

# CAHRnews

Centre for Applied Human Rights newsletter

Dear Friends,

The Centre for Applied Human Rights has had a busy autumn and winter. We have hosted 10 human rights defenders on our Protective Fellowship Scheme; expanded our research in the Middle East; hosted a workshop of the responsibility to protect; and furthered work on making York the UK's first human rights city.

We have been delighted to see many new people from the local community in York as well as the wider human rights community attend our events and take an interest in the work we do.

This spring our students have collaborated with the York Human Rights City Network to host the annual [York Human Rights Film Festival](#) in the last week of March. We hope to see you there!

Sanna Eriksson  
Centre Co-ordinator, CAHR



Alex Bellamy with CAHR's Lars Waldorf at the R2P conference.

## Research

### Launching the Transitional Justice Barometer Project in Tunisia

On 20 January CAHR took part in the public launch of the Transitional Justice Barometer project in Tunisia. The launch marks the start of a two year research project, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research through its programme on Security and Rule of Law in Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings. CAHR is partnering Impunity Watch and the Kawakibi Democracy Transition Centre (KADEM) in this ambitious new project.

The research will accompany transitional justice processes in Tunisia, such as the Truth and Dignity Commission, with a view to supporting and monitoring victim participation in such processes. The launch of the project was attended by over 60 people, including representatives from the Truth and Dignity Commission, various Ministries (Justice and Transitional Justice, Social Affairs, Interior, Health, Women), and a wide range of civil society groups.

The launch was followed by two days of planning by the three project partners. Paul Gready, CAHR's Director, said 'This is important research, which rather than providing the more usual snap shot of transitional justice processes, will support victims to engage with and shape these processes by linking research to capacity building, advocacy and impact assessment'.

### Is There A Responsibility to Rebuild After Intervention in Libya?

To mark the 10th anniversary of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), the Centre held a one-day conference on 12 January 2015. All UN members agreed in 2005 that individual states and the international community have a responsibility to protect populations from genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. However, the idea of a "responsibility to rebuild" post-atrocity states was left out of that 2005 agreement. Our conference on What Responsibility to Rebuild? examined the links between R2P, jus post bellum, peace-building, and transitional justice in light of recent turmoil in places like Libya.

The keynote speaker was Alex Bellamy, who has helped set the research and policy agendas on R2P as Director of the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. During his talk, Bellamy controversially announced that R2P has become an established norm of state behaviour. Audio recordings of the conference are available through the [University of Leeds](#).

This was the third and final conference in a series on The Responsibility to Protect and Humanity organized by the universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York, and generously funded by the White Rose Collaboration Fund.



## York Human Rights Film Festival

23-29 March 2015

**Tue 24/3**

***Dangerous Acts: "the unstable elements of Belarus"***

@ CITY SCREEN, 8PM

+ Q&A with Katsiaryna Borsuk

**Wed 25/3**

***The Square***

@ FULFORD ARMS, 7.30PM

+ TALK with Sherif Azer

Community Screening

@ THE GOLDEN BALL, 5PM

**Thu 26/3**

***Bananas\*!***

@ ORILLO STUDIOS, 7.30PM

+ TALK with Carrie Bradshaw

**Sun 29/3**

***7 Lives + Short Syrian Films***

@ THE FLEETING ARMS, 7PM

+ TALK with Zaher Omareen

Community Screening

@ NEVERMIND, 2PM

[tickets and more info](#)

# Rights in Action

## York Human Rights City Network Re-launches

The last few months have been very exciting for York Human Rights City Network (YHRCN) since its restart in September 2014.

### Public events

In January Liberty Director Shami Chakrabarti gave a free public talk, where she spoke eloquently on the situation of human rights in the UK, and its portrayal in the media. The talk was so well attended that many were turned away.

This year's York Human Rights Film Festival takes place in the last week of March. The city-wide festival will focus on the very current and controversial topic of 'protest'. We will be looking at the key role local groups can play in advancing the respect of human rights from across the globe to right here in York. The festival will include a mixture of feature length documentaries and short independent films in different venues across York.

### Engagement with local schools

Our human rights education workshops with pupils from across all ages and schools in York continues, dispelling the myth that the youth of today are not engaged in issues of social justice and politics.

### Police training

YHRCN is working closely with North Yorkshire Police and York Racial Equality Network, planning a day long workshop at the Centre for Applied Human Rights on 18 March, exploring what a new multi-partner hate crime strategy for North Yorkshire might look like.

### Creating indicators measuring human rights progress in York

A big thanks to all who took part in YHRCN's student-led survey around the most important human rights in York! The top five rights selected by residents were:

- Education
- Non-discrimination and equality
- Health
- Standards of living
- Housing



YHRCN has been awarded an ESRC grant to develop these rights into recommendations and indicators, which can then be used to track progress over time. We are happy to be working with York CVS, The City of York Council and North Yorkshire Police in developing these alongside a range of community groups - the indicators will be launched at a special conference in September.

## Local outreach work—CAHR human rights defenders take to the stage

In 2014/15 human rights defenders on CAHR's Protective Fellowship Scheme have taken to the stage twice to showcase their creative writing and storytelling skills and share stories from their experiences defending human rights in different contexts. On the 10th December for International Human Rights Day and in partnership with the York Human Rights City Network, the HRDs performed *Turning Tides* at Orillo Studio. It was a series of linked narratives about a range of issues and episodes within their human rights work. On the 8th March for International Women's Day and as part of CAHR's annual Women on the Front Line event, the HRDs performed *Journeys to Justice* at York Theatre Royal's De Grey Rooms. The performance included stories of women's journeys and struggles for rights and dignity across continents.

We'd like to say a special thanks to Tor Richards and Orillo Studios; Damian Cruden, Juliet Forster and the team at York Theatre Royal; and musicians Steve Hill and Bethany Elen Coyle.

This is what a few of the fellows had to say about the events:

*'The International Human Rights Day performance was amazing. I loved all the stories and it was really perfect. Also, it was very special to have the opportunity to do the Women's Day event here in York. In our country there is a lot of restriction. In Sudan last year we couldn't do the Women's Day event because the government wouldn't give us permission.'* – Hikma Ahmed (Sudan)

*'It is amazing to share our stories and histories through creative writing and theatre. It is different, you can put your feelings into it. I loved it when the woman (in the audience) asked how we prepared this performance. It was really a collective effort. Also, the confidence of the Centre to show us outside, on stage, it tells us the Centre has confidence in us and our abilities. It really is very nice.'*

– Valdenia Paulino Lanfranchi (Brazil)

*'I appreciate it when people give a bit of time to be connected with arts. It is a chance for people to express their feelings on a higher level, the level of art, which is higher than simple verbal communication. Having this performance was a good chance to share my feelings and thoughts in a beautiful way. Human rights defenders have a lot of things to say, full of energy, and emotion and pain sometimes and we should show it to an audience. Share the voice of those who are fighting to those who are supporting.'*

– Katsiaryna Borsuk (Belarus)

*'It was an opportunity to share our experiences in the world with people here. To learn from each other. A space where cultures can work together.'*

– Irene Miramontes Montes (Mexico)



Fellows perform at York Theatre Royal's De Grey Rooms for International Women's Day (left) and at Orillo Studio for International Human Rights Day (above).



# Protective Fellows

## CAHR hosts ten human rights defenders on its Protective Fellowship Scheme

In the academic year 2014/15 CAHR has hosted 10 human rights defenders from Afghanistan, Belarus, Brazil (2), China, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mexico, Sudan and Yemen on its Protective Fellowship Scheme for Human Rights Defenders at Risk.

During their time in York the fellows have participated in human rights trainings; conducted public talks engaging audiences ranging from school children to community groups; learnt from one another through shared experiences; and conducted advocacy with NGOs, government and international organisations.

Ruth Mumbi who works with women in informal settlements in Kenya, had the opportunity to address the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office's Human Rights Day reception; an International Parliamentary Conference on Human Rights in the Modern Day Commonwealth in London; and the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN in New York.

To learn more about the Fellowship Scheme and to hear first hand from human rights defenders about their work on the frontline, follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



Fellows and staff at a retreat in Northumberland, December 2014.



Abdul Hakim Hashemi, Ahmed Al-Kolaibi, Valdenia Paulino Lanfranchi & Hikma Ahmed practice making participatory video.



Valdenia Paulino Lanfranchi gives a public talk at the University of York about the situation of HRDs in Brazil, January 2015.

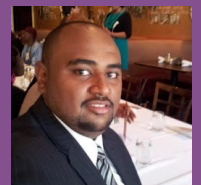
## Former fellows succeed with projects

During her time at CAHR, Dina Meza from Honduras (fellow spring 2013) developed a project entitled Journalism & Democracy. With funding from the Network for Social Change, the Sigrid Rausing Trust and Global Human Rights, the project has now launched with a digital newspaper, [Pasos de Animal Grande](#). The project also helps journalists, media workers and vulnerable groups in Honduras to exercise their freedom of expression, to document human rights abuses without censorship, to protect themselves against threats, and to be better connected with and supported by the international community.



Dina Meza

Nagi Musa from Sudan (fellow spring 2013) developed as a fellowship project the idea of youth camps to promote peacebuilding and foster a new generation of leaders among young people from different communities in Sudan. The project has now been realised together with a Sudanese organisation: three youth camps have been run in the region and more is planned. Nagi says, "it was a great success and we can see how the participants have changed."



Nagi Musa

CAHR congratulates Dina and Nagi on their success!

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