getty Images

Parvina Navruzova Building Strength in Numbers

Over the past year, PHR developed a larger and more culturally diverse bench of trainers to scale up our world class training in forensic documentation of human rights abuses. In this year alone, our Training of Trainer (ToT) curriculums put more than 50 people from 11 countries through high-level, comprehensive workshops to learn how to train others in this critical work. And these efforts have already borne fruit: ToT graduates this year led their own trainings in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kazakhstan, Kenya, and Morocco.



Parvina Navruzova and PHR Senior Program Officer Dr. Zied Mhirs at PHR's 2016 Training of Trainers in Istanbul.

"Before this training, I thought that we were the only ones working in human rights. But now, I understand that we are not alone. It's a very useful training because the government must see that we have partners in Kyrgyzstan, Syria, Afghanistan. When there are more of us, I think it gives us a lot of power."

Lawyer Parvina Navruzova, coordinator for the Coalition Against Torture in Tajikistan, speaking of PHR's training

“You Have to Have Proof.”

Evidence

In the wake of the 1995 massacre in Srebrenica of more than 7,000 Muslim men and boys by forces commanded by Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, a team of PHR forensic experts spent months exhuming and identifying remains contained in mass graves there. PHR’s Dr. William Haglund, Senior Forensic Advisor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, led the team that gathered evidence showing the victims were executed and dumped in shallow graves.



Change

In March 2016, after six years of proceedings, the Tribunal found Karadzic guilty of war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, and sentenced him to 40 years in prison.

When Congolese security forces arrested businessman Paulin Kalonji for the second time, he knew his days were numbered. Suspecting him of subversive ties, they held him in an overcrowded cell for two weeks, tortured him, and brutally interrogated him. A few months after he was released, Kalonji fled the country. “I was afraid,” he said. “I knew if they came for me again, they would kill me.”

In the United States, Kalonji found a lawyer, who, through Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), introduced him to Dr. Katherine McKenzie, director of the Yale Center for Asylum Medicine and a member of PHR’s Asylum Network.

Dr. McKenzie conducted a medical examination and documented several scars which were consistent with Kalonji’s claims that he had been cut with a bayonet and burned with melted plastic by his torturers. Armed with the evaluation, Kalonji applied for asylum. In 2013, he was granted



The Washington Post

“This is a momentous day for international justice, but also for those in Bosnia who lost husbands and wives, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters in a coordinated campaign of violence.”

Susannah Sirkin, PHR director of international policy and partnerships, speaking of the conviction of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic

Dr. Katherine McKenzie measuring a scar on asylum seeker Paulin Kalonji’s leg. Medical evaluations can corroborate claims of torture and other violence by those applying for asylum in the United States.

Photo: Robert Lisak

safe haven in the United States. "I was lucky," he says. "The evaluation was a big element in obtaining asylum. It's not easy. I have friends who have applied for asylum, but they don't have proof. You have to have proof."

Today, Kalonji works for a surgical equipment company. Three of his children are in college. His 18-year-old daughter wants to be a doctor.

For Dr. McKenzie, who has completed more than 70 such evaluations over the past 10 years, working on Kalonji's case reaffirmed why she

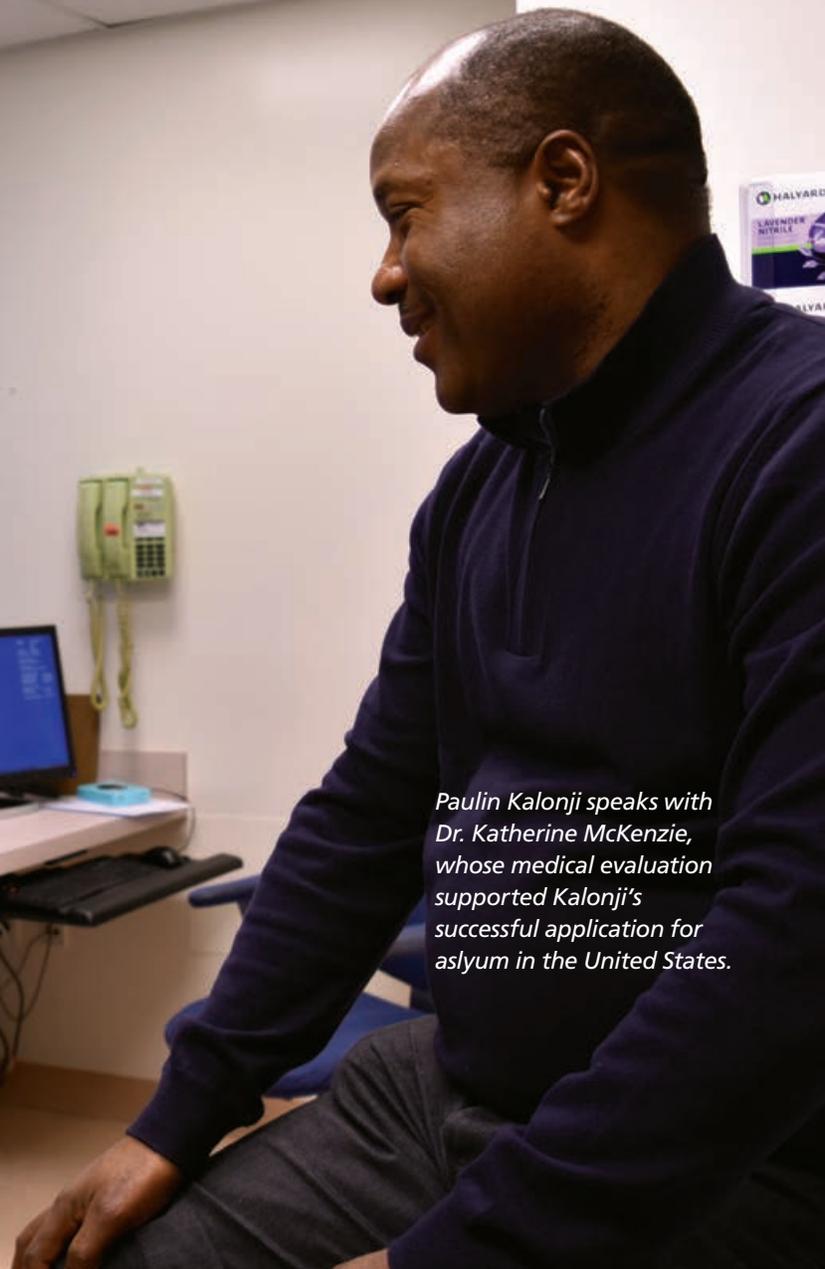
does asylum work, and why she helps PHR train other medical colleagues in forensic evaluations. "You really have the ability and the skills as a physician to make a difference in the life of displaced people in the world.... Hearing what happens to people, seeing their resilience – it inspires you and you really feel like you're able to contribute in a positive way."

"[I have] the responsibility to be compassionate to a person who has likely suffered a great deal, while providing evidence that is objective and credible in court.... Now more than ever I am grateful that I'm able to contribute my expertise as a physician to promoting human rights."

*Dr. Katherine McKenzie, Director,
Yale Center for Asylum Medicine and
PHR Asylum Network member*

Seeding a New Generation of Human Rights Advocates

The work of PHR's Asylum Program is often the last step in refugees' and other immigrants' arduous journey to safety and freedom. The pro bono medical evaluations conducted by our 700-strong network of volunteers help support asylum seekers' claims that they were tortured or subjected to sexual or other violence in their countries of origin. Over the past year, the Asylum Program provided a record 520 evaluations; through it, PHR is seeding a new generation of human rights advocates within the medical community.



*Paulin Kalonji speaks with
Dr. Katherine McKenzie,
whose medical evaluation
supported Kalonji's
successful application for
asylum in the United States.*

Bleeding to Death Behind the Barricades



“The doctors told me both Taybet and Yusuf died from bleeding. I believe that if they were both taken to the hospital, they would have survived. They wouldn’t be dead.”

Hali Inan, 61, whose wife and brother were shot by snipers during curfews in Silopi, Turkey in February 2016

PHR researchers heard harrowing stories when they travelled to southeastern Turkey in the summer of 2016 to investigate allegations of human rights violations by Turkish security forces against the predominantly Kurdish population. A succession of 24-hour sieges had blocked access to health care, cut off water, food, and electricity to whole cities, and resulted in thousands of deaths. Many people, we were told, died because the sick and wounded were prevented from reaching emergency medical care.

Our report “Southeastern Turkey: Health Care Under Siege” documented attacks on ambulances and hospitals, the destruction of health care clinics, unlawful killings, and the persecution of medical professionals who sought to document evidence of these human rights violations and hold the government accountable.

Calling Out Russia’s Brutality in Syria

Russian warplanes streaked into the Syrian conflict at the end of September 2015. In the following month, they carried out 10 attacks on health facilities, wantonly killing and injuring patients and medical staff, putting hospitals out of service, and further devastating the country’s already crippled health infrastructure. PHR’s rigorous documentation broke the news of these attacks in the media and squarely focused the world’s attention on Russia’s lethal role in the conflict – a role brought to new lows during Russia’s pitiless 2016 bombing of Aleppo. The data is part of our highly respected Syria mapping project, a comprehensive and meticulously corroborated visual database of the killing of medical workers and the destruction of medical facilities in Syria, the vast majority by government forces and their Russian allies. PHR’s data – which is cited at monthly meetings of the UN Security Council, and widely used by decision-makers and by the media – will one day help frame the prosecution of these crimes against humanity.

PHR’s full map of attacks on health care in Syria can be found at phr.org/syria-map.



The mother of 15-year-old Rozerin Çukur, who was shot and killed by Turkish security forces in a curfewed neighborhood of Diyarbakır in January 2016. Her body was only identified in June.

theguardian

“People can only build their futures where they can be safe, where they can send their children to school, and where they can get the healthcare they need. Allowing Syria’s medics to keep their skills sharp is just one thing we can do to help Syrians build the future they all want: one in which they can go home.”

Donna McKay, PHR executive director

The Ruthless Destruction of Syria's Health Care System

Who's killing Syrian medical workers?



Who's attacking Syria's health facilities?



These figures are drawn from PHR's Syria mapping project. Every time our researchers learn of an attack on Syrian medical facilities or personnel, they sift through hundreds of articles, social media posts, photos, videos, and reports from our sources on the ground to determine exactly what happened and who was responsible. Data is through July 2016.





A survivor of sexual violence is comforted by Dr. Patrick Bigabwa, a clinician at the sexual violence unit at Panzi Hospital in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where tens of thousands of women are sexually assaulted every year. A close PHR partner, Panzi Hospital specializes in the care and rehabilitation of sexual violence survivors. Photo: Platon for The People's Portfolio

Sexual Violence in the DRC: From Evidence to Justice



“So few survivors dare to come forward to speak about what happened to them. The stigma is unbelievable in their communities. They’re rejected by their families, by their husband, their parents, their children. They lose their livelihood. They lose any sense of place in their community. So speaking out about what happened to them comes at an enormous cost to them.”

Karen Naimer, director of PHR’s Program on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones

A 17-year-old Congolese girl is assaulted in her village and raped. Though she is brought to a local clinic and examined by a doctor, his report is illegible, and the police are unable to pursue the case.

A few miles away, a woman is raped by two ex-militiamen while working in her fields. The doctor’s examination is thorough and the report is sent to the local police station – but the file mysteriously disappears. Villagers say the assailants broke in and destroyed the evidence.

In a third case, an eight-year-old student is raped by her teacher. Though the assault is documented by a doctor, the suspect arrested, and the report safely conveyed to the courts, the judge is unable to interpret the medical language of the report. Without the evidence needed for a conviction, the perpetrator goes free.

Stories like these are common in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Yet only a tiny fraction of the thousands of rape cases that occur every year are properly prosecuted. Lack of evidence plays a crucial role in hampering justice.

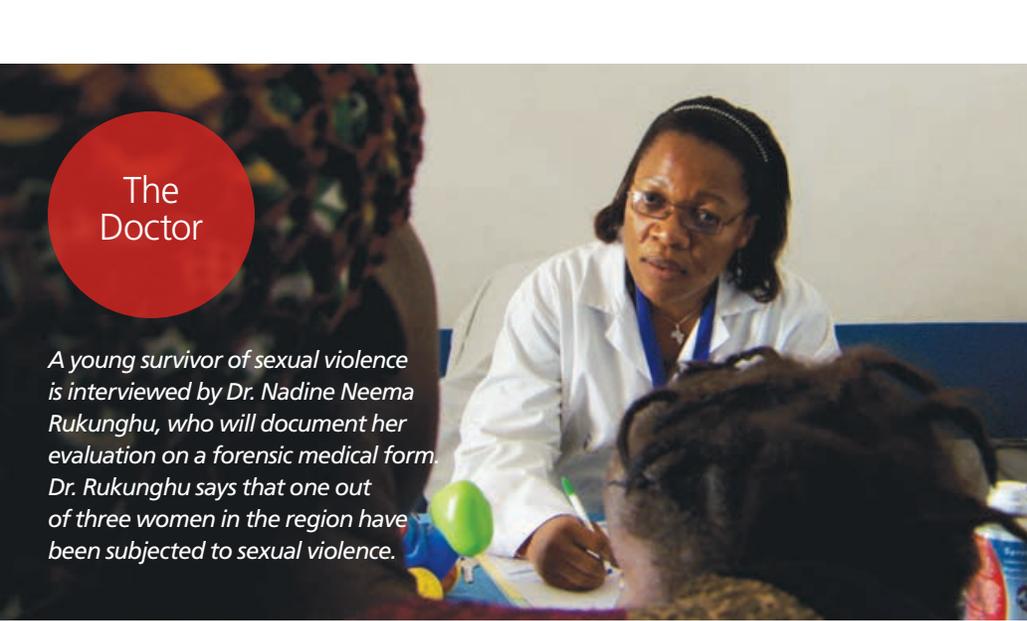
Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) is helping to change that – with a ground-breaking innovation that doesn’t require sophisticated technology.

For the past four years, PHR experts and staff have worked intensively with our partners in the DRC to develop a standard forensic medical form – one that documents and preserves court-admissible evidence of rape and sexual violence. The checklist-style form helps doctors and nurses ensure that they have not forgotten anything when examining a survivor, and that their report is comprehensible to others working on the case. PHR also trains police, lawyers, and judges to use the form to investigate and prosecute sexual violence cases. What’s more, our unique cross-sectoral approach, piloted in three provinces of the DRC, has nurtured exceptional relationships among these professionals – making it much easier for them to coordinate with each other and, together, bring rape cases to trial.

In 2016, the Congolese government agreed to implement the standardized forensic medical form throughout the whole of the DRC. It sounds modest, even bureaucratic. But this simple form is changing survivors’ lives and is a critical step in securing justice for those who suffer the horror of sexual violence. The photos on the following pages show how it works.

The forensic medical form is also being used with MediCapt, PHR’s award-winning mobile app that allows clinicians to document, securely store, and safely transmit evidence in sexual violence cases. Here, PHR consultant Georges Kuzma and Dr. Nadine Neema Rukunghu, Medical Coordinator of the Sexual Violence Clinic at Panzi Hospital, DRC, test the app’s secure capture feature for forensic photography.





The Doctor

A young survivor of sexual violence is interviewed by Dr. Nadine Neema Rukunghu, who will document her evaluation on a forensic medical form. Dr. Rukunghu says that one out of three women in the region have been subjected to sexual violence.

"PHR has taught us the importance of working within a network... Before, I didn't have many relations with doctors ... (or) with judges and magistrates, but when we meet within the network, go through the same training, we become friends. We have improved our professional relationships, and that has really improved the quality of the services that we provide for the population."

*Col. David Bodeli Dombi,
head of the South Kivu Child Protection and Sexual Violence unit,
Congoles National Police*



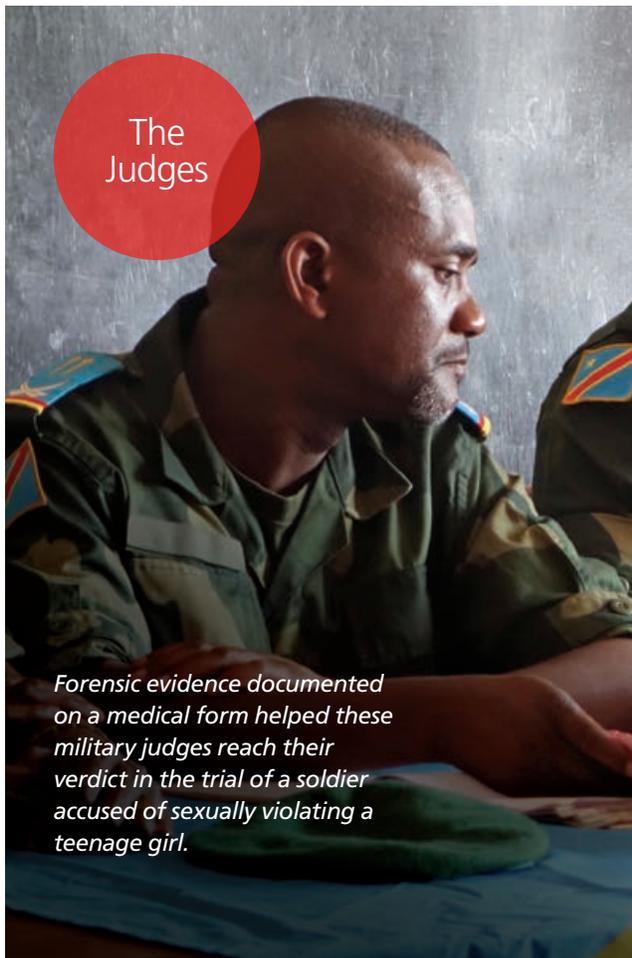
The Police Officer

Armed with forensic evidence properly documented on the medical form, police investigators like Georgette Mapendo, at the Child Protection and Sexual Violence unit of the South Kivu police force, are able to investigate cases of rape and sexual violence.



The Survivor

A teenage survivor of sexual violence, her identity hidden by a scarf, at the trial of the soldier who allegedly assaulted her.



The Judges

Forensic evidence documented on a medical form helped these military judges reach their verdict in the trial of a soldier accused of sexually violating a teenage girl.



The Prosecutor

Evidence contained in forensic medical forms help military prosecutors bring cases of rape and sexual violence to trial. Here, a soldier in the DRC army accused of sexually assaulting a teenage girl stands before the South Kivu military tribunal. Forensic evidence in the case had been documented on the medical form created by PHR and our Congolese partners.



G. GENITALIA

Use the legend to examine the injuries from sexual assault findings

- 1. Inner thigh injury
- 2. Periurethral injury
- 3. Perineum injury
- 4. Labia majora injury
- 5. Labia minora injury
- 6. Hymen injury
- 7. Clitoris/surrounding area injury
- 8. Penis injury



“I promised myself to reveal the truth every time, with all means, and never to be afraid of revealing the truth.”

*Dr. Şebnem Korur Fincancı,
Turkish human rights activist
and PHR partner*

*Turkish human rights activist
Dr. Şebnem Korur Fincancı and
PHR Executive Director Donna
McKay, after Dr. Fincancı's
November 2016 court hearing
on spurious terrorism charges.*

A Turkish Human Rights Champion

The Turkish authorities' brutal crackdown on civil society that followed the attempted coup in 2016 is only the latest in an escalating pattern of silencing those who speak out against the government.

In June 2016, authorities arrested one of Turkey's leading human rights defenders, longtime PHR partner and world-renowned forensic expert Dr. Şebnem Korur Fincancı. Dr. Fincancı and two co-defendants faced spurious terrorism charges after they participated in a solidarity campaign with a Kurdish opposition newspaper. PHR helped lead a global campaign for their release. In November, Executive Director Donna McKay joined a contingent of human rights defenders from around the world to attend Dr. Fincancı's court hearing and take part in a public demonstration calling on Turkey to drop all charges against Dr. Fincancı, her co-defendants, and other human rights activists.

With Dr. Fincancı's trial postponed twice, PHR continues to advocate for her release, and for an end to the ongoing arrests, detentions, and dismissals of thousands of doctors, forensic experts, and other health professionals in Turkey. We will not stop until justice is served, human rights violators are held to account, and the culture of impunity that allows these shameless abuses to occur is extinguished.

DAILY NEWS

"The international community needs to continue to step in and speak out even more loudly in continued support of our colleagues in Turkey."

Christine Mehta, PHR researcher

Navy Nurse: The Quiet Hero of Guantánamo

In 2014, a career U.S. Navy nurse took an unprecedented stand: he refused to force-feed Guantánamo detainees on the grounds that it violated the ethical standards of his profession. When the Navy tried to punish the nurse, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) launched a sustained, high-profile campaign in his defense, rallying the American Nurses Association, the American Medical Association, and others. The Navy dropped all charges, but the nurse's ordeal was far from over. PHR kept up the pressure in 2016 when the U.S. Defense Department threatened to revoke the nurse's security clearance, which would have led to a dishonorable discharge. That threat was also dropped.

Two years after this brave medical officer took a stand against torture, PHR is very pleased to report that he has retired from the military, with full honors, and will continue to work as a nurse in his civilian life. In a political climate in which U.S. President Donald Trump has openly espoused a return to torture, PHR is proud to have supported this military nurse in his refusal to participate in the illegal and unethical harming and degrading of another human being.

The New York Times

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

"At Guantánamo, [force-feeding] is carried out on mentally competent prisoners who are forcibly removed from their cells and strapped into five-point restraint chairs by prison guards in riot gear. This has nothing to do with saving lives. Instead, it is about using medicine to carry out military objectives: silencing detainees on hunger strike."

*Sarah Dougherty, senior fellow,
PHR U.S. Anti-Torture Program*

Exposing the U.S. Government's Torture Lies

Evidence

PHR used epidemiological tools to show that land grabs in Myanmar are having dire human rights and health consequences for thousands of families who have been forced from their homes.



Change

Burmese activists used our report successfully to get the government in one area to establish a committee to determine compensation for displaced families – and some families have already been compensated.

Through our U.S. Anti-Torture Program, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) has waged a 13-year campaign to expose and end the complicity of medical personnel in “war on terror” abuses by the United States. Over the past two years, PHR and the activist psychologists we mobilized contributed to the American Psychological Association’s decision to ban psychologists from national security interrogations and detention sites that violate international law. Following that ban, the Pentagon withdrew psychologists from detainee operations at Guantánamo Bay.

Our report “Truth Matters” highlighted how CIA psychologists James Mitchell and Bruce Jessen betrayed the law and ethics in developing psychological torture methods, and PHR continues to push for accountability for all health professionals who designed and implemented the U.S. torture program.

With U.S. President Trump’s stated openness to using torture, PHR’s work is more critical than ever. We are redoubling our efforts to ensure that the United States unequivocally rejects torture as official policy, to insist that health professionals are not ordered to participate, and to empower them to stand firm in their ethical obligation to “do no harm.”

“In the post-9/11 period, doctors and other health professionals were instrumental in designing and implementing the U.S. torture program that destroyed thousands of lives and has undermined the moral standing the United States assumed in the postwar period.”

Dr. Kerry Sulkowicz, PHR board chair, PHR blog

Murder by Siege

In late spring 2016, 12-year-old Ola died in Syria. Her death was not from barrel bombs, missiles, or mortar fire, but from starvation. She lived in Madaya, a small town controlled by opposition forces that the Syrian government has besieged since July 2015. Inside Madaya, Ola and 40,000 other people were trapped without access to supplies, food, or services outside the town, surrounded by thousands of landmines and dozens of checkpoints manned by snipers.

Our report “Madaya: Portrait of a Syrian Town Under Siege,” produced in partnership with the Syrian American Medical Society, told the story of the town’s 86 people who died as a direct result of the siege during its first year – from malnutrition and starvation, landmines, and snipers. Almost all 86 could have been saved, but Syrian authorities only allowed limited quantities of food and medical supplies into Madaya and ignored repeated requests to evacuate Ola and her neighbors. On May 26, 2016, Ola succumbed to starvation.

Our report highlighted the individual human toll of siege warfare, not just in Madaya, but in dozens of towns across Syria where at least one million people remained besieged as the conflict moved into its seventh year. By telling Madaya’s story, PHR underscored the urgent need to end all sieges in Syria, rather than to negotiate one-off aid deliveries or single humanitarian evacuations.



“Children are dying of starvation an hour from warehouses filled with food aid in Damascus.... Each day under siege brings the rest of Madaya’s population one day closer to death.”

Elise Baker, PHR research coordinator



*Syrian government forces block the entrance to the town of Madaya, which they have besieged since July 2015.
Photo: Louai Beshara/AFP/Getty Images*

An Evening Dedicated to Syrian Heroes

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) was proud to present the 2016 Physicians for Human Rights Award to Syrian medics Dr. Lena and Dr. Nour* at our annual gala in April. The event, which drew hundreds of distinguished guests to Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall in New York for an evening dedicated to the Syrian people, also honored philanthropists Ayman and Sawsan Asfari for their commitment to supporting tolerant, inclusive, just societies in the Middle East. Best-selling author and journalist Kati Marton presented the award to

the Asfaris. Dr. Lena's and Dr. Nour's awards were presented by human rights activist and physician Dr. Kamiar Alaei, who was imprisoned in his native Iran and spoke movingly of the role played by PHR to secure his release. We thank you for the continued support that makes it possible for us and our partners to empower courageous human rights defenders like Dr. Lena and Dr. Nour around the world.

**Dr. Lena's and Dr. Nour's names have been changed to protect their identities.*

"What kind of world do we live in when doctors, nurses, patients, families, and children are targeted and killed every day?"

Dr. Nour, Syrian physician and PHR honoree



Syrian musician Kinan Asmeh and his CityBand perform at PHR's 2016 Gala at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall in New York.

Photos: Thos Robinson/Getty Images



From left: PHR Board Chair Dr. Kerry Sulkowicz, honoree Sawsan Asfari, PHR Executive Director Donna McKay, honoree Dr. Lena (identity hidden for security reasons), honoree Ayman Asfari, and Dr. Sandra Leong at PHR's 2016 Gala.

"Despair is everywhere around us. And yet, I have hope – because of the resilience and strength I have seen in my patients, and because of my work with PHR."

Dr. Lena, Syrian physician and PHR honoree



PHR board member Gerson Smoger, Cynthia Lawrence, and PHR emeritus board member Dr. Robert Lawrence.



Mortimer Zuckerman and honoree Ayman Asfari.



Shelby White, PHR board member Anthony Romero, and Donna McKay.

Volunteers

Every year, Physicians for Human Rights receives more than \$1.5 million in donated and in-kind services. We thank the many physicians, scientists, lawyers, and other health and legal professionals who volunteer their time and expertise to help us document and call attention to mass atrocities and severe human rights violations.

Suhaila Aboud, BA, MA
Randi Abramson, MD
Melanie Adem, LICSW
Sanjay Adhia, MD
Harrison Adika, LLB
Joanne Aholu, MD
Carolyne Ajema, BA, MSW
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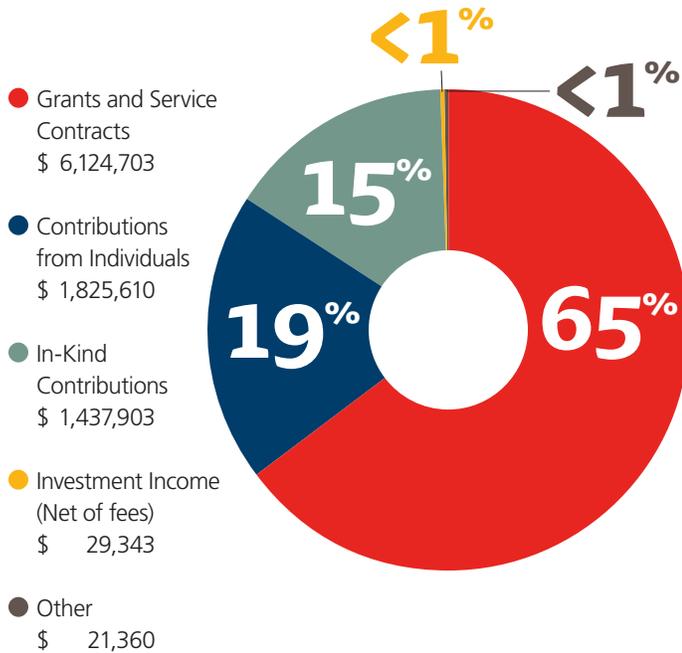


Physicians for Human Rights

Physicians for Human Rights is proud to launch our new visual identity with this annual report. Our new design and tagline shine a spotlight on PHR's pivotal role in using the power of medical and scientific evidence to expose and bring an end to human rights violations around the world.

Financials

FY16 Operating Revenues



Statement of Activities (for the year ending 06.30.2016)

Revenues

Grants and Service Contracts	\$ 6,124,703
Contributions from Individuals	\$ 1,825,610
In-Kind Contributions	\$ 1,437,903
Investment Income (Net of fees)	\$ 29,343
Other	\$ 21,360

<i>Total Operating Revenues for FY16</i>	\$ 9,438,919
<i>Operating Expenses</i>	\$ 8,667,280

Statement of Financial Position (for the year ending 06.30.2016)

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,808,800
Accounts Receivable	\$ 2,700
Grant and Contribution Receivables	\$ 2,067,848
Prepaid Expenses and Other	\$ 135,694
Property and Equipment, Net of Depreciation	\$ 327,315
Investments	\$ 3,495,601
Deposits	\$ 50,658

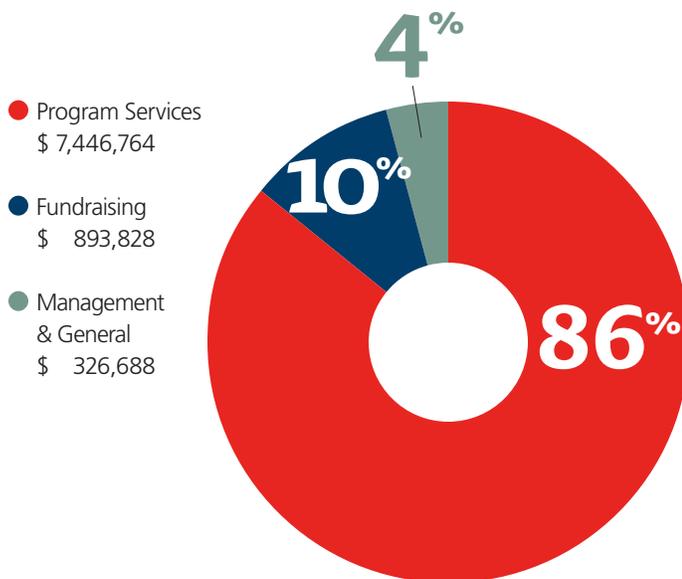
<i>Total Assets</i>	\$ 7,888,616
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Liabilities and Net Assets

Line of Credit	\$ 1,483,211
Accounts Payable	\$ 192,737
Accrued Expenses	\$ 302,779
Deferred Rental Obligation	\$ 26,630
Unrestricted Assets	\$ 2,210,948
Temporarily Restricted Assets	\$ 3,672,311

<i>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</i>	\$ 7,888,616
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FY16 Operating Expenses





Physicians for
Human Rights

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For more than 30 years, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) has used science and the uniquely credible voices of medical professionals to document and call attention to severe human rights violations around the world. A Nobel Peace Prize co-laureate, PHR employs its investigations and expertise to advocate for persecuted health workers and facilities under attack, prevent torture, document mass atrocities, and hold those who violate human rights accountable.

Through evidence,
change is possible.



Nobel Peace Prize
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