



# NARRATIVE LABS

SYNTHESIS  
WORKSHOP



 JustLabs

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Country Fact Sheets

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# AUSTRALIA



# FACTSHEET ON AUSTRALIA

## **Background: Lack of federal human rights protections**

Australia is the only Western democracy in the world without a Charter of Human Rights, of equivalent legal protection of human rights (e.g. a Bill of Rights, Human Rights Act). As part of the Asia-Pacific region, Australia is also part of the only region in the world without a regional human rights mechanism. The Australian Constitution was drafted in 1901 and includes few substantive rights (e.g. right to vote, right to freedom of religion, implied right of political communication).

Despite these clear gaps in the legal and institutional protections of human rights, Australian Governments have generally introduced laws and policies which respect the rights of the majority of Australians.

## **Impact on minority groups**

However, there have been clear examples of government laws, policies and actions deliberately targeting minority groups in Australia which have led to significant discrimination, inequality and systemic injustice.

Historically, the colonization of Australia included mass killings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as laws which did not recognize Indigenous peoples as human beings and denied them basic rights to be counted as citizens, or to vote. The infamous 'Stolen Generations' from 1910 to 1970 led to the forcible removal of Indigenous children from their families as part of a policy of assimilation. Today, the life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is about 10 years lower than non-Indigenous Australians, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are 15 to 20 times more likely to be in custody than non-Indigenous Australians. More recently, the Australian Government has imposed policies which deliberately target remote Aboriginal communities – including compulsory leasing of land, prohibitions on alcohol and pornography, welfare quarantining, and imposing more onerous work requirements to access social security.

The Australian Government has also a number of anti-immigration laws and policies and stoke racist and xenophobic sentiment during federal elections to secure votes. Historically, the White Australia Policy, which ran from 1901 to 1973, limited immigration for people from non-Caucasian backgrounds. Over the last six years, the Australian Government has imposed an indefinite mandatory detention regime to any refugees or asylum seekers who arrived in Australia by boat, which has resulted in significant abuses on offshore detention camps in Papua New Guinea and Nauru, and for people returned to their home countries as part of the Australian Government's boat turnbacks.

There are a number of other examples where existing laws and policies have failed to protect human rights.

## Summary of current political situation

There is an upcoming federal election in Australia in May 2019. The conservative Liberal Party has been in power for the past six years, and imposed a series of laws which have failed to address Indigenous disadvantage, imposed punitive immigration policies, increased the ability of government agencies to engage in mass surveillance on citizens, restricted the abilities of civil society organizations to fundraise and advocate, introduced punitive measures for people on social security and decreased and consolidated key functions of the public service, among other conservative measures.

The current Prime Minister Scott Morrison is a very conservative Christian. Senior Government MPs are comfortable making public comments that deliberately demonize and further marginalize First Nations people, refugees, Muslims, African 'gangs', and LGBTI people for political advantage. The Government is also failing to address any issues of systemic gender discrimination. Even in its own ranks it has very few women in Parliament and the party is ideologically opposed to quotas to increase female representation.

The Parliament also has in it a minority nationalist party, One Nation, and an independent who barely conceals his white supremacist beliefs. Although the One Nation and the Government parties have condemned many of his comments (including hateful remarks following this week's massacre in New Zealand,) their own rhetoric fuels and mainstreams attitudes like his and xenophobia in the community.

The current conservative party is unpopular as a result of recent internal turmoil and a series of unveilings of mismanagement and serious human rights abuses (although they have not really been described in human rights languages). There are a series of recent and upcoming Royal Commissions (independent investigations) which have highlighted significant human rights abuses which have taken place in Australia, including:

- Abuse in the Northern Territory youth justice detention center – including the use of restraints and spit hoods on children, extended solitary confinement, dangerous conditions and abuse by prison guards – 100% of children in this facility are Indigenous)
- Institutional child sexual abuse – including the lack of accountability for particularly church leaders who covered up decades of child sexual abuse on children in their care
- Banking industry – including irresponsible lending, financial institutions taking advantage of vulnerable customers, price gouging, and forcing people into bankruptcy to make a profit
- Aged care facility – recently commissioned inquiry following reports of older people being abused by carers in government-funded aged care homes
- Disability – recently commissioned inquiry following reports of people with disability being mistreated, abused, restrained and sexually abused in supported accommodation facilities

Most political pundits are tipping that the center-left Labor Party will be elected. The HRLC believes this will present a window of opportunity for Australia to introduce a Charter of Rights and reverse some of the negative trends of previous years.

### **Recent targeting of civil society organizations**

Australian charity laws confirm that advocacy by charities to further their charitable mission is lawful. However, Australia has no national Charter of Human Rights to protect freedom of speech, association and assembly. There is limited protection of political communication in the Australian Constitution. The HRLC has relied on this recently to successfully challenge Tasmanian anti-protest laws that restricted protest rights to protect business interests.

The political context for civil society advocacy has deteriorated significantly in the past five years and there have been constant threats by the Federal and some state governments including:

1. Targeted funding cuts of organizations that advocate (partly at the request of mining interests)
2. Direct and indirect clauses in funding agreements that restrict advocacy
3. Threats to the charitable tax status of environmental organizations that advocate
4. Appointment of a new head of the charity regulator who has a record of hostility to charity advocacy
5. Attempts to introduce new laws that, under the guise of addressing foreign interference in Australian elections, would stifle public advocacy by charities and others by imposing extremely onerous compliance obligations on organizations that advocate
6. Passing or attempting to pass anti-protest laws that restrict protest rights to protect business interests and in particular mining and forestry businesses.
7. The broader context around democratic freedoms has also deteriorated in the past 5 years with the Federal government:
8. Cutting funding to the Australian Human Rights Commission (Australia's national human rights institution), attempting to procure the resignation of its most recent President and engaging in repeated personal criticism of its most recent President and other Commissioners.
9. Repeatedly criticizing environmental groups that undertake public interest litigation and attempting to amend standing laws to make it harder to bring environmental public interest litigation.
10. Intensifying of government secrecy and secrecy laws.
11. Criticizing, investigating and prosecuting whistleblowers, including investigating journalists who publish stories exposing government misconduct.
12. Undermining digital freedom by requiring the stockpiling of metadata and allowing warrantless access to metadata.
13. Proposing new laws to create a huge facial recognition database and capability using drivers license and passport photos with weak safeguards to protect against abuse.
14. Proposing new laws to weaken encryption.

15. Intensifying criticism of the judiciary.
16. Appointing a Charities Commissioner who does not value the contributions of charities and believes that charities should be abolished.

## CLIENT BACKGROUND: HUMAN RIGHTS LAW CENTRE

The [Human Rights Law Centre \(HRLC\)](#) believes in a future where human rights are universally understood, upheld and protected. We secure law and policy changes that eliminate inequality and injustice and build a society in Australia grounded in decency, compassion and respect. We are fiercely independent, with the majority of our funding coming from philanthropic support.

To achieve change, we use an integrated strategic mix of legal action, advocacy, research, education and UN engagement. We maximize our impact by working closely with key partners, including community organizations, pro bono law firms and barristers, academics and experts, and international and domestic human rights organizations.

The HRLC was established in 2006 and is a registered charity with offices in Melbourne and Sydney. The HRLC employs around 20 staff. Most are trained as lawyers although we employ three staff in our communications and campaign team. Our annual budget is around USD\$2 million. We leverage around USD\$6 million annually in pro bono work from law firms and barristers in support of our human rights work.

We currently have nine focus areas in our strategic plan:

1. Democratic freedoms (with a focus on civil society advocacy, press freedom, protest rights and the rule of law)
2. Rights of refugees and people seeking asylum
3. Rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
4. Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (although this work has recently evolved into a stand-alone LGBTI advocacy organization called Equality Australia).
5. Rights of people in prison
6. Business and human rights
7. Women's reproductive health rights
8. Stronger legal and institutional protection of rights
9. Promoting human rights through Australian foreign policy and UN engagement

Our staff bios are [here](#).

A summary of our key achievements over our first ten years of operation is [here](#).

Our most recent annual report document recent achievements including our contribution to achieving marriage equality in Australia is [here](#).

Daniel Webb, our Director of Legal Advocacy, [received](#) the 2017 Global Pluralism Award for his work at the HRLC defending the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum.

During the lab, the Australia team put together a persona profile of HRLC, as follows:



The Australia team determined that HRLC secures law and policy changes that eliminate inequality and injustice and build a society in Australia grounded in decency, compassion and respect. To achieve change, they use an integrated strategic mix of legal action, advocacy, research, education and UN engagement. They maximize their impact by working closely with key partners, including community organizations, pro bono law firms and barristers, academics and experts, and international and domestic human rights organizations.

## NARRATIVE CHALLENGES FOR HRLC

Unhelpful narratives about *charity advocacy* include:

1. Charities should be focused on practical work and helping people in need, not engaging in politics of left wing socialist agendas.
2. Charities should not be undertaking political activities or influencing elections.
3. Charities should be required to declare where they're getting every cent of their money from.
4. Environmental charities encourage illegal activities (e.g. strikes / protests).
5. Environmental charities are hostile to industries which are creating jobs and growth in Australia.
6. Environmental charities are conducting "lawfare" – i.e. using the courts to challenge projects

Unhelpful narratives about *human rights / United Nations*:

1. Human rights are not an issue in Australia – they're an issue for other parts of the world.
2. Human rights are a luxury that protect a few while undermining national security for the large majority.
3. Human rights are for special interest groups / undesirable people – they're special privileges for minority groups.
4. Australia is sick of the UN lecturing us on what we should do.

Unhelpful narratives about a *Charter of Rights*:

1. Australia doesn't need a Charter – we can trust elected politicians to do the right thing.
2. A Charter would transfer power from elected representatives to unelected judges.
3. We don't want to end up with a Bill of Rights like the US and their gun laws. If it's not broken, don't fix it.

Unhelpful narratives that "*scapegoat*":

1. Refugees, Muslims and "African gangs" are causing social problems / crime.
2. Australia should decide who can come to this country and the manner in which they come.
3. Illegal queue jumpers trying to come to Australia have to be deterred from landing on our shores.

After interviewing the client intensively and going through the background materials and on-site discussions at the workshop, the Australia team crafted HRLC's challenge statement as follows:

*How might we leverage Australians' strong multicultural identity, sense of fairness and compassion because we want to increase the societal gains of being pro-human rights?*

The team profiled the relevant actors and target audience in the orbit of ProVene, given this challenge. They are:

HUMAN BIO

**INTERESTS:**

- LAW INTERPRETATION / RULE
- DUE PROCESS

**POWERS:**

- Trust of the BCB
- Enforceability
- Unaccountability
- Independence

**NAME:** Judge Jess

**JOB:** JUDGE      **AGE:** 60+ ↑

**RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Conservative
- Impartial
- Principled
- not-representative
- Independent

**PERSONAL QUOTE:**

~~If you haven't done anything~~  
 we apply the law.  
 # (impartially)  
 ...we don't make the law.

**NEEDS:**

- ▲ Legal frame work : good

**PORTRAIT**



**INFLUENCERS:**

- Other judges
- Media
- Juries
- Public opinion

**BEHAVIORS:**

interpret the law

**VALUES:**

- Law
- Incorruptability
- Apolitical

**ASPIRATIONS:**

legacy rule of law

INTERESTS:

Law  
Human rights  
Social justice  
Access to justice

POWERS:

- Principled  
- Knowledgeable  
- Experienced MP

NAME:

MARK DREYFUS

JOB:

SHADOW  
AG/LAWYER

AGE:

55

RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:

- Understand refugee background

PERSONAL QUOTE:

The arch of  
the moral  
universe is  
long but it bends  
toward  
justice.

PORTRAIT



NEEDS:

- Legacy / impact
- Charter of rights
- Modern human rights law
- Champion for justice status

INFLUENCERS:

- Labour party - Jewish community
- Constituents (diverse)
- Media
- Opposition

BEHAVIORS:

- Considered use of law
- Consensus-building
- Fight for rights
- Tenacious D.

VALUES:

• Multiculturalism

ASPIRATIONS:

• Charter of Rights

INTERESTS:

Hostility to non-Anglo immigration  
Pro-business (big biz)

Public Influence  
Media Control/Ownership  
Ownership of Assets

NAME:

Murdoch Press

JOB: Media  
Maintain Status Quo

AGE: 80+

RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:

- Conservative
- Populist

PERSONAL QUOTE:

~~If you've done~~  
~~nothing wrong~~  
~~you've nothing~~  
How many more  
paraplegic black  
lesbians do  
we need?

NEEDS:

- Business model
- outrage
- 'the other'

INFLUENCERS:

- Economic Interest
- Political interests
- Shareholders
- Other media outlets

- Bullying / brash
- Publishing
- Propaganda
- Lobby

VALUES:

- HR= "political correctness"
- HERITAGE
- Western civilization

world domination  
(power & influence)  
\$\$





campaign to show how Australians are driven to multiculturalism and helping others. The campaign aims to reaffirm, through crowd sourcing and live participation with the use of video and technology, that Australia is a nation driven to compassion and doing what is right. The project will be based on public-private partnerships with brands like Billabong and involving businesses that can buy into the campaign to whatever extent they like.

## REQUIRED READINGS ON AUSTRALIA

1. pages 11-44 (introductory chapter) of "[Rising to the Populist Challenge: A New Playbook for Human Rights Actors](#)"
2. [The OGR Guide to Hope-based communications](#) - This is an approach that HRLC is trying to aspire to. As it can be challenging today with a lot of the HRLC casework, HRLC is hopeful the Charter campaign can embrace it.
3. [Safeguarding Democracy](#) report by the Human Rights Law Centre
4. [Defending Democracy: Safeguarding Independent Community Voices](#) by the Human Rights Law Centre
5. Rashad Robinson, [Changing our narrative about narrative: The infrastructure required for building narrative power](#)

Examples of unhelpful narratives:

6. Daniel Andrews is the most progressive and leftwing Premier in any Australian State, yet even he views civil liberties as a luxury: [Daniel Andrews defends claims that civil liberties a 'luxury' in fight against terrorism](#)
7. This is getting old, but an example our then Prime Minister dismissing criticism from the UN: [Tony Abbott: Australians 'sick of being lectured to' by United Nations, after report finds anti-torture breach](#)
8. This is was our immigration minister are the time and now is minister for home affairs: [Peter Dutton says 'illiterate and innumerate' refugee would take Australian jobs](#)

# HUNGARY



# FACTSHEET ON HUNGARY

## **Background: Rise of the Fidesz Party and Necessary NGOs**

In 2010, the highly conservative right-wing Fidesz Party was elected and began a slow but systematic endeavor of undermining democratic processes through the passing of legislation and centralizing federal power. By acquiring various Hungarian media outlets and forming relationships with newspapers/broadcasting companies, Prime Minister Orbán began consolidating his power and influence over the Hungarian people. He controlled which information was disseminated to whom and in what format. This began his campaign against foreign-funded NGOs. In August of 2013, a Fidesz-supported newspaper printed the names of organizations "serving foreign interests," by receiving money from the Norway Grants NGO Fund (Hungarian Helsinki Committee) in an effort to stigmatize these organizations. A year later in July of 2014, the Prime Minister referred to NGOs as "paid political activists who are trying to help foreign interests," (H/H Committee). Orbán pit NGOs against the Hungarian people by claiming that they were responsible for perpetuating foreign involvement and interests in Hungary. In September, he spoke again, claiming that "NGOs operate under double standards" (H/H Committee). He simultaneously attacked the legitimacy of NGOs, by questioning their integrity, while furthering the distance between the populace and NGOs. While PM Orbán was investing in a large smear campaign to villainize Hungarian NGOs, police raids against foreign fund allocation consortium members began. This was in an attempt to gain evidence either about domestic NGOs supporting foreign agendas, or funding from terrorism/money-laundering. These raids were later found unlawful by Hungarian courts after NGOs demanded investigations into the raids' legality. In late December 2014, PM Orbán began hinting at the possibility of presenting anti-foreign-funded NGO legislation.

## **The Soros Effect**

While still under Communist rule in the 1980s, the Open Society Foundations, founded by George Soros (Hungarian born), began social activism in Hungary. His organizations worked on education, human rights, public health reform, culture, and minority (Roma) rights (Open Society Foundations). In the midst of the European refugee crisis in 2015, Soros-funded Foundations began to receive major backlash from the Hungarian government for their support of Muslim migrants seeking asylum in Hungary. In an October 2015 radio interview, PM Orbán began his single-minded crusade against Soros foundations by claiming that the flooding in of migrants was a direct result of those activists who "support everything that weakens the nation states," especially those under the supervision of George Soros (H/H Committee).

## **Foreign Agent and Funding Narratives**

In an attempt to receive incriminating information, an MP of the Fidesz Party sent an open letter to NGOs in November 2015, asking if they supported Soros' ideas about open borders for migrants. As a result of the smear campaigns and intimidation/tactics of coercion, a UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights activists visited Hungary in February 2016 and concluded that activists "were

increasingly working in a rather polarised and politicised environment," and constantly facing attempts at delegitimization, criminal defamation, and excessive regulatory pressure (H/H Committee). While steps were being taken to ensure that the outside world understood the issues facing Hungarian NGOs, no decisive action was being taken.

A state-sponsored news portal published "the Soros Network," a list of NGOs funded by Soros, and expressed concern about their financial transparency. The only concrete item PM Orbán could grasp onto, in an effort to villainize these organizations, was their foreign financial backing. Continually calling them "foreign agents" and questioning the legitimacy of their finances was the primary strategy in Orbán's playbook. And it worked. It created a gulf between the nationalistic Hungarian people and the foreign agenda-driven NGOs by contrasting the two parties' beliefs on a divisive issue, while calling into question their ulterior motives and financial credibility. In June 2016, things escalated when the Eötvös Károly Policy Institute (member of the Soros Network), reported that a bugging device attached to their phones and computers had been found in their offices. The Fidesz Party fell back slightly by claiming that Soros Network NGOs were initially helpful to Hungary, but have since become a matter of national security because of their illegal activities. Gaining traction and legitimacy after claiming this to be an issue of national security, The Fidesz Party continued through the end of 2016 and into 2017 with its smear campaign against the Soros Network. NGOs were called fake organizations, terrorist/human trafficking groups, "serving the interest of foreign powers," (H/H Committee). These campaigns were strategically timed as the Fidesz Party announced in February 2017 that a National Consultation (citizen-wide survey) would be issued regarding "illegal migration and foreign influencing attempts" (H/H Committee). While this national survey appeared to be a democratic procedure, it was only a facade. The survey was riddled with vague phraseology, out of context quotes, misinformation, and biased questions. The main purpose of this Consultation was to maintain the illusion of democratic process while furthering the Fidesz agenda of undermining NGOs' legitimacy/efficacy and perpetuating conspiracies about Soros Foundations.

In response to the growing possibility of Parliament passing an anti-NGO bill that would specifically target Soros Foundations, the HCLU (Hungarian Civil Liberties Union) requested that the written language of the proposed law be released to the public for commentary before Parliamentary discussion. This request was swiftly denied and government officials refused to meet with the HCLU. NGOs were attempting to fight legislation and unjust regulation, but they still fell subject to the government and must act accordingly otherwise they faced the possibility of further punishment. In April 2015, the VP of Fidesz claimed that the upcoming anti-NGO bill only hoped to ensure financial transparency from foreign-funded NGOs for the safety of Hungary. Later in April, the Law on the Transparency of Organizations Supported from Abroad was submitted to Parliament. This law would officially "force NGOs receiving more than 24,000 EUR direct or indirect funding from abroad to re-register as "civic organization funded from abroad" and to put this pejorative label on every publication," (Amnesty Int'l). By forcing organizations to release their financial records and then legally label themselves as "foreign funded" PM Orbán was further forging a divide between "the people" and NGOs. Even though their work was aimed at bettering the lives of Hungarian people, NGOs must be labeled as foreign entities.

This made NGOs have to work so much harder at convincing citizens of their well-intentioned work on divisive issues.

As a result of this legislation, thousands demonstrated in Budapest on April 12, 2017 to "oppose government policies that are seen as limiting academic freedom and intimidating civic groups" (AP news). Despite their continued claims that the new law was meant only to encourage transparency and was for the good of the people, the Fidesz Party agreed to meet with five NGOs about the language of the bill. However, Parliamentary discussions had already begun on the bill when they allowed the meeting. In June 2017, the NGO Bill was adopted with 130 votes in favor, 44 votes against, and 24 abstentions (H/H Committee). Immediately after, several NGOs declared they would not register in compliance with the new law. Furthermore, they turned to the European Committee for help, who launched an infringement procedure against the NGO Bill. Despite this ongoing procedure, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee noted that within a few months of the NGO Bill's passage, all of its cooperation agreements to work on immigration and police detention facilities were immediately terminated, after decades of cooperation.

The EC infringement procedure was put before a court in February 2018 and is still in consideration of the law. The EC may consider suing Hungary over the law, but Hungarian Parliament has since begun reviewing the language of the bill given all of this negative feedback. In the meantime new campaigns and legislation directly targeting Soros Foundations have emerged in the Hungarian sphere.

In April 2018, a new smear campaign began when the names of 200 activists were listed along with personal information in the Figyelo business journal, a 2016 government-acquired weekly business magazine. The list was published as the "Soros mercenaries" and framed as the enemies of the people in an intimidation tactic. As a result, the Open Society Foundations website removed any information regarding its workers from online. These intimidation tactics have a strong effect on the NGOs who are often helpless against government strategies.

Following this campaign was a new piece of legislation, introduced in the spring and passed in June 2018, entitled the "Stop Soros" law, which focused on attacking Soros-funded organizations and the issue of illegal migration in Hungary. According to the BBC, anyone could be "jailed for working for or with NGOs that are involved in helping or campaigning for asylum seekers." The law allows Hungarian police to deny migrants in Hungary access to independent legal assistance. It further undermines and criminalizes the legitimate work of lawyers and NGOs, threatening them and their supporters with prison terms. MPs also passed an amendment to the constitution declaring that "alien populations cannot be settled in Hungary", in effect outlawing the European Commission's attempts to grant asylum to refugees (BBC). The "Stop Soros" law is an incredibly strategic piece of legislation that simultaneously criminalizes the human rights work of NGOs and disturbs civil society at large in Hungary.

In August 2018, a new law introducing a 25% "special tax on immigration" came into force, which requires this arbitrarily high tax to be paid upon receipt of financial support to media campaigns, and educational and network-building activities that "directly or indirectly" support immigration. A significant advocacy victory followed

this in September 2018, when the European Commission voted to trigger a rare punitive political mechanism because of a “clear risk of a serious breach of the EU founding values” by Hungary. At the time of writing, the government has further advanced its efforts by also forcing out an American private university, criminalizing homelessness in Hungary’s Constitution and by consolidating almost complete control over the local media landscape.

### **Popular Opinion on NGOs**

Not much literature exists on popular opinion in Hungary on NGOs, but what is known exists in the form of public demonstrations. According to the BBC, in November of 2014, thousands attended Hungary’s “public outrage day” and protested PM Viktor Orbán’s corrupt government. In April of 2017, following the announcement of the new NGO Bill, tens of thousands demonstrated in Budapest to protest the bill’s proposal. And in April of 2018, tens of thousands demonstrated against the PM’s control of the media, which they claimed won him the recent election. (Reuters) Although the results of the 2017 National Consultation are difficult to find, they aren’t reliable figures because of the survey bias, both in the questions (very biased language and information presented) and response (fervent opponents of granting migrants asylum are more likely to mail their responses in).

Despite the protests and demonstrations, PM Viktor Orbán has still been elected for three consecutive terms. Clearly, he has his supporters. And according to *The Atlantic*, Orbán’s success is due to his “weaponizing the immigration issue. In a September 2015 [poll](#), two-thirds of Hungarian respondents supported the building of the fence along the Serbian border. A 2016 [poll](#) conducted by the Pew Research Center in 10 European countries ascertained that Hungarians were the most likely to believe that refugees would increase the chances of terrorism in their country: 76 percent of Hungarians questioned said they believed this, compared with a median of 59 percent for the 10 polled countries. Even stronger was the belief that refugees are a burden because they take a country’s jobs and social benefits: 82 percent of Hungarians polled identified with this belief, as against a median of 50 percent.”

This data shows that Orbán’s rhetoric and tactics into scaring the people of Hungary against refugees is working. While Hungarians supported their Prime Minister in the past, it may be wavering as of recently, and NGOs must latch onto this development. NGOs must work at appealing to their emotions and showing them that refugees want and deserve the same rights as them. Perhaps NGOs brutal transparency and honesty on divisive topics like migration will turn Hungary society’s view.

## **CLIENT BACKGROUND: THE HUNGARIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE**

The Hungarian Helsinki Committee is a non-governmental watchdog organization that protects human dignity and the rule of law through legal and public advocacy methods. As a leading Hungarian non-governmental human rights organization with a globally recognized reputation, in 2018 we continued to work towards a world in which everyone receives protection against human rights abuses.

As in previous years, in 2017 we focused our efforts:

1. To defend the rule of law and a strong civil society in a shrinking democratic space;
2. To defend the right to asylum against inhuman government policies and increasing xenophobia; and,
3. To defend the rights of detainees and fairness in the criminal justice system.

### **HHC's Achievements in 2018**

1. We step up against anti-rule-of-law measures in Hungary with multiple methods.

In an ever shrinking civic space, we managed to realise strategic victories against the Hungarian government's anti-democratic and anti-NGO policies through advocacy and litigation. Our work was crucial in triggering a new infringement procedure by the European Commission, unprecedented sanctions by the European Parliament and a critical UN Secretary General report focusing particularly on attacks against civil society. We won our third civil lawsuit against the governing party for the violation of our right to good reputation.

2. We are a leading civil society actor and a role model for a courageous NGO in the region.

We remained a leading voice among the NGOs opposing attacks on civil society and the further democratic backsliding of Hungary that helped us foster new alliances of resilient civil society actors in the wider region to tackle illiberal tendencies. We continued to act as a role model civil society actor, showing a courageous alternative to apathy and giving in.

3. We maintained high visibility and kept our prominence as a credible public voice of civil society in Hungary.

Despite an ever shrinking media space in Hungary, we managed to maintain our spectacular media presence in the reporting period, reaching 618 registered representations in Hungarian, and 253 in international media. Our online outreach continued to grow, reaching 4 000 followers on Twitter and 29 000 on Facebook and registering over 370 000 visits on our blog. The number of those offering us financial

support under the "1% of the income tax" scheme grew by 260% in the past four years.

4. We are the only organisation that provides legal assistance to asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons in Hungary.

We provided free-of-charge legal assistance to asylum-seekers and other forced migrants in as many as 626 cases 2018, remaining the only organisation offering such crucial help in Hungary. 188 HHC-represented clients received some form of international protection in 2018, despite a massively hostile political and legal context. 84% of our asylum appeals were successful at court. As a result of our decade-long advocacy and litigation work, the EU Court of Justice finally banned the unscientific and discriminatory "psychological testing" of sexual-emotional orientation in asylum cases in Hungary and the entire EU.

5. We help refugees to be reunited with their loved ones.

With our help, 26 persons could join their refugee family member in safety in Hungary. Thanks to our strategic litigation efforts, Hungarian jurisprudence has continued to gradually address unlawful policies that prevent refugees from bringing their beloved ones from danger to safety in Hungary, such as the non-acceptance of religious marriage or unduly restrictive approaches regarding evidence assessment.

6. We challenge the massive arbitrary detention of asylum-seekers.

Our strategic litigation work continued to shed light on the systemic arbitrary detention of asylum-seekers in Hungary and the lack of effective judicial oversight in this respect, pushing international actors to take action. We saved 10 asylum-seekers from deliberate starvation while in detention in the transit zones by obtaining 6 interim measures from the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). We secured 5 additional ECtHR interim measures that obliged Hungary to ensure adequate living conditions to vulnerable asylum-seekers in the transit zones, in line with the prohibition of inhuman treatment. We reached the release of a particularly vulnerable asylum-seeking family from arbitrary detention in the transit zone through obtaining an interim measure from a domestic court.

7. We are the only voice publicly and constantly denouncing human rights violations against forced migrants in Hungary .

Our successful advocacy work ensured that international pressure is maintained on Hungary for its inhuman and unlawful asylum policies. Our advocacy work and the strong international criticism it generated put an end to the deliberate starvation of asylum-seekers detained in the transit zone in August 2018. The Sargentini report, adopted by the European Parliament with a landslide majority, referred to and echoed our criticism regarding the dismantling of the Hungarian asylum system. The specific 20 information briefs we prepared in 2018 were downloaded altogether as many as 13 409 times from our website.

8. We are a globally reputed promoter of inclusive and innovative training in the field of forced migration.

In 2018, the HHC Refugee Programme's staff trained, in 6 languages, over 865 asylum and migration professionals and students from over 50 countries. We continued to bring sustainable refugee law education to Latin America and Northwest Africa, representing an outstanding global impact of our work. We remained a global promoter of the rights of the stateless through training, as well as probably the only refugee-assisting European NGO whose innovative training services are often requested by state and judicial authorities.

9. We champion the issue of accessible information in criminal procedures in Hungary and Europe.

We continued to be a leading civil society actor advocating for more accessible, comprehensible and plain-language information to be provided to suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings in Europe. We initiated the establishment of a Europe-wide network of plain language and accessible legal information experts. The Petty Offence Working Group, led by the HHC, developed 2 pioneering information booklets on petty offence procedures (for homeless people and prostitutes) using plain language.

10. We push for rights-respecting and fair petty offence procedures.

We effectively challenged the criminalisation of homelessness by successfully requesting the Ombudsman to initiate the review of the relevant provisions by the Constitutional Court, as well as launching an "amicus curiae campaign", resulting in numerous prestigious actors submitting such contributions to the Court. Our online video campaign aiming at raising awareness about the inhumanity and ineffectiveness of criminalising homelessness has been particularly successful: the first two campaign videos were viewed 385 652 times by the time of writing.

11. We advocate for everyone's right to a fair trial and equality before the law.

We remained the leading NGO in Hungary in terms of advocating for the enforcement of the procedural rights of defendants in criminal procedures and for the adequate implementation of the related EU directives. We were the first to analyse the experiences of the implementation of the new Code of Criminal Procedure. We conducted and acted as catalyser for in-depth research on suspects' rights and the use of audio-visual recording of interrogations as a measure to promote fairness and equality. Our innovative handbook provides gap-filling support to defence lawyers working with children in criminal procedures. We provided direct legal advice to 96 persons concerning their human rights complaint related to criminal proceedings.

12. We challenge the overuse of unjustified pre-trial detention.

We remained the only organisation that systematically provides free-of-charge legal assistance and legal representation in Hungary with regard to unjustified pre-trial

detention (25 persons in 2018). We set up an innovative circle of defence lawyers for training and information exchange purposes on pre-trial detention.

13. We advocate for humane prison conditions and respect for detainees' human rights.

We played a key role in successfully pushing Hungary to reduce massive prison overcrowding in recent years through litigation and advocacy. In 2018, we continued our international advocacy work on this issue, as well as for the respect of detainees' right to family life, resulting in both UN and Council of Europe bodies echoing our concerns in their reports. We provided legal assistance

14. We step up against the impunity of perpetrators of hate crimes, torture and inhuman treatment in Hungary.

We continued to be the only organisation in Hungary that effectively challenges impunity for torture and ill-treatment, as well as a champion of the struggle to end the impunity of hate crime perpetrators. We provided legal assistance to 44 people who complained about abuse and ill-treatment by authorities, 52 prisoners who complained about inadequate medical treatment in prisons and 43 persons with complaints about police measures. We continued to play a crucial role in the Working Group Against Hate Crimes, officially qualified as international good practice by the European Commission.

15. Received outstanding international recognition in 2018

As in previous years, our work received outstanding international recognition in 2018. Human Rights First, the independent advocacy and action organisation awarded Márta Pardavi, HHC co-chair, with its prestigious 2018 William D. Zabel Human Rights Award, in honour of her work fighting for the rights of refugees, migrants, and other marginalised groups in Hungary and across Europe.

The prominent German ProAsyl Foundation honoured our co-chairs, Márta Pardavi and András Kádár with its Human Rights Award 2018. In its decision, ProAsyl praised the HHC's continuous efforts in defending the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers, despite the increasingly deteriorating situation surrounding civil society in Hungary.

The International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) and the Liberal Youth Foundation (LYF) presented us with their Freedom Award 2018. IFLRY Secretary General Sven Gerst said: "The Hungarian Helsinki Committee has been a safeguard of the rights of migrants and refugees in times when it was most needed."

We were one of the recipients of the Hungarian Antifascists Alliance's 2018 Miklós Radnóti Anti-Racist Award.

Our co-chair, Márta Pardavi was chosen as one of the POLITICO 28 class of 2019, among the 28 people from 28 European countries who, according to Politico, will shape Europe in the year ahead.

During the lab, the Hungary team put together a persona profile of HHC, as follows:



The chosen image is a cup of coffee because this is a recent organization that wants to bring people together and have conversations. When Hungarians do that they go to cafes and have cup of coffee together. The team also found that the job of HHC is to litigate and make dialogue possible. It is 29 years old, a small group with about 30 people, and are very diverse and generally reflect the demographics of the country identity-wise. They have very good expertise and tend to know more than the government, especially regarding legal matters. They have a David vs. Goliath mentality and are anti-Orbán. HHC promotes and cover issues such as protection for asylum seekers, integration, government checks and balances, unfair detention. HHC embodies values such as dignity, standing up for civil society, making sure government hears them. HHC's context, at the time of the lab, was that the opposition in Hungary had ben very weak and one of the articulated needs was that they needed to have better representation across the political spectrum. Having such a radical party at one end of the spectrum means it has been difficult for HHC to find the mid-point politically where they want to be.

## NARRATIVE CHALLENGES FOR HHC

Current and typical narratives attacking the Hungarian Helsinki Committee:

1. We are Soros mercenaries.
2. We are paid agents of Soros and Brussels.
3. We want open borders while Hungarians want no migrants whatsoever.
4. We have not been elected by voters while Fidesz has been elected for the third term resulting in a qualified majority in Parliament. This means that Hungarians support Fidesz and its election program which promised to Stop Soros. Hungarians support the government's measures against NGOs. We are opposing the will of the people.
5. There are over 60,000 NGOs in Hungary and only a handful of Soros-supported, foreign-funded NGOs are complaining. We are a "fake NGO".
6. We bring terrorists, rapists and Muslims who won't integrate into Christian Europe.
7. We are helping migrants to commit illegal acts, i.e. cross border and apply for asylum.
8. We refuse to comply with the law, i.e. refuse to register as a foreign-funded NGO.
9. We refuse to reveal our true activities and sources of funding, we are concealing our real activities. Soros gives instructions to carry out his political goals. At a press conference in April 2017, János Halász, then spokesperson for the ruling Fidesz party parliamentary group, lied about the HHC when he stated among others that the organization had violated the law by not operating transparently, not disclosing its assets, and said that in general, the HHC was not willing to abide by the law. We sued and [won](#).
10. Smear campaigns: "The fake-NGO Helsinki Committee, which carries out the political orders of international speculative financial capital, unabashedly tries to falsify even black and white data. Contrary to their lies, the fact is that in 2014 four-fifths of the asylum seekers, approximately 35,000 people did not come from war zones, thus they were livelihood immigrants." We sued and [won](#).
11. George Soros would also like to see migrants receive lighter sentences for the crimes they commit. George Soros, with significant amounts of funding, supports numerous organizations that assist immigration and defend immigrants who have committed unlawful acts. One example, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, with regard to the prohibited crossing of the border argued that 'the application of strict legal consequences with regard to unlawful entry may be considered concerning'." We sued and [won](#).

Some classic narratives that have been around since before 2015:

1. "Where were you in 2006?" The claim that we didn't do anything to protect people against police brutality during the Fall 2006 riots in Budapest. This furthers the claim that our interests don't lie with the "people" of Hungary.
2. We don't ever stand up to protect the rights of ethnic Hungarians in the neighboring countries (e.g. ethnic Hungarians whose minority rights are abused in Ukraine).

3. We protect the rights of criminals over the rights of innocent people.
4. We only care about deviant minorities. We encourage deviant behavior.
5. We are cosmopolitan Budapest well-off (=Jewish) people who don't know what it's really like elsewhere in the country.

After interviewing the client intensively and going through the background materials and on-site discussions at the workshop, the Hungary team crafted HHC's challenge statement as follows:

*How might we inspire more people (women, young people, diaspora) to get involved in politics because Hungary needs viable alternatives?*

The team profiled the relevant actors and target audience in the orbit of HHC, given this challenge. They are:

**HUMAN BIO**

**PERSONAL QUOTE:** Dick head dictators have nothing to do in Hungary

**NAME:** Tommy Fluor (of Wellhello)

**JOB:** Rock musician/TT

**AGE:** 32

**RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:** Irreverent In your face Publicity-seeking

**INTERESTS:** Brands - fashion  
Girls  
Hip  
Sub-culture  
Satire

**VALUES:** Fun  
Freedom  
Innovative  
Diversity

**POWERS:** 115k followers on Instagram  
Pragmat / sketchy  
Free to sponte mind

**NEEDS:** Music festivals  
Fellowers + fans  
Sponsors  
Cool stuff  
Artistic Integrity

**INFLUENCERS:** Graffiti artists  
Two-paul day (joke pants)  
Foreign artists (musicians)

# HUMAN BIO

## PERSONAL QUOTE:

GOT NO TIME  
MISS MY KIDS.

## PORTRAIT:



## NAME:

~~Eniko Kovacs~~  
ENIKO KOVACS

## JOB:

PAYROLL SPECIALIST AT MERCEDES

AGE: 58

## RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:

- Middle class
- Lives in Midsize City
- 2 kids, one in UK, the other studying in Hungary

## INTERESTS:

- Moderately Conservative
- Bothered by Orbán's rhetoric but still voted for him
- Wants her UK kid to come back to Hungary
- have loans to pay for her kids' education
- Gossip columns
- "All politicians are corrupt"

## VALUES:

Fin security  
Healthcare  
Ops for kids

Good  
behaviour

kids

Being  
respectful

Equality

Takes care of every thing

## POWERS:

## NEEDS:

Healthcare

Social care (mother)

Waste

Take care of kids

Student loan

No free time

## INFLUENCERS:

Orbán

Family + friends (skippy @ Tesco)

Charities (e.g. Red cross)

**HUMAN BIO**

**PERSONAL QUOTE:** MAKE HUNGARY GREAT AGAIN!

**NAME:** VIKTOR ORBÁN

**JOB:** PRIME MINISTER **AGE:** 54

**RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:**

**INTERESTS:**  
 FOOTBALL  
 \$\$  
 ↑ POWER

**VALUES:**  
 NATIONALISM  
 SECURITY  
 STABILITY

**POWERS:**  
 Media  
 Rhetoric

**NEEDS:** ORDER LOYALTY  
 MONEY

**INFLUENCERS:**  
 Steve Bannon  
 EPP

**PORTRAIT:**

The map of actors around HHC, based on the former's power and their support or opposition to HHC's work, is as follows:



Then, when asked to come up with a one-line value proposition, the Hungary team came up with this:

*Piercing insight:* People feel connected when they do things together.

*Brand connection:* Offer connection to a cool club by taking part in politics

*One-liner:* Hungary: it's your future, don't miss out #FOMO

After feedback at the plenary, and further activities, the Hungary team finally came up with this prototype:

A combination of an app and celebrity endorsement to encourage "civic parties", voting, and in general being politically engaged e.g. canvassing and being active in community. The app will enable you to see where all your friends are, how they are being engaged and making you question why you aren't there (similar to Snapchat's tool to locate your contacts.) With this, the client will create a campaign video to encourage young voters to vote by showing a popular Hungarian musician promoting voting. He will not focus on what party to vote. The aim is merely to mobilize young people more generally to become more politically active. The campaign shows the musician attending a night out/bar event with the target audience and encouraging them to vote and share selfies pledging their involvement too.

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## REQUIRED READINGS ON HUNGARY

1. pages 11-44 (introductory chapter) of "[Rising to the Populist Challenge: A New Playbook for Human Rights Actors](#)"
2. pages 57-70 of the same [book](#), entitled "The crackdown on NGOs as an opportunity to reinforce human rights values: A Hungarian case study"
3. Márta Pardavi, [Starve and Strangle Policies to Shrink Space for Free Civil Society in Hungary](#), 13 November 2018
4. Summary of [latest developments](#) in Hungary since the April 2018 elections – Joint paper by Amnesty Hungary, HHC and the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (HCLU)
5. ['The Most Dangerous Man in the European Union'](#), The Atlantic, 7 April 2018
6. [Resisting Ill Democracies in Europe](#): Understanding the playbook of illiberal governments to better resist them: A case-study of Croatia, Hungary, Poland and Serbia (to understand the important regional context of Hungary)
7. Rashad Robinson, [Changing our narrative about narrative: The infrastructure required for building narrative power](#)



# MEXICO



Alumno desaparecido de  
Ayotzinapa, Gro.



ABEL GARCÍA HERNÁNDEZ

# FACTSHEET ON MEXICO

## Background: A Violent Landscape

An understanding of the immense amount of violence in Mexico is critical context to grasp the operational environment of NGOs in Mexico. Historically, there has been a decrease in homicides, but over the past decade, Mexico has seen an exponential increase in the amount of violence committed. This violence, in the form of killings, kidnappings, torture, and enforced disappearances, demonstrates a blatant violation of human rights. Furthermore, its perpetration as both drug cartel criminal violence and security forces state violence exhibits a complete disregard for the existence of human rights in the country.

In 2017, the number of killings in Mexico was 29,168, the highest number on record. But, as of May 2018, Mexico was already on track to surpass that statistic. According to *Time*, in May of 2018, someone was killed every 15 minutes in Mexico on average. A U.N. Special Rapporteur for the Freedom of Expression, David Kaye, said in a report at the end of 2017 that Mexico has "a profound crisis of safety" with 30,000 disappearances in the last decade, approximately 30,000 homicides per year and all of these statistics expecting to rise. (Reuters)

The state of violence partially exists because of President Felipe Calderón's (2006 - 2012) releasing of the Mexican army to combat the growing drug cartels. This responsive action spurred on a self-perpetuating cycle of violence in Mexico. On top of the government supporting and being complicit in the violence, a major deficit of law enforcement exists in Mexico. The Government Security Agency says they have "half the police force they need," with 116,000 positions unfilled. (Time) Furthermore, while the state's action against drug cartels did bust up larger dominating cartels, it resulted in the fragmentation of cartels into smaller more numerous gangs with similar agendas. These mini-gangs began diversifying outside of drug trafficking and experimenting in other forms of violence: kidnapping, executions, torture, and extortion. Attempting to gain a foothold of their own, these gangs have been migrating throughout the country and introducing violence into parts of Mexico that hadn't been exposed to it yet. This has led to almost every state in Mexico seeing an increase in their violence since 2015 (Time).

In many areas of the Mexican territory, the population lives in the middle, on the one hand, of the criminal violence unleashed by the drug cartels; and, on the other hand, of the state violence generated by security forces. In this context, both high-impact crimes and gross human rights violations, including tortures, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions, have increased. Regarding torture, the UN Rapporteur on the subject said after visiting Mexico that it is "generalized" in the country, used as a method of criminal investigation. As for the disappearances, the official figures indicate that in Mexico more than 30,000 people have disappeared in the last ten years, without there being exhaustive investigations to establish how many of these would be enforced disappearances. Finally, in terms of executions, in Mexico there are almost 30,000 homicides per year; although non-state actors perpetrate the vast majority of these, there is a relevant number -indeterminate due

to the lack of investigations- of homicides, committed by state agents in the exercise of their functions.

Beyond the landscape of civilian violence is the increasing rate of political violence that occurs in Mexico. The decentralization of cartels has caused local governments to act as mini-cartels, which in turn leads to local corruption and violence. There has been a "2400% increase in political killings from 2012-2018." (Time) In fact, "130 politicians, including 48 candidates for office, have been murdered since September 2017." (Time) The sheer amount of civilian and political killings is exacerbated by the largest issue facing Mexican civil society: impunity.

One of the common elements of these serious human rights violations is impunity. There are no sanctions in Mexico for those who commit torture, executions or disappearances: although the complaints have increased, the judicial rulings handed down for these crimes are scarce. As of August 2017, the Mexican government reported that the whereabouts of more than 32,000 people who had gone missing since 2006 remained unknown. The cases are open, the files exist, and yet no action occurs. And when NGOs or journalists attempt to bring this corruption to light, they fall victim to the same violence. From 2000 through October 2017, 104 journalists were killed and 25 disappeared, according to the Attorney General's Office. (HRW.org) The National Human Rights Commission reported in 2016 that 90 percent of crimes against journalists in Mexico since 2000 have gone unpunished, including 82 percent of killings and 100 percent of disappearances. And although some legal action was taken with the creation of the Special Prosecutor's Office for Crimes against Freedom of Expression in July 2010, not much efficacy has been exhibited. The Office has opened more than 1,000 investigations into crimes against journalists, but as of October 2017, it has brought charges in only 115 cases and obtained only 3 convictions. (HRW.org)

There is a clear prioritization in the Mexican government against human rights, and this is the landscape in which NGOs such as Centro Prodh exist. Smear campaigns against the legitimacy of NGOs funding, as are common amongst populist governments, exist in Mexico. Similarly, government attempt to demonize the motivations of NGOs and thereby render their actions ineffective, by characterizing them as enemies of the Mexican government with anti-nationalist motivations. Finally, the government perpetuates a general distrust of civil society and the work of NGOs, further undermining the legitimacy and efficacy of human rights activism in the country.

## **CLIENT BACKGROUND: CENTRO PRODH**

In 1988, the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center was legally established as a Non-Governmental Organization in Mexico. It was founded by the Catholic priest order of the Jesuits and the name of the center is a reference to a martyr of that religious congregation. Regardless of that origin, Centro Prodh defines itself as laic, respects all beliefs and it is now led by non-Jesuit professionals.

When Centro Prodh was founded, it was one of the first human rights non-governmental organizations in the country, so from its foundation it has kept a leading role in the human rights movement in Mexico. Centro Prodh's mission is to promote and defend the human rights of victims, especially those in situations of vulnerability and poverty, and to build a more just, equitable, and democratic society that fully respects all human dignity.

To achieve this goal, Centro Prodh directs its work toward individuals and collective victims of human rights violations, focusing on marginalized social groups. The priority populations are women, indigenous communities, victims of social repression, and migrants. Centro Prodh has four main departments: a) "Defensa", which gives free legal aid, legal defense and assistance in cases of human rights violations; b) "Internacional": which does litigation and advocacy; c) "Educación": which develops training programs for civil society and communities in human rights issues; and d) "Comunicación": which does media advocacy at both the national and international level and manages the social networks.

In our discourse and in our products, we have sought to put a special emphasis on the issue of impunity, highlighting its pernicious effects on the victims and on the Mexican society. Impunity is one of the elements that have in common the serious crimes committed by drug cartels and gross human rights violations committed by the security forces; talking about impunity, in addition, allows us to build links with other agendas, such as those promoted by those who work against corruption.

For example, with regard to torture, Centro Prodh has documented the increase in torture against women in detention, including the use of sexual violence, and is currently accompanying a group of surviving women who are promoting a public campaign called "Breaking the silence. All together against sexual torture". Regarding the disappearances, Centro Prodh has worked in depth in the Ayotzinapa case, related to the disappearance in a single night of September 2014 of 43 young students, that marked a turning point in the public conversation about the disappeared in Mexico and that showed a broken justice system that lied in that emblematic case.

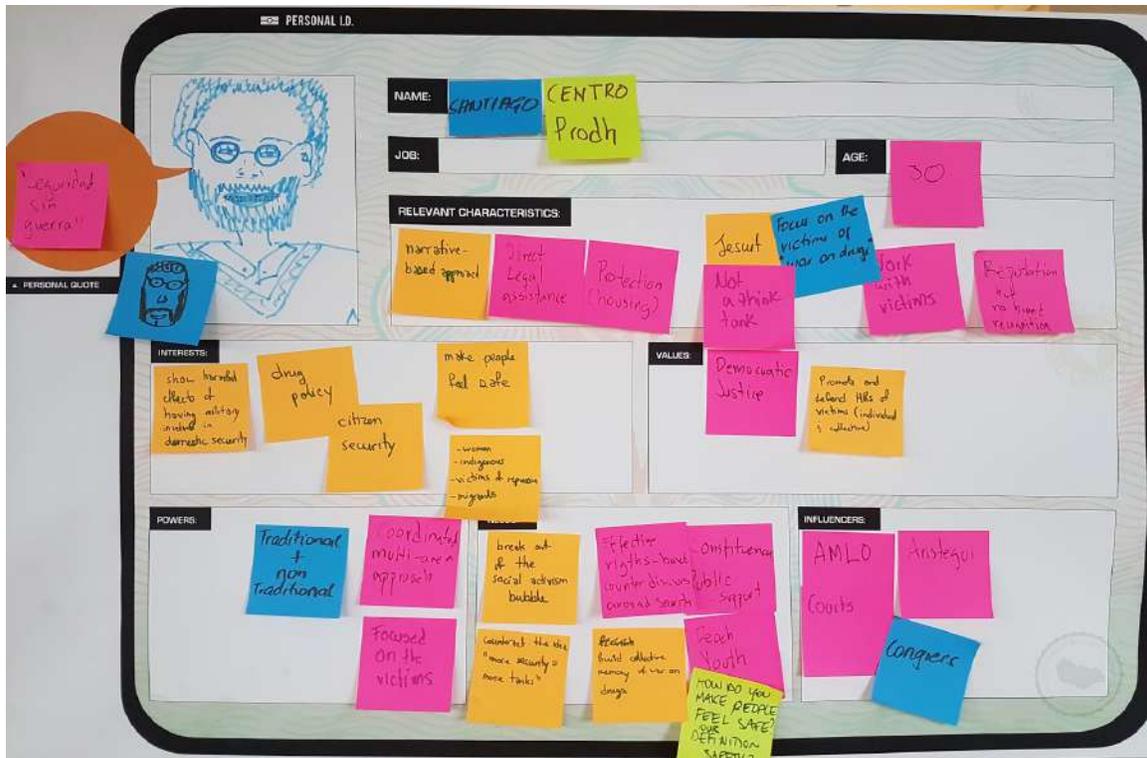
Finally, regarding the executions, in the Tlatlaya case Centro Prodh revealed that in an event that had been presented as a confrontation between the military and drug traffickers, executions had been produced and hidden; Centro Prodh proved also that the military unit involved in the events had received the order to "take down delinquents" in "dark hours".

Also, we have tried to intensify our international work, given the fact that despite the crisis of violence, Mexico is viewed from the outside as a "developing" country with a "stable economy" and a "new democracy" that has some problems of violence and a foreign policy committed with human rights.

In a country where journalists and human rights defenders face risks for their work, especially at the local level, the work we do creates a condition of risk. Centro Prodh has faced from surveillance schemes in its facilities to public disqualifications and even the illegal use of spyware against team members.

Regarding each of the cases and causes it represents, Centro Prodh designs strategies in which, in addition to the legal dimension, advocacy and political communication are relevant. For example, we seek to give voice to victims, take their stories to the media, make products for social networks, and additionally show the causes of those human rights violations and elaborate proposals for change.

During the lab, the Mexico team put together a persona profile of Centro Prodh, as follows:



The Mexico team found that Centro Prodh is a very reputed and influential human rights organization in Mexico working at the forefront of major cases in the country. As the more leftist government recently took to power right after the lab, they anticipated that Centro Prodh would need to be thinking in terms of bigger narratives such as openness or being victim-focused that the organization has been fighting for. Its biggest struggle is thinking about how to create narratives that can challenge public support for the heavy-handed military in order to address security needs of the country. Most of the country supports the military/security needs narrative which is something Centro Prodh has seen to not work. How does it create a narrative that makes a dent on that? What other model can they produce that creates an alternative to these dominant narratives?

## NARRATIVES CHALLENGES OF CENTRO PRODH

Centro Prodh's working model will face new challenges in the immediate future. In addition to the crisis of violence, the current context of Mexico is marked by the overwhelming triumph in the most recent presidential election, held in July 2018, of the candidate of an emerging party from the left, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), who built his platform with a markedly anti-establishment proposal. This renovation of the Presidency opens new opportunities and new challenges. Although in matters related to human rights, justice and security, President López Obrador and his team often use formulas that lack the detail or the phrasing expected by the human rights movement, they have shown willingness to undertake changes that previous administrations have rejected. Additionally, Centro Prodh has had positive links with the President and with some members of his team in the past. In this scenario, favorable conditions may exist so that emblematic cases accompanied by organizations such as Centro Prodh are finally solved and so that the agenda we promote advances in some substantive aspects.

Although the scenario looks hopeful in general terms, some risks are also appearing. They are linked to expressions that some new actors, now close to the next government, made during the campaign, specifically about their distrust of the work of civil society organizations, in terms similar to those that have been present in other Latin American countries. There, more than opportunities, in the middle term this kind of expressions developed in to new obstacles for human rights organizations.

The first hundred days of the López Obrador administration have confirmed that with the new government, at least in this initial phase, the human rights agenda has two sides: opportunities of concrete advances in cases of victims who have sought justice and truth for years; but also setbacks in relevant policies.

Among the advances, the creation of the Presidential Commission for Truth and Justice in the Ayotzinapa case, of which Centro Prodh is part, as well as the other efforts that the new government carries out to clarify this emblematic case. Other good measures have been the acceptance of the existence of a human rights crisis in front of international bodies; the acts of acknowledgment of responsibility in paradigmatic cases of attacks against freedom of expression and serious violations of human rights; and the proposal of a new policy to address the crisis of disappearances, including a mechanism for forensic identification.

Among the setbacks, the new Government and the Congress approved two dangerous legal changes: the one that broadened the crimes that are subject to preventive detention; and the one that created the National Guard. This new security force is a militarized national police that will continue the territorial deployment of the armed forces to deal with the drug cartels. Additionally, the new Government appointed to the Supreme Court of Justice two judges that do not have any human rights credentials. Likewise, the government announced some big development projects that could affect indigenous territories and canceled some social programs guaranteeing women's rights.

In this context, during these first hundred days of government the President has also made several statements with criticism towards civil society. Although these statements do not target the type of work carried out by civil organizations dedicated to the defense of human rights such as Centro Prodh, they have included excessive generalizations and raised preoccupations.

Apart from this and the intense polarization that today characterizes the public debate in Mexico, the fact is that support for President López Obrador and his popularity continue to increase.

In this context, Centro Prodh faces multiple challenges to produce narratives that increase the impact of its work. We face the need to broaden the impact of our work on young audiences and to refine our discourse on security and human rights, in a society increasingly prone to favor heavy-handed measures.

In this context, the narratives that Centro Prodh is confronting are:

### 1. Narratives linked to the origin of their funding (legitimacy challenges)

Many public actors, in an effort to undermine Centro Prodh's work, have alluded that the sources of their foreign funding could strongly influence their agenda and the campaigns they support. For example, it has been suggested publicly that the receipt of funding from George Soros' Open Society Foundation would "compromise the technical and political autonomy of their agenda." (Centro Prodh)



## 2. Narratives linked to emotional abuse of victims for profit

Other political actors have publicly questioned the transparency and motivations behind Centro Prodh's relationships with victims of human rights violations. This recently appeared with their work on the enforced disappearances of 43 students, as mentioned above. When Centro Prodh showed that the government's released version of the final whereabouts of the students lacked credible evidence, the "Commander of the Mexican Navy himself accused Centro Prodh of making profit with the pain of the victims." (Centro Prodh)

### Example: Attacks against Centro Prodh<sup>24</sup>.

## Padres de los normalistas son manipulados: Semar

Doris Gómora | El Universal  
Jueves 11 de diciembre de 2014

Twitter

Me gusta 0

La gente y grupos que los acompañan sólo buscan beneficios personales, asegura. Llama a sociedad y gobierno a trabajar en unidad para evitar casos como el de Iguala

### COBERTURA CASO AYOTZINAPA

[doris.gomora@eluniversal.com.mx](mailto:doris.gomora@eluniversal.com.mx)

El secretario de Marina, Vidal Francisco Soberón, afirmó que los padres de los normalistas desaparecidos en Iguala, Guerrero, están siendo manipulados por personas y grupos que los acompañan siempre, pero que buscan beneficios personales.

"Está perfectamente claro, si hay grupos, y lo específico son grupos y personas que son las que aparecen continuamente con ellos, salen en televisión y este grupo que aparece en todos lados cerrando caminos y demás, y buscando otro tipo de cosas. No me referí a ningún partido".



**CRITICA.** El titular de la Secretaría de Marina, Vidal Francisco Soberón Sanz (der.), asegura que llama mucho la atención que personas o agrupaciones se dediquen a tratar de desacreditar lo hecho por el gobierno federal en el caso Iguala. (Foto: GUILLERMO PEREA / CUARTOSCURO)

### Notas Relacionadas:

- › "Los títeres son ellos", reviran los padres 2014-12-11
- › El Presidente debe ofrecer disculpas: Enrique Krauze 2014-12-11
- › EU apoyará a Peña Nieto en seguridad, anuncia

### 3. Narratives linked to Centro Prodh's criticism of heavy-handed security policies and specifically to the documentation of military abuses

In recent years, some political actors have questioned Centro Prodh's criticism of the security policies implemented in the country since 2006. These criticisms go from crude statements that Centro Prodh defends drug traffickers, to more sophisticated dismissals on how its work makes Centro Prodh "useful fools" of organized crime or about how, in security, it only criticizes from a position of privilege without really proposing viable alternatives of public policy, despite the national emergency that Mexico is experiencing.

Example: [Op-ed](#) presenting Mexican NGOS as defenders of kidnappers

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ITINERARIO POLÍTICO

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## Derechos humanos, mafia incrustada en el poder



RICARDO ALEMÁN

12.04.2016/02:27

**D**e suyo insultante y ofensivo, el dato es demoledor.

Existen secuestradores y asesinos —cuyos abogados de distintas ONGs invocaron tortura para sus clientes—, que en conjunto han recibido poco más de 100 millones de pesos, de dinero público, como indemnización. ¡Sí, aunque no lo crea!

De ese dinero, una parte sustancial llega a manos de los abogados y las propias ONGs. En cambio, las verdaderas víctimas del crimen solo han recibido poco más de 600 mil pesos, pero no para reparar el daño, sino solo por gastos funerarios.

### 4. Narratives linked to the role of civil society itself

Centro Prodh detects a narrative, in an incipient state, more related to the work that civil society performs in relation to what it is implied in the takeover of power by a candidate that won a comfortable victory and that genuinely represents the most heartfelt popular demands. It is not yet clear if the government will replicate this discourse and political actors linked to it recognize the trajectory and the

contribution of Centro Prodh. Notwithstanding that in general Centro Prodh is optimistic in the face of the political changes that are coming in the country; it is warning that this kind of narrative could be enabled in situations of confrontation with the incoming administration.

**MÉXICO** 21/03/2018 10:37 PM CST | Actualizado 22/03/2018 11:05 AM CST

## **AMLO: "Le tengo mucha desconfianza a todo lo que llaman sociedad civil"**

Criticó que el INAI "actuó como tapadera en el caso de Odebrecht".

 Por Redacción

### **5. Narratives linked to the international image of Mexico**

Mexican foreign policy has enabled the government to maintain an international narrative suggesting that the human rights "crisis" is nothing more than isolated events of violence happening solely at the local level. This narrative implies that the main institutions of the country are not at risk of or perpetuating violence. Furthermore, Mexico has been successful at perpetuating their role as a promoter of human rights within Mexico and on an international level. Centro Prodh and other organizations, on the other hand, have been able "with the documentation of specific cases to question this perspective, to point out that the diagnosis goes beyond local issues and institutional problems."

Example: Mexico's international image on human rights issues

### **New cooperation agreement with Mexico in the field of human rights**

High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour signed a new agreement with the Government of Mexico last month to extend OHCHR's presence in the country, and continue joint efforts for the promotion and protection of human rights.



At the end of her four-day visit to Mexico where she signed the new agreement, High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour stressed that "on the international scene, Mexico is a force for good in the human rights agenda. Its very wide ratification of the international human rights treaties, with ratification of the latest treaty against disappearances imminent, places the country in the forefront of the campaign I'm leading in this 60th year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to push for universal adherence to these treaties".

Given the above, what it sees as its challenges are:

**1. To generate, around the causes and cases that we work in, narratives that are attractive to new audiences, especially the youth**

Currently, in cases or thematic campaigns, as well as in particularly relevant situations, the Centro Prodh generates multiple products and contents on the human rights situation in Mexico in the media and in its social networks. And although we have grown both in social networks followers and in presence in the media, we notice that our public is often very identified with people who have previously had some exposure to human rights content or who are ascribed to a political identity close to that of some of the people or groups that we represent. In this regard, we note the need to generate products and content that are more attractive to young audiences, since we observe that Mexican youth are not actively approaching the discourse of human rights. Also, we note that we need to consolidate a base of allies in the social networks that can be activated in adverse situations, smear campaigns and attacks.

**2. Specifically in the causes and in the cases related to the security policies, we need to generate narratives that counteract the overwhelming support for heavy-handed measures and in particular militarization**

Despite the efforts made by the human rights movement in Mexico, heavy-handed security policies continue to have the support of the majority. And although Centro Prodh and other organizations have documented extensively the human rights committed by the Army, the soldiers continue to obtain almost absolute public support. The majority of the population, including practically the entire population located in the most violent regions of the country, supports the militarization of security. This causes that those who question the militarist paradigm are considered defenders of the drug cartels or insensitive to the fear in which some communities of the country live. At the same time, as the performance of civilian police does not improve, it is difficult to propose in the public arena real alternatives to the progressive militarization. In this sense, we warn of the challenge of generating narratives that, while recognizing the situation of insecurity in which a significant portion of the country lives, convincingly argue that militarization is not the best alternative, proposing realistic and concrete ways to strengthen the civilian police forces. Although the victory of AMLO opened some expectations about the possibility of reviewing the security policy and reversing the militarization process, very quickly the new government opted to continue the military deployment, by means of a constitutional reform that created the National Guard and even expanding the presence and participation of the Army in various sectors of the economy. Although civil society tried to oppose this measure and provide arguments for the discussion, the truth is that 85% of the Mexicans supported the National Guard. Therefore, in the coming years we will have to continue warning about the risks of employing the Army in tasks unrelated to its nature, with little possibility of influencing changes, with growing support for the President and the Army, and at the same time we will have to monitor the creation of the National Guard.

After interviewing the client intensively and going through the background materials and on-site discussions at the workshop, the Mexico team crafted Centro Prodh's challenge statement as follows:

*How might we convince AMLO to commit to a new model of domestic security because the identity that binds Mexicans together is the desire to reduce violence?*

The team profiled the relevant actors and target audience in the orbit of Centro Prodh, given this challenge. They are:

## HUMAN BIO

**PERSONAL QUOTE:** Free speech anywhere

**NAME:** Carmen Aristegui

**JOB:** Journalist      **AGE:**

**RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:** high level of trust, reputation

**INTERESTS:**

- Free speech
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Human rights

**VALUES:**

- independent journalism
- courageous

**POWERS:**

- Listened by millions of Mexicans (including AMLO)
- ~~internal~~ international connections + respect
- can amplify + pass the mic

**NEEDS:**

- security
- sources; information
- maintain her channels

**INFLUENCERS:**

- intellectuals
- victims
- activists

# HUMAN BIO

## PERSONAL QUOTE:

We are in a ~~war~~ war against the drug cartels

## NAME:

General Cienfuegos

## JOB:

Minister of Defense

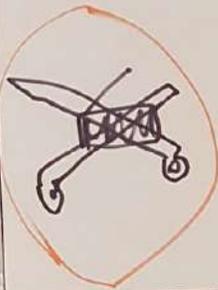
## AGE:

old 70

## RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:

Symbolizes status quo, conservative, nationalist

## PORTRAIT:



## INTERESTS:

- Keep the army powerful
- Defeating the cartels
- National security

## VALUES:

- Nationalistic
- Order

## POWERS:

- Control over armed forces

## NEEDS:

- to keep their budgets
- want to improve HR image
- new legal framework to protect what they're doing

## INFLUENCERS:

- President 
- US govt 

# HUMAN BIO

# AMLO

## PERSONAL QUOTE:

THE MEXICAN  
TRANSFORMATION:  
PART IV

## NAME:

AMLO

## JOB:

INCOMING  
PRESIDENT

## AGE:

70

## RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS:

LEFTIST; NEW GOV  
EXPERIENCED

## PORTRAIT:



## INTERESTS:

Equality, poverty issues  
Anti-corruption

## VALUES:

HONEST  
Just

## POWERS:

- majority on both chambers
- majority public support

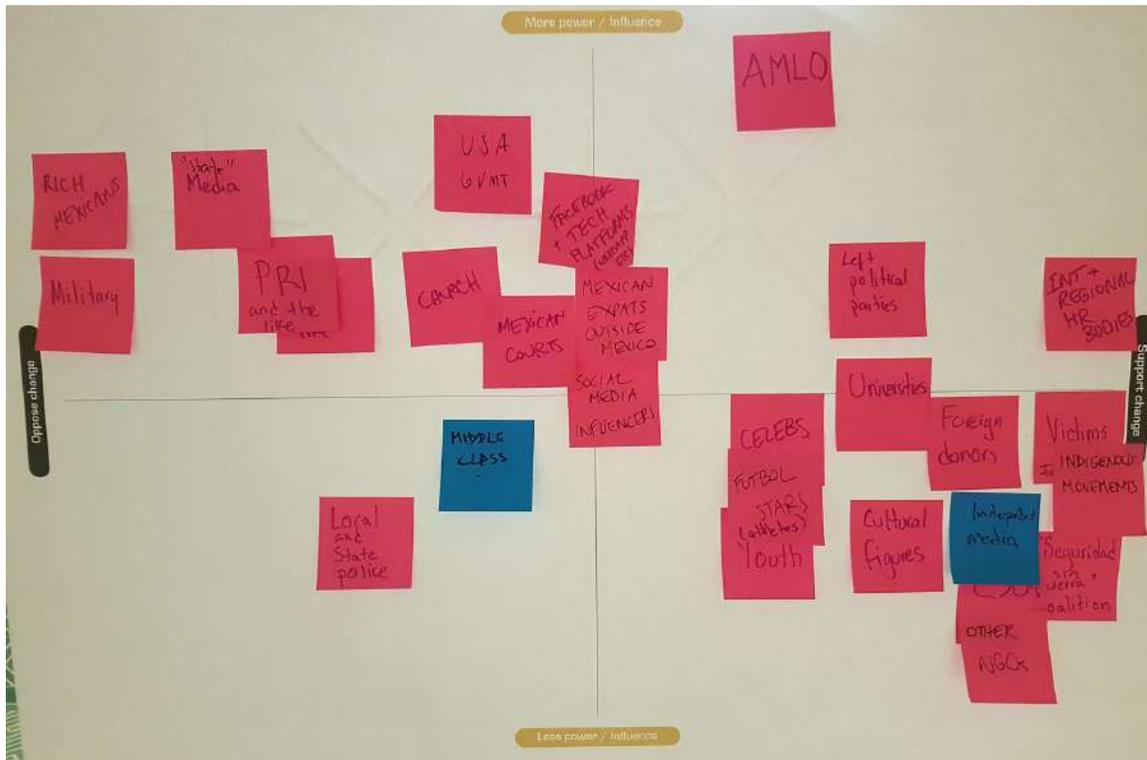
## NEEDS:

Deliver results year 1  
To reduce violence

## INFLUENCERS:

Intellectuals  
Independent journalists - CARMEN  
ARIBAU  
\$\$ - Carlos Slim

The map of actors around Centro Prodh, based on the former's power and their support or opposition to Centro Prodh's work, is as follows:



Then, when asked to come up with a one-line value proposition, the Mexico team came up with this:

*Piercing insight:* Everybody is tired of violence and wants security but at the same time people accept violence (militarization) because they are afraid

*Brand connection:* The Mexican human rights community can offer with a series of campaigns an alternative vision of security that is built on peace not war.

*One-liner:* Rise above FEAR!!

After feedback at the plenary, and further activities, the Mexico team finally came up with this prototype:

Mock interviews in the media by an actor who looks like Mexican president Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), making the proclamations respecting rights that the client and its allies in civil society want to hear from AMLO. They will be statements of our messaging by making him say the right thing. These pronouncements and actions can include creating a commission and drafting new domestic security policy. Each announcement will contain a background of the Mexican flag with the AMLO actor giving messages to create a new legacy for Mexico and for the world e.g. "No one will die at the hands of the military, this is not what our administration about. There will be no more killings". The client will engage journalist allies to talk about the international reaction to AMLO's supposedly groundbreaking speech and

will engage celebrities who have huge media followings to endorse the messages. The "meeting" with AMLO will begin with possible supporters including famous Mexicans who have democratic convictions.

## References

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<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/19/world/americas/mexico-spyware-anticrime.html?ref=nyt-es&mcid=nyt-es&subid=article>

## REQUIRED READINGS ON MEXICO

1. pages 11-44 (introductory chapter) of "[Rising to the Populist Challenge: A New Playbook for Human Rights Actors](#)"
2. [Using Texts as Lures, Government Spyware Targets Mexican Journalists and Their Families](#)
3. [Mexico's misinformation wars: How organized troll networks attack and harass journalists and activists in Mexico](#)
4. [Fighting Mexico's Corruption: NGOs turn fighting graft into tourist business](#)
5. [Fact Sheet: Closing Space for Human Rights in Mexico](#)
6. Rashad Robinson, [Changing our narrative about narrative: The infrastructure required for building narrative power](#)

 **VENEZUELA**



 JustLabs

# FACTSHEET ON VENEZUELA

## **Background: Venezuela's conflict of powers due to the lack of their separation**

Venezuela is going through the worst economic, political and social crisis in its history—a highly volatile political situation, very high levels of poverty, malnutrition, inflation and corruption never before seen in the country—as a consequence of the authoritarian policies of the regime that has been in power for more than 18 years. All this crisis has resulted in a significant impact on the exercise of the rights of citizens, not only because of the institutional crisis in which public institutions do not do their work and do not support citizens in the exercise of their rights, but also because the State does not fulfill its obligation to educate citizens effectively in what their rights are and how to exercise and demand them. All of this is a consequence of the near-absolute control by the Executive Power over all the other branches and public institutions of the State, rendering non-existent any separation of powers, an essential principle for the exercise of democracy.

For example, food products are scarce and not on the shelves, or people just do not have enough money to buy them. With the scarcity of food, jobs and security, Venezuelans have basically been in a political situation in which the government indirectly determines what they have to do in their lives, what they can eat, the hours they can leave the house, among others.

The latest backdrop of this situation is the current clash of powers between the Legislative and the regime of Nicolás Maduro. The elections of May 20, 2018 were not recognized by more than 60 countries, being marred with lack of transparency, justice and freedom, and thus rendering illegitimate the presidency of Maduro as of the end of his presidential term on January 9, 2019. The constitution of Venezuela states that the President of the National Assembly must assume the presidency until elections are held. Therefore, in the view of the opposition, since January 10, 2019, Nicolás Maduro has been usurping the Presidency of Venezuela because he is occupying a position that does not correspond to him. Although the elections were not declared illegal by any Venezuelan authority (the courts, for example), the argument is that all State authorities are illegally operating under direct control of the executive power for the undue protection and benefit of the latter, and thus without protection of the law. Thus, Venezuela is currently seeing the greatest power conflict in its history.

ProVene produced short videos that succinctly summarize the recent events in Venezuela and the crisis in general. Watch them [here](#) and [here](#). Also, see list of readings, particularly the chapter by Rafael Uzcátegui.

## CLIENT BACKGROUND: FUNDACIÓN PRO BONO VENEZUELA (PROVENE)

Venezuela's Pro Bono Foundation (ProVene) was born in 2009, after a group of young lawyers and law students engaged in the promotion and protection of access to justice in Venezuela, especially in the poor sectors. It was founded to provide advice and free legal training to those who do not have the resources to pay for a lawyer. In order to organize pro bono practice, ProVene contacted leading international entities with experience in the field of pro bono legal work, to know their methods and to introduce them in Venezuela.

ProVene offers its beneficiaries free legal advice from lawyers belonging to the most recognized law firms in the country and students of the best law faculties. Through free legal advice and the promotion of research and training related to legal issues, ProVene has managed to consolidate itself as the most important pro bono organization in Venezuela and one of the most recognized in Latin America.

ProVene's mission is to strengthen access to justice in Venezuela and intends to do so through three lines of action. The first, whose activity was the cause for the formation of the organization, is the community visits to provide free legal advice, by means of which people with limited resources are cared for in all their legal needs, directly in the communities where they live. In doing these visits, ProVene realized that mere legal assistance to people did not solve the problem of improving access to justice, so we developed the second area of action on public interest cases, which can be undertaken either as strategic litigation developed directly by the lawyers of ProVene or as strategic campaigns that push for the recognition and exercise of rights that are currently not contemplated in the Venezuelan legal framework. Finally, to complement the first two lines of action, we developed the third one on research and training in human rights.

During the lab, the Venezuela team put together a persona profile of ProVene, as follows:

- The organization focuses mainly on youth. The personal quote is "bringing rights closer to people," and the illustration is "justice" hugging the population.
- It began with a specific interest around access to justice, but it has since expanded to transitional justice, gender, youth, and democracy, etc.
- It has access to law firms that support their mission with pro bono work.
- It needs to find 1) more partners in the political context (law firms are increasingly hesitant to work with the organization), 2) more resources and donors, and 3) more protection, specifically keeping a low-profile given the work that they do.
- The organization provides free legal advice, aids the most marginalized, conducts public interest campaigns and public service, and exhibits creativity and solidarity. It has to balance day-to-day direct service work with more strategic judicial work.

- It finds itself in a complicated dynamic now: it tries to bring justice to the people, but now "justice" is "government justice." The organization is thus wading into murky waters.

**Persona Profile**

**Personal Quote:** BRINGING RIGHTS CLOSER TO PEOPLE

**Portrait:** 

**Name:** PRO VENE

**Job:** HUMAN RIGHTS TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE

**Age:** YOUNG

**Relevant characteristics:**

**Interests:** GENDER EQUALITY, TRADITIONAL JUSTICE, ACCESS TO JUSTICE, LEGAL EDUCATION, YOUTH, DEMOCRACY

**Powers:** LAW FIRMS + PARTNERS

**Needs:** PARTNERS, RESOURCES, DONORS, PROTECTION, LOW PROFILE

**Behaviors:** FREE LEGAL ADVICE, LEGAL RESEARCH, PUBLIC INTEREST CAMPAIGNS

**Influencers:** BENEFICIARIES

**Values:** PUBLIC SERVICE, CREATIVITY, SOLIDARITY, VOLUNTEERISM, COLLABORATION, COALITION-BUILDING

**Aspirations:** BALANCE BETWEEN ORIGINAL IDENTITY AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE (?)

**JustLabs**

## NARRATIVE CHALLENGES FOR PROVENE

While there have been no direct attacks against ProVene, it works under a general climate of attack and self-censorship among civil society in Venezuela. Some of the predominant narratives leveled against the human rights community in Venezuela by the government are:

1. NGOs are US or Colombia agents working against the "revolution".
2. NGOs are stealing money from rightful beneficiaries.
3. NGOs go to the communities to get political advantage and they campaign against the government.
4. NGOs incite hatred among Venezuelans.
5. NGOs have to justify accounts and the use of money, much more than any other type of entities such as for-profit companies.

Given the above, plus the current economic crisis, it is impossible for human rights NGOs to find financial support from any Venezuelan companies, institutions, civil society, and other funders. ProVene has also had to maintain a low profile despite all the work that it has been doing, otherwise, public offices would not open their doors to it being an NGO. While ProVene has direct community contacts through its visits in communities and engagement with community leaders, it still has to be careful in keeping its work almost invisible, otherwise, it risks its work being attacked, its offices raided or its members sent to jail like what has happened with other NGOs.

After interviewing the client intensively and going through the background materials and on-site discussions at the workshop, the Venezuela team crafted ProVene's challenge statement as follows:

*How might we make rights appealing with/within/against a hostile environment because in that way we will be more protected, more legitimate, and more sustainable to empower citizens?*

(The organization is in a tricky situation because it must work within the very judicial system (and its hostile rules) that they seek to counter and reform.)

The team profiled the relevant actors and target audience in the orbit of ProVene, given this challenge. They are:

Persona Profile

Personal Quote:

A MÍ NO ME JODAN.

Portrait



Name: DIOSDADO PEREZ
Job: BUREACRAT Age: 45-50
Relevant characteristics: MANAGES RESOURCES. MIDDLE MANAGEMENT. CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE HIS JOB.

Interests: JOB SECURITY, MONEY, STABILITY, BE PART OF ELITE, POWER

Powers: PUBLIC RESOURCES, CONNECTIONS, SOME INFLUENCE, SOME STATUS

Needs: CARES ABOUT DOING THE RIGHT THINGS, STAY AWAY FROM TROUBLE / JAIL, INFLUENCE, STABILITY - HIS JOB

Behaviors: PRODUCE FEAR, 'LAGARTO', PRODUCE DEPENDENCY, OBEDIENT, CONFORMIST, PRODUCE INSECURITY

Influencers: FEAR, UNCERTAINTY, INSECURITY

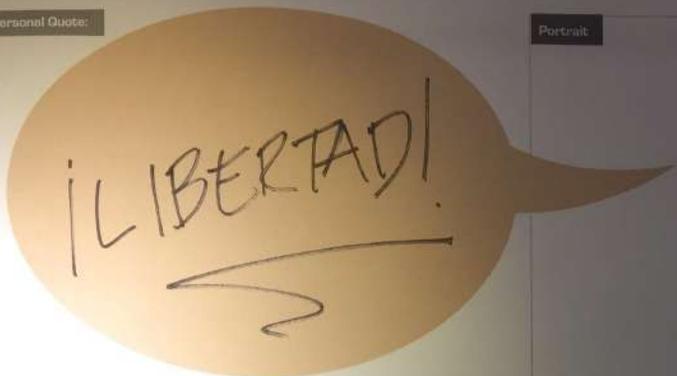
Values: STATUS, MONEY, FAMILY, IDEOLOGICAL COHERENCE

Aspirations: FOOD, JOB, HEALTH, SECURITY, ELITE: STATUS



## Persona Profile

Personal Quote:



Portrait:



Name:

JUAN PÉREZ

Job:

SOCIAL LEADER

Age:

34

Relevant characteristics:

Interests

FEED HIMSELF  
ACCESS TO HEALTH  
FREEDOM  
SHELTER  
HELP OTHERS .

Powers

SOCIAL CAPITAL  
COMMUNITY  
WILL POWER  
RESILIENCE/  
CREATIVITY / RESOURCE-  
FULNESS .

Needs

RESOURCES  
SECURITY  
COMMUNICATION  
CHANNELS

Behaviors

ACTIVISM  
COMMUNITY ORGANIZING.

Influencers

NGOs  
THE BASE / COMMUNITY  
THE GOVERNMENT

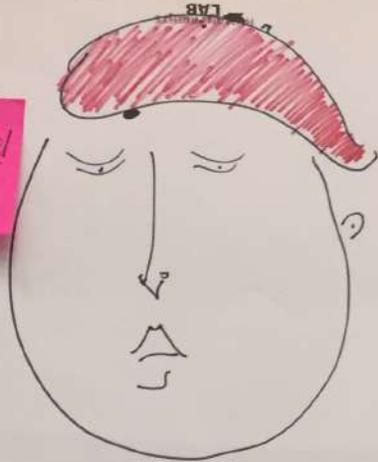
Values

RESOURCEFUL  
COMMITMENT  
HARD WORKING  
RESILIENT  
CREATIVE  
HAPPY

Aspirations

FREEDOM  
DEMOCRACY  
JUSTICE  
TRANSPARENCY

EXPROPIESE!



Persona Profile

Personal Quote:

CHAVEZ  
VIVE!!!

Portrait:



Name: NICOLÁS MADURO  
Job: DICTATOR Age: 50+  
Relevant characteristic: SYSTEMATIC HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATOR.

Interests

KEEP HIMSELF IN POWER

What do they do? What inspires them? What do they love? What do they enjoy?

Powers

MILITARY ASSISTANCE  
OIL  
BUREAUCRACY  
SECRET POLICE  
PSUV  
ALLIES:  
CHINA  
RUSSIA  
CUBA

FOOD  
HEALTH

Needs

DOLLARS  
PETROS  
YUANS  
INT. SUPPORT  
POLITICAL ALLIES  
MILITARY ALLIES

Behaviors

INDUCE FEAR  
PERSECUTE OPPOSITION  
PROFIT  
REPRESSION

Influencers

CHÁVEZ  
CUBA  
IDEOLOGY  
RUSSIA, CHINA

Who are the people or things that influence them?

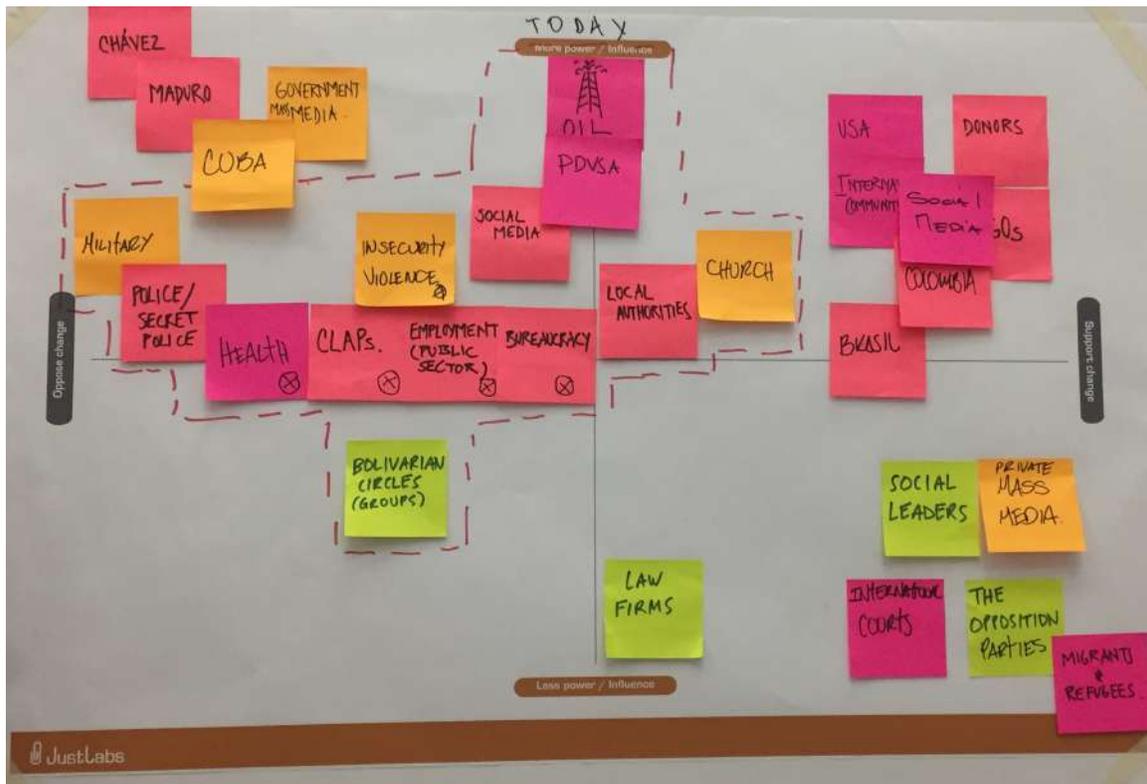
Values

POWER  
ANTI PLURALISM  
ANTI ELITISM  
AMBITION  
CORRUPTION

Aspirations

CHÁVEZ  
KEEP HIMSELF IN POWER  
AVOID PROSECUTION  
PROFIT

The map of actors around ProVene, based on the former's power and their support or opposition to ProVene's work, is as follows:



Then, when asked to come up with a one-line value proposition, the Venezuela team came up with this:

*Piercing insight:* People don't know how to exercise their rights; rights are not a priority. We see people who are suffering in a harsh environment and who are not able to be themselves in a complete sense.

*Brand connection:* Rights are transversal to any environment. You are not a human if you can't exercise rights. It goes really deep into what it means to be a human.

*One-liner:* "Rights make people human."

After feedback at the plenary, and further activities, the Venezuela team finally came up with this prototype:

A food truck that will travel to various communities and give them access to basic needs that are currently in desperate scarcity in Venezuela: food, water, health services, free Wi-Fi and connectivity, along with the organization's core service: free legal education and legal aid. The goal is to fuse the concept of the importance of rights and legal protection, on the one hand, with basic survival needs that Venezuelans are more preoccupied about given the dire economic and social situation there now, on the other. Through such embodied experience of the law and rights coupled with food or other basic necessities actually visiting them in their communities, the aim is to remove the conceptual divide between the two in the

minds of ordinary Venezuelans, most of whom have been disempowered politically due to more urgent survival concerns and a sense of hopelessness that the political situation would change. The client will partner with the communities and local, national, and international allies (international service provider allies, such as Google and Facebook, and other NGOs that could provide food, water, and healthcare). The project is designed to be modular: it can run on one truck or multiple ones in more communities depending on resources. As a separate project, a mock robot will automatically answer simple legal questions (like FAQs on a website).

Since that lab in May 2018 when ProVene participated, much has changed in the Venezuelan context, bringing as a consequence the existence of new challenges in the work of ProVene. Specifically, since 2017 ProVene has been working on a project on transitional justice, almost clandestine manner. Today however, given the current situation, everything related to the transition has increased significantly. Thus, ProVene has not been threatened directly, but we are running projects that are directly against the regime. It has been said in multiple occasions that those who talk about transitional justice are those who are working to overthrow the government violently.

Another challenge that we have now is the violence that the government has unleashed and is using indiscriminately on anything that comes close to a protest or claims that the State is not solving society's problems. The government has also taken the practice against any protests in low-income communities.

However, just as there are challenges, we are also aware that the situation of ProVene can change favorably when the government changes, since in case of a change, there is the possibility of the transition expanding to the workings of public institutions, allowing them to have much stronger reach.

Finally, an additional challenge for ProVene, although not exactly an initiative on narratives, is the need for training in rights—not only to satisfy the need that people have for information on Venezuelan political legal events and ways to exercise their rights, but also because in times of chaos it is necessary that all members of the community know basic notions of conflict resolution and basic principles of exercising rights, to be able to resolve conflicts that the State does not have the capacity to resolve due to its absence in these communities and the lack of trust in it by the community.

## REQUIRED READINGS ON VENEZUELA

1. pages 11-44 (introductory chapter) of "[Rising to the Populist Challenge: A New Playbook for Human Rights Actors](#)"
2. "['It Is Unspeakable': How Maduro Used Cuban Doctors to Coerce Venezuela Voters](#)"
3. pages 71-78 of the same book in #1 - a chapter entitled "Resilience in Non-Democratic Contexts: The Challenge of Being Useful under the Venezuelan 21st Century Dictatorship" by Rafael Uzcátegui

4. [Venezuela: who is Juan Guaidó, the man who declared himself president?](#)
5. [Venezuela's Guaido launches national tour in 'new phase' to oust Maduro](#)
6. [Presidente Maduro encabeza fase superior de ataques contra ONG y activistas de derechos humanos](#)
7. [ONG preocupadas por amenazas de Diosdado Cabello a Carlos Nieto Palma](#)
8. Rashad Robinson, [Changing our narrative about narrative: The infrastructure required for building narrative power](#)