

ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL GRAPHIC NOVEL AND COMICS CONFERENCE / LONDON / 1-3 JULY 2020

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# Comics in Human Rights Education – Amnesty International's Approach

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## **CONTENT AND TRIGGER WARNING**

This presentation contains  
text and images dealing with  
human rights and  
issues of human rights abuses.

## **ABSTRACT**

Amnesty International has a long-standing tradition of cooperating with artists from different fields to promote human rights and raise awareness about human rights abuses.

In recent years, besides endorsing selected graphic novels relevant to Amnesty's causes, the NGO has come to devise and publish comics of its own. These comics are used very effectively for educational as well as campaign work. Amnesty uses a wide range of genres and narrative approaches to deliver its messages and reach out to different audiences.

## **READING MATERIALS**

A selection of three comics created by the UK, Sri Lanka and Germany sections of Amnesty.

## **PRESENTATION**

Following a brief introduction to Amnesty International and a basic outline of the guiding principles of Human Rights Education (HRE), we are going to survey the synergies between Amnesty and the arts, before proceeding to the main part of this presentation, dedicated to a detailed exploration of the reading materials at hand.

# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION 5

Amnesty International 6

Human Rights Education (HRE) 8

Amnesty, HRE and Comics 9

## THREE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION COMICS

The Human Rights Defenders [Amnesty UK] 11

Spectrum [Amnesty Sri Lanka] 26

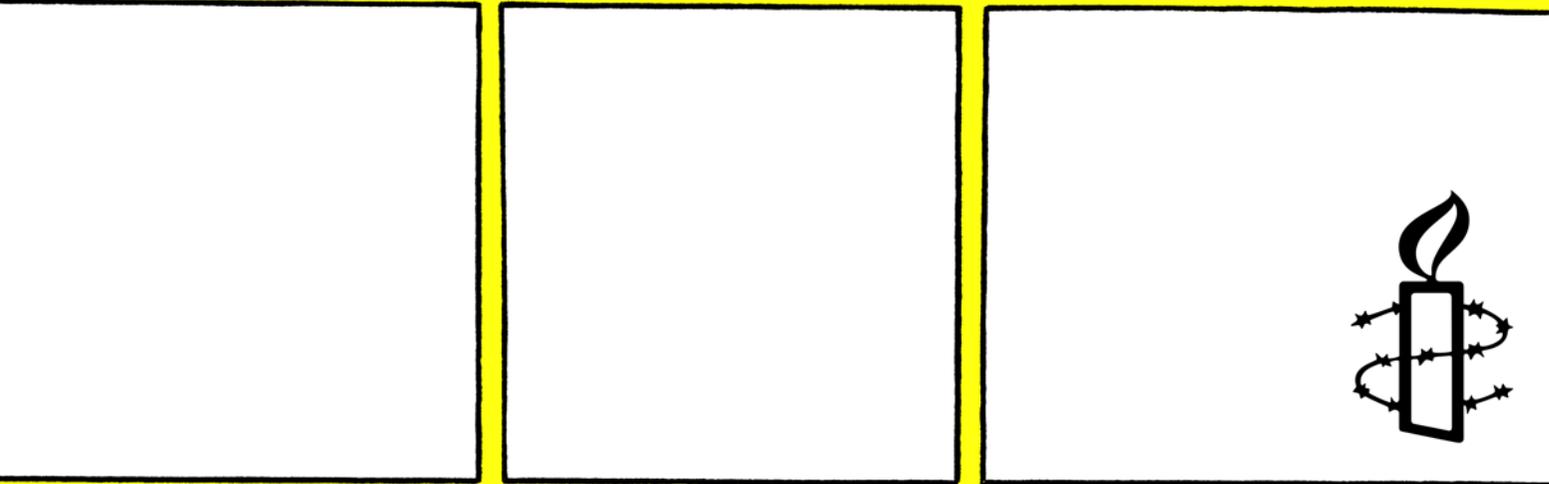
Who Defends Human Rights? [Amnesty Germany] 36

ABOUT US 46

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SOURCES 47



# INTRODUCTION: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION (HRE) AND COMICS



„1. Human rights education and training should capitalize on and make use of new information and communication technologies, as well as the media, to promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. The arts should be encouraged as a means of training and raising awareness in the field of human rights.“

[Article 6, UN Declaration on HRE and Training]

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL – AN INTRODUCTION

„Amnesty International’s vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International’s mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of these rights.“

[Statute of Amnesty International, POL 20/1045/2019]

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**

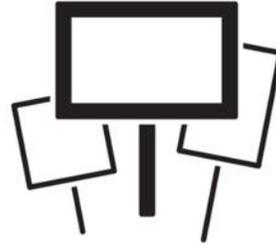


## Who We Are



Since 1961, we've been helping people claim their rights across the world.

## What We Do



From the death penalty to free speech, we protect people's human rights.

## Get Involved



Write a letter, volunteer, donate... and speak out against injustice worldwide.

**Amnesty International** is an international non-governmental organisation focused on human rights, founded in London in 1961 as a **membership organisation** – a movement of activists: **more than seven million members** and supporters around the world, with national and regional sections **active in more than 70 countries!**

Besides **direct-appeal and urgent action campaigns**, Amnesty's activities include **monitoring and reporting human rights abuses**, legal advocacy, lobbying, raising media awareness, **supporting human rights activists** and **empowering people and communities through human rights education**.

# WHAT IS HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION (HRE)?

In a nutshell, according to the **United Nations Resolution on Human Rights Education and Training [A/RES/66/137]**, human rights education (HRE) encompasses:

education **about** human rights:

people **learn** about human rights and how to protect human rights

education **through** human rights:

people **experience** human rights, because education *is* a human right and the learning/teaching is done in a way that respects the right of both educators and learners

education **for** human rights:

HRE empowers people to **enjoy** and **exercise** their rights, to **respect** and **defend** the rights of others

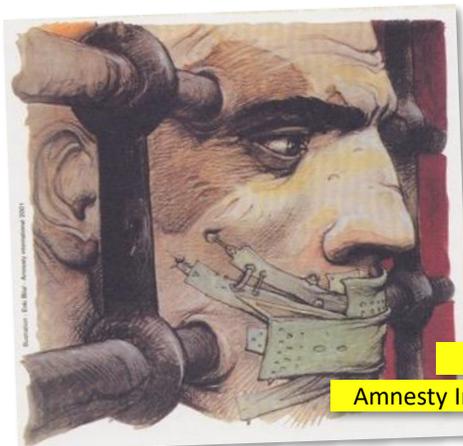


Therefore, HRE is **key to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights** and to the promotion and **full realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms** for all.

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, HRE AND COMICS

Since its foundation in 1961, **Amnesty International** has often worked with artists. In the early decades, **renowned artists** would often cooperate with sections on a national level to **create posters** and use their artistic voice **to bring public attention to the organisation and its campaigns**.

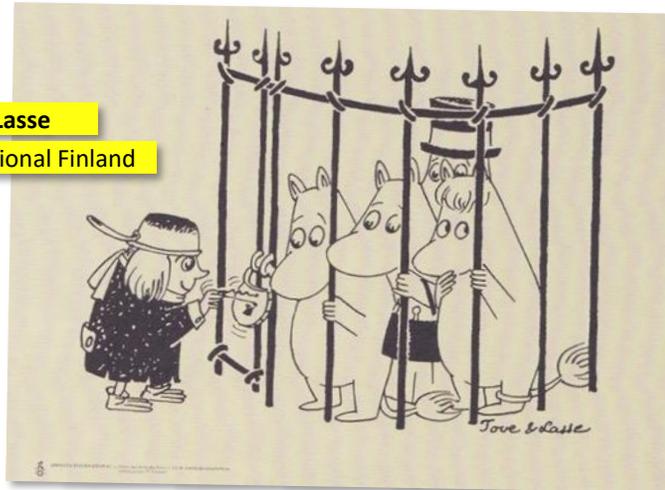
In countries with a strong comic culture or popular comic artists, this also **included comic artists** from time to time.



Enki Bilal

Amnesty International France

Tove & Lasse  
Amnesty International Finland



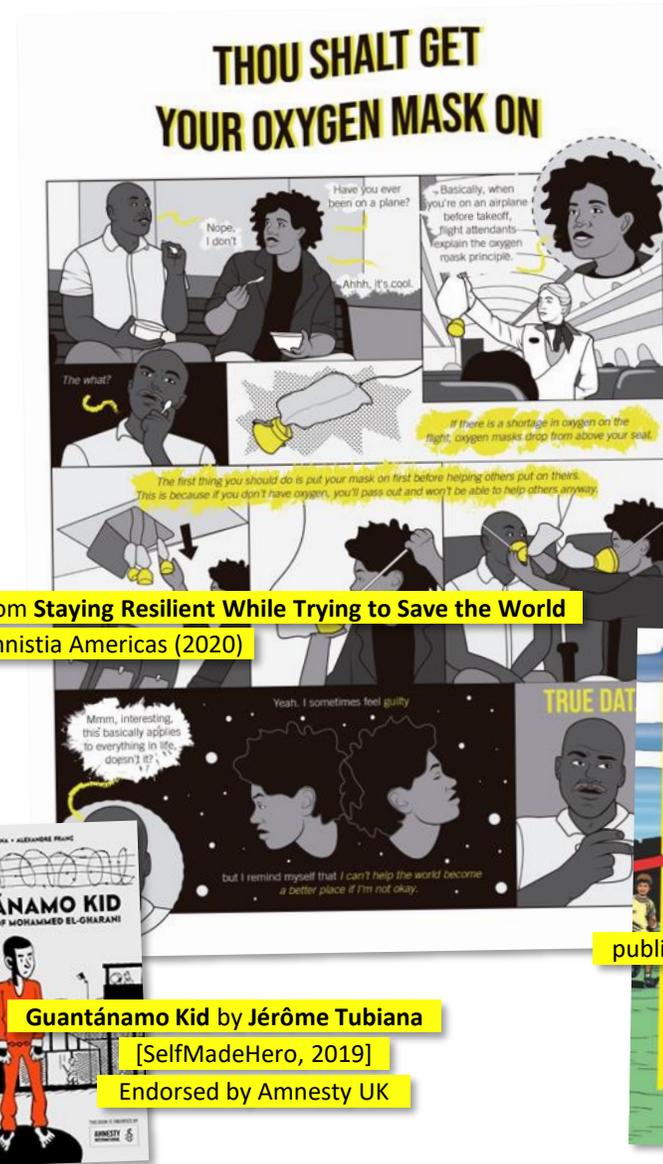
Franquin + Delporte  
Amnesty International Belgium

As **Amnesty** went on to incorporate artistic expression and interaction ever more resolutely as a resource for campaigning and educational work, the organisation also **came to recognise comics as a powerful medium for HRE.**

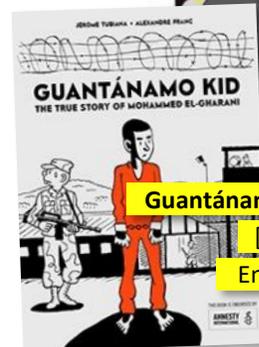
Some sections have long started including **short comics** or **reviews of graphic novels** in their edition of Amnesty Magazine, while others, like Amnesty UK, have also taken up a practice of **endorsing graphic novels** that deal with issues relevant to Amnesty's work.

The practice of working with artists to create **original comics for Amnesty** is also **becoming more common.**

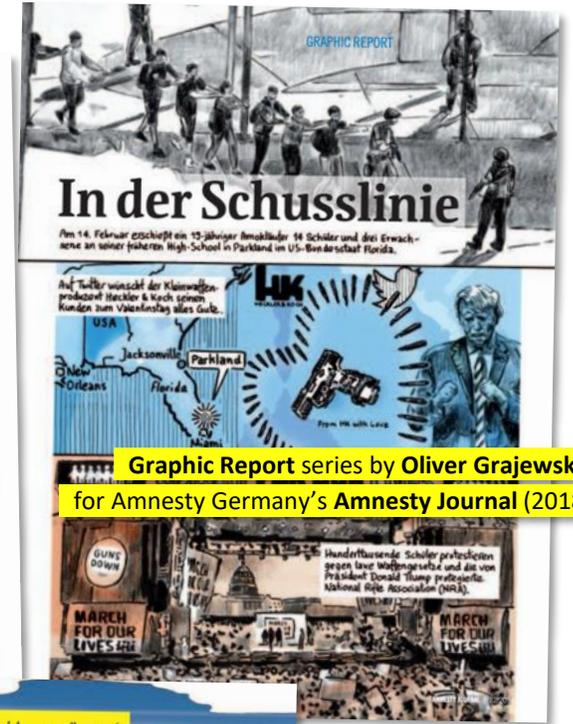
**Let's have a closer look at three recent comic projects by the UK, Sri Lanka and Germany sections of Amnesty International!**



Comic from **Staying Resilient While Trying to Save the World** by Amnistia Americas (2020)



**Guantánamo Kid** by Jérôme Tubiana [SelfMadeHero, 2019] Endorsed by Amnesty UK



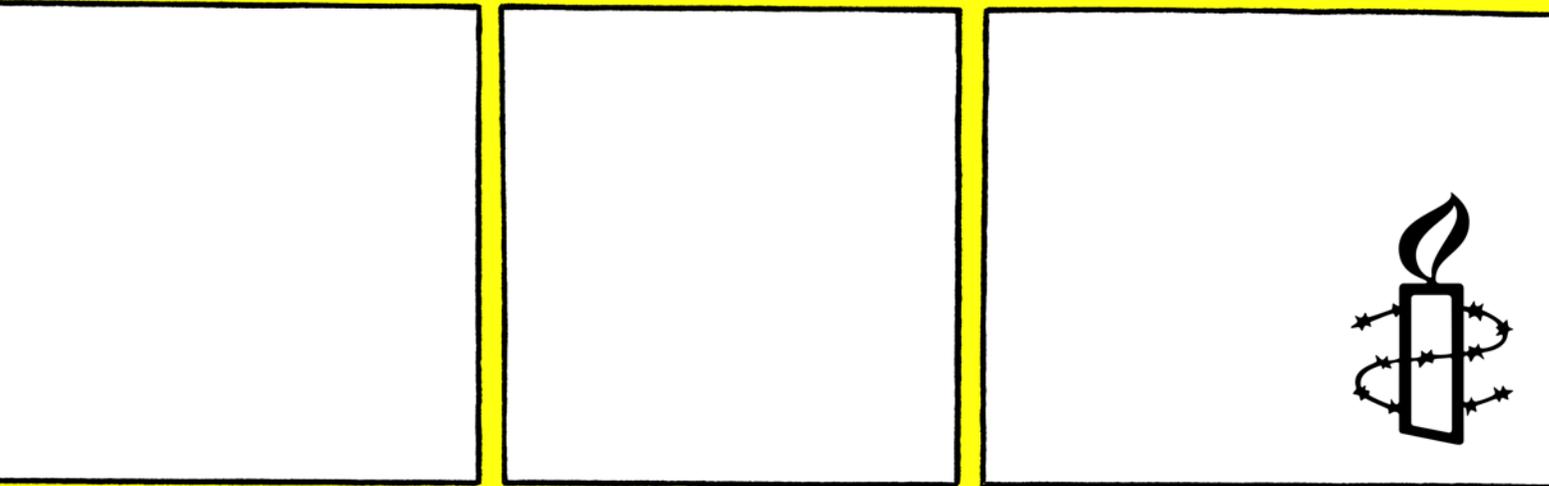
**Graphic Report series** by Oliver Grajewski for Amnesty Germany's **Amnesty Journal** (2018)



**Safe Schools for Girls** comic by Axworks published in several languages including Arabic, Italian, French,... by Amnesty International (2008)

# THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

[Amnesty International UK]



„We wanted to explain who Human Rights Defenders are and why they are crucial to defend human rights. For this we needed a project that tells their stories in an accessible way that resonated with people.“

[Sara Rydkvist, Campaign Manager at Amnesty UK]

Title: **The Human Rights Defenders**

Section: **Amnesty International UK**

Campaign launch date: **March 2019**

Campaign hashtag: **#SendBackUp**

Script: **Amnesty International UK**

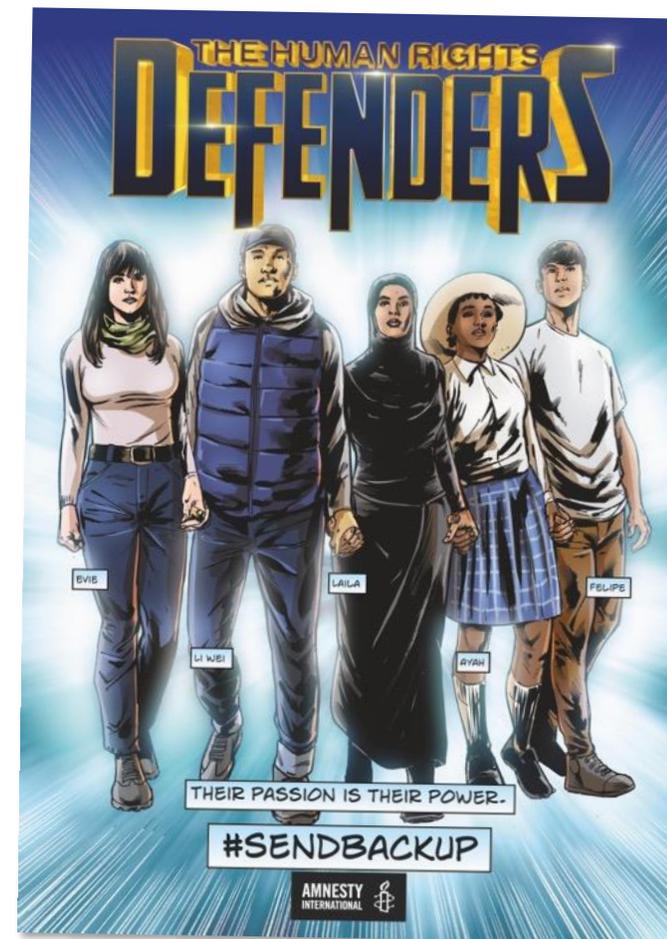
Comic artist: **Neil Edwards**

Agency: **Exposure**

Language: **English**

Format: **Printed magazine (about 20,000 copies)**  
**E-Book (free download)**  
**Video with animated panels** in various formats  
designed for social media campaigning  
on YouTube and Instagram

Collaterals: **Mock movie trailer**  
**Mock movie poster**  
**Set of 3D action figures**  
**Limited run of t-shirts**



# PROJECT DESIGN AND CREATIVE PROCESS

**The Human Rights Defenders** was created as part of Amnesty’s international **#BRAVE** campaign, a long-term global campaign calling for the urgent protection of human rights defenders (HRDs).

Amnesty International UK issued a **call on the UK Government** to prioritise its work to **support human rights defenders** in response to the unprecedented surge and global scale of attacks, and to develop a coherent strategy in order to ensure HRDs **all over the world** receive support consistently from the UK.

The aim of the project was to **generate awareness for “ordinary people doing extraordinary things”** and **get the wider public involved in the UK campaign**, whilst simultaneously driving home the point that **no superpowers are needed to stand up for human rights**.

**Everyone can be a human rights defender.**



#BRAVE social media campaign

images by Amnesty Thailand

and Amnesty Kenya

The **initial idea** for this project was pitched to Amnesty UK by **Exposure Agency**.

**Inspired by Marvel and DC superheroes** and **mimicking the launch of an actual Hollywood blockbuster**, the project was to bring a unique and activating take on a **superhero collective made up of #brave ordinary people** driven by their passion for human rights.

The **script** was developed by the **Brave campaign** project team at **Amnesty UK** together with Amnesty UK's publications team.

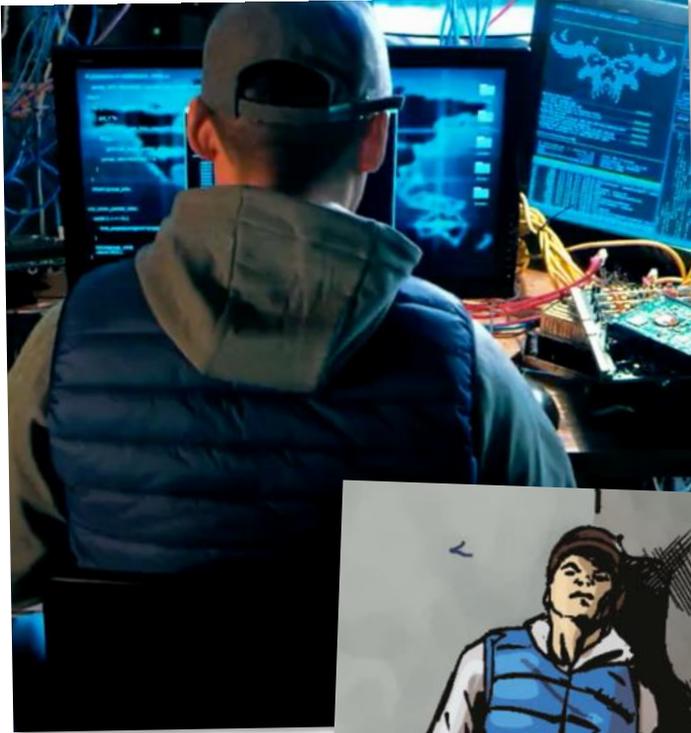
The **stories** were **based on the experiences of real life activists** in different parts of the world:

*„The most important thing for us was to give a strong voice to our characters and to make sure that the context of their work and activism was clear. With only one page for each story we were conscious of how the story was told to ensure this, and spent time adjusting and refining the script throughout the process of developing the comic.*

*With a limited time frame for delivery of the project a decision was made not to create storylines for the comics based directly on individuals who Amnesty works with, but rather base the characters and storylines on key issues HRDs face and on country contexts relevant to Amnesty UK's work.*

*The script and storylines therefore drew inspiration from the experiences of real life activists to create a diverse cast of characters.“*

[Sara Rydkvist, Campaign Manager at Amnesty UK]



Once the team at Amnesty was done with the copywriting process, a **film teaser starring an actual human cast** was shot **by Bark Films Ltd**, to be released ahead of the launch date for the actual comic.

The film cast posed for a promotional photo shooting and actors **Patrick Stewart** and **Paul Bettany**, both known for their involvement in the Marvel films, provided **review quotes for the film posters**.

Actress, activist and writer **Gillian Anderson** contributed a **voiceover** for the film teaser.

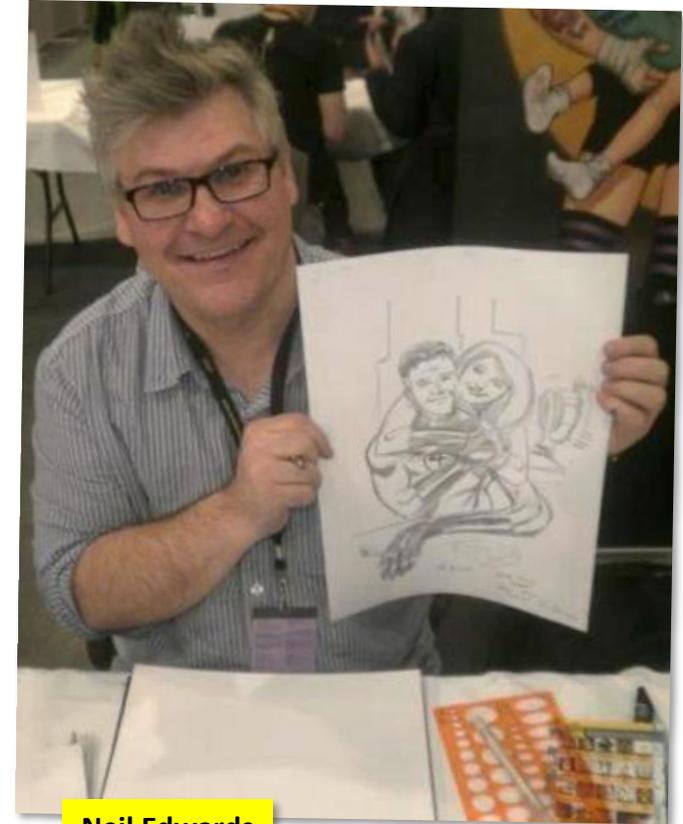
The look of the cast from the film teaser also **served as reference for the** comic artist's **visual representation of the HRDs in the comic**.

In order to render the typical **visual style of the classic superhero genre**, Exposure enlisted the **draftsmanship** of **Marvel and DC artist Neil Edwards**.

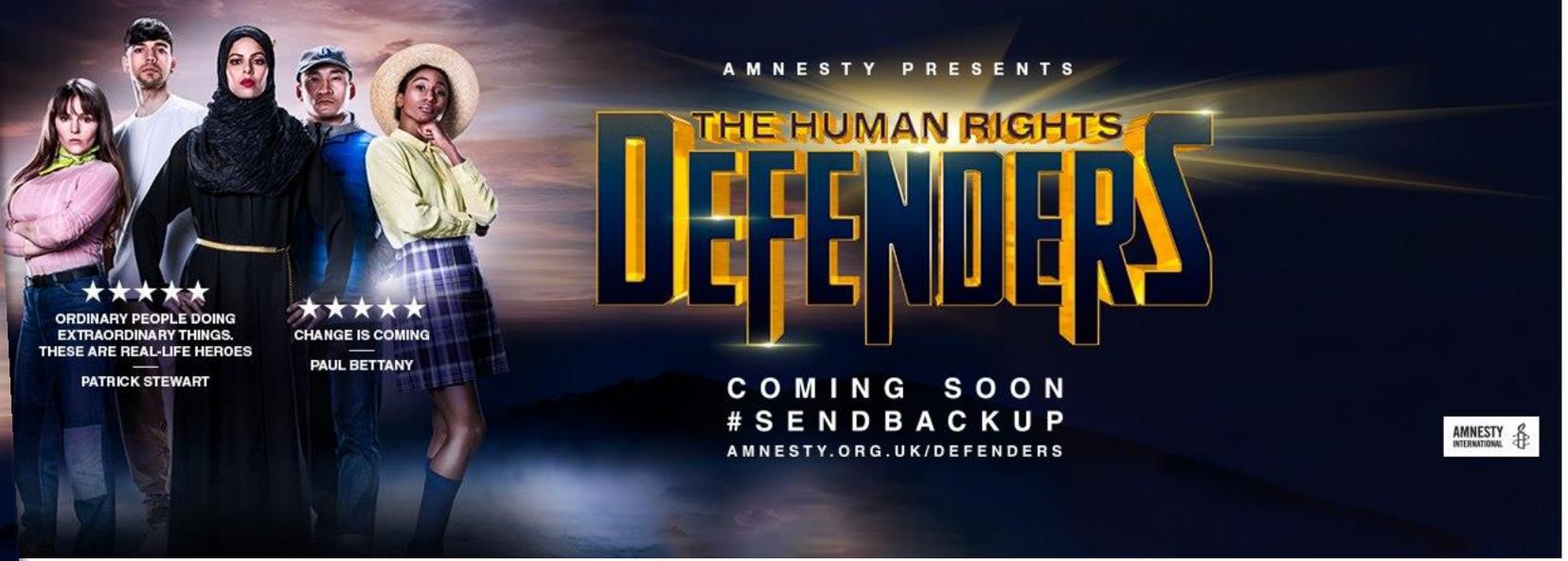
Neil Edwards has worked on various books including **Captain America, Fantastic Four, Avengers, X-Men, X-Factor** and **Herc**. His **Spider-Man: Season One** graphic novel with Cullen Bunn was a New York Times best seller.

In addition to the comic itself, the agency produced a **number of collaterals** to reinforce the impression that this was **a real blockbuster in the making**.

While a **limited run of HRD-themed t-shirts** actually went on sale to raise funds for Amnesty UK, the **3D action figure set** was produced only once. The models were used to take product photos and later **showcased at Amnesty stalls** during the campaign.



Neil Edwards



### The Human Rights Defenders

- L: movie poster
- T: header/cover image for social media pages
- R: Twitter screenshot





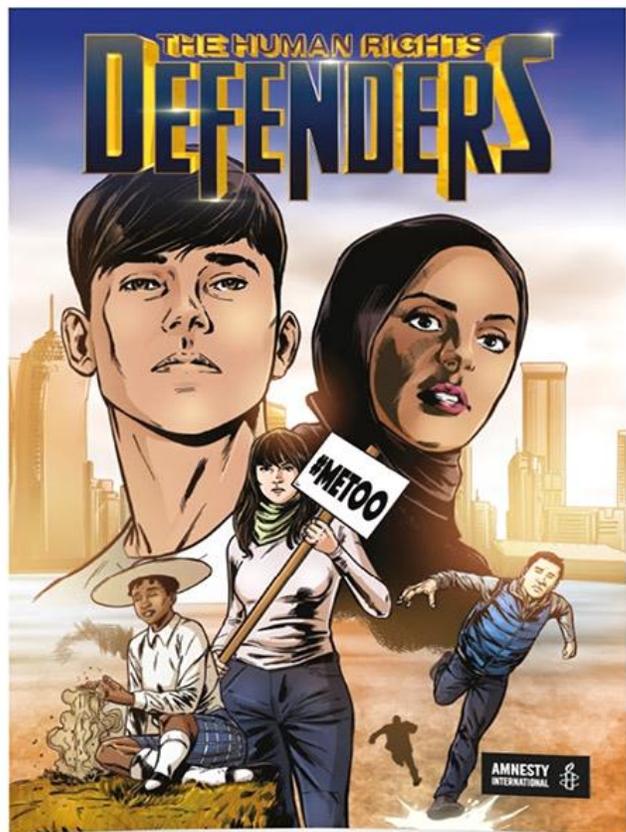
**The Human Rights Defenders: Trailer** [narrated by Gillian Anderson]

[🔗 YouTube Link](#)



**The Human Rights Defenders: Issue #001** [animated video of the comic]

[🔗 YouTube Link](#)



**The Human Rights Defenders: Issue #001**  
Printed magazine





**The Human Rights Defenders**  
Limited edition t-shirts



# CAMPAIGN REACH AND EVALUATION

## CAMPAIGN REACH

The comic was successful in generating public interest in human rights issues beyond Amnesty UK's regular demographic of supporters. It fared well on Amnesty's social media channels and local groups reported that the promotional materials used at Amnesty stalls really did catch people's attention and thus provided many openings to talk about human rights issues, inform about the campaign and present the work of Amnesty International.

## COMMITMENT

In terms of garnering active support for Amnesty UK's campaign towards a stronger UK government stance on human rights issues, the comic did not achieve the boost to the number of action-taking hoped for. Nevertheless, it did achieve an increase in the number of actions, and more so than in comparison to other similar actions targeting members of the UK parliament.

The figures for active participation, by way of letter-writing and other forms of direct civic engagement with the UK government, showed a better turn-out but remained stable compared to other Amnesty campaigns in the UK.

## HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Within Amnesty UK, the comic was welcomed by activists and HRE trainers as a useful and engaging tool in both youth and adult education. The comic is used as a low-threshold basis to stimulate empathic in-depth engagement with the issues raised in the stories and with human rights in general. It lends itself to the application in a very wide range of formal and informal educational settings, from workshops and public talks to face-to-face discussions at an Amnesty stall.

Since the digital version of the comic was available as a free educational resource, it was also picked up by teachers' networks in the UK and used in schools.

## INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Some time into the campaign, the project team decided to return to the Kenyan story to update the portrayal of Ayah. In the opening panels of the original version of the comic, Ayah's account is rendered in captions only while the speech bubble on the page belongs to the police officer.

The team felt that this had the unintended effect of giving Ayah a less strong voice compared to the other four HRD characters. Edits were therefore made to the final panel to give Ayah more voice and agency.

The team also decided to change the opening caption of „a world away in Kenya“ to „at the same time in Kenya“ to ensure it did not echo a northern-centric attitude towards Africa that does not represent Amnesty's role as a global movement.



Original version of Ayah's story

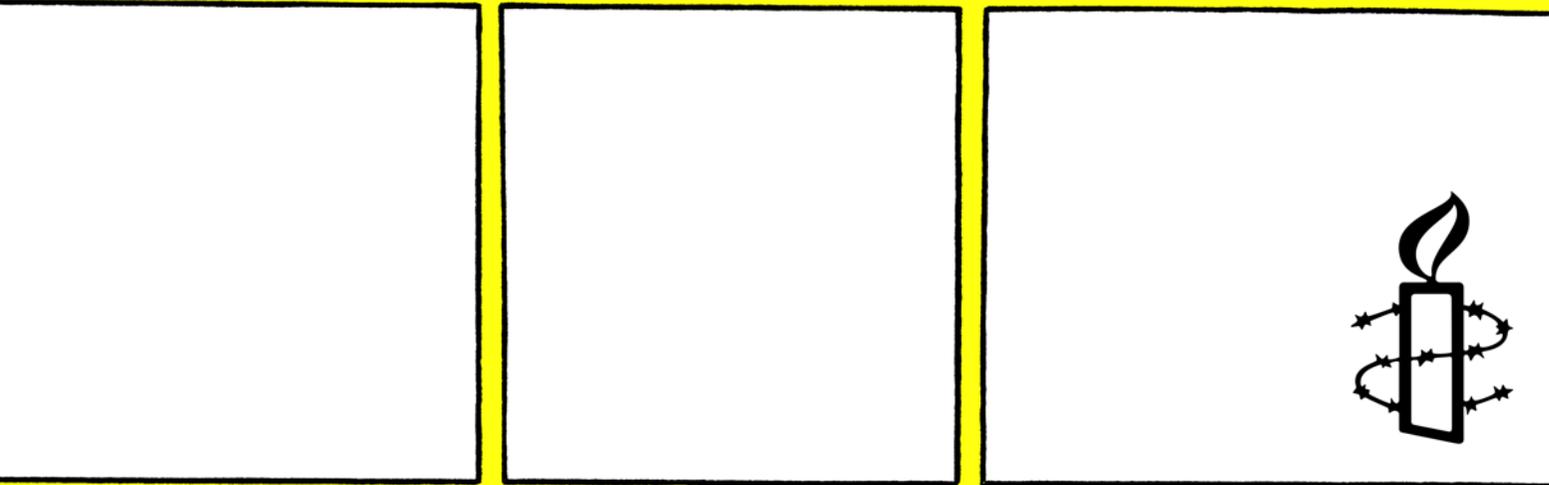


Edited version



# SPECTRUM: FOUR STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION FACED BY LGBTI PEOPLE IN SRI LANKA

[Amnesty International Sri Lanka]



„Comics are an amazing way to immerse the reader in a story, one which can make them empathize and educate them, and so they make for an effective way to campaign on these issues as it gives the issue a very human face.“

[Rehab Mahamoor, Research, Campaigns and Communications Assistant at Amnesty Sri Lanka]

Title: **Spectrum**

Section: **Amnesty International Sri Lanka**

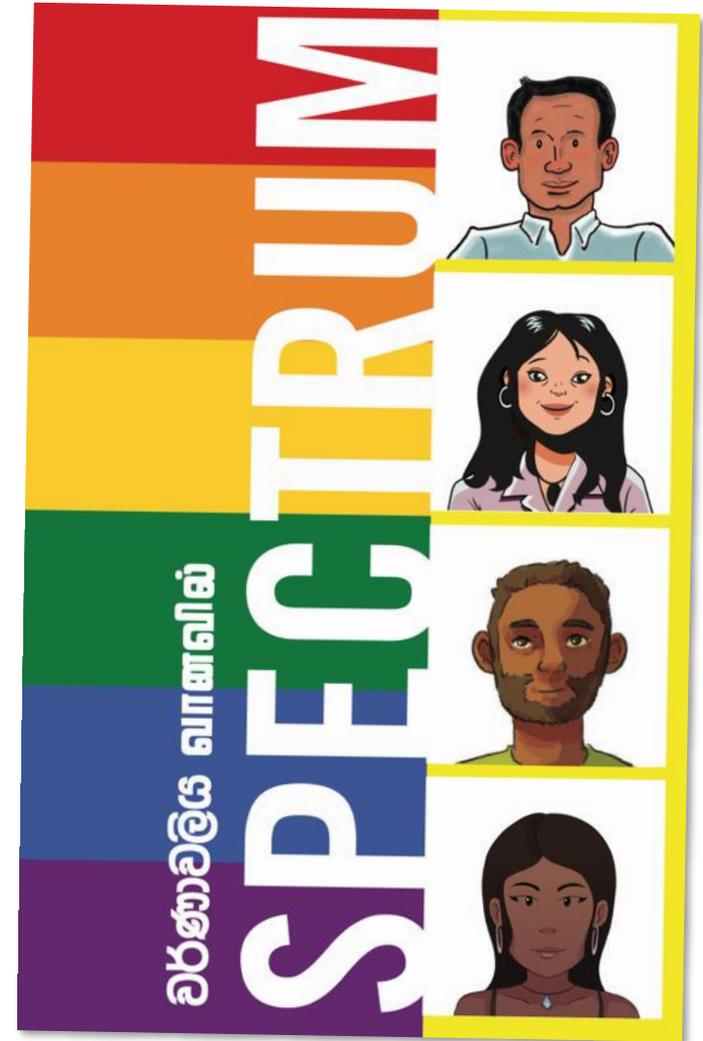
Date of publication: **December 2019, Lanka Comic Con**

Script: **Amnesty International Sri Lanka**

Comic artists: **Gimhani Galagedera  
Madhri Samaranayake  
Shenuka Corea  
Akiel Surajdeen**

Languages: **Sinhalese, Tamil, English**

Format: **Printed magazine  
E-Book (free download)**



# PROJECT DESIGN AND CREATIVE PROCESS

Amnesty Sri Lanka's **Spectrum** project was designed **to raise awareness** of the types **of discrimination faced by LGBTIQ\* people in Sri Lanka** and to serve as a tool **for education**.

Given the **growing comic culture** in Sri Lanka, the project team decided to use **graphic story-telling** to reach out to its target audience of young people.

To ensure that the comic could be used all over the country and would be accessible to all young people, it was **released in Sinhala, Tamil and English**, and made available as a **printed magazine** and as an **e-book**.

The publication was **launched at the annual Lanka Comic Con** in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in **December 2019**.



Amnesty at Lanka Comic Con 2019



## INVOLVING THE LGBTIQ\* COMMUNITY

In preparation for the campaign, Amnesty Sri Lanka had been conducting **interviews with many individuals from the LGBTIQ\* community** and, throughout the project, was in **consultation with activists** working on LGBTIQ\* issues in Sri Lanka **for their feedback on the scripts and artwork.**

The **four stories** for the comics project were **chosen to represent different sexual orientations and gender identities.**

Amnesty also made a **conscious effort to commission artists from the LGBTIQ\* community** itself.

However, due to time constraints and clashing schedules, the project team was **unable to have a full team of LGBTIQ\* artists** to work on the comics.

## THIS STORY IS MY STORY

All four stories published in **Spectrum** are **true stories**, with no part being fictionalised and no names changed: **Manju, Kiruthika, Thenu and Samanali** were all **heavily involved in** both **the writing and drawing stages of the project**, and consented to give their real names and details.

The project team at Amnesty started out by drafting **scripts based on the interviews**. At every step, the scripts were given to Manju, Kiruthika, Thenu and Samanali for their feedback and approval.

Next, Amnesty set up **meetings between** them and the artists, so that **all parties involved in a given story** would get to know each other.

During these meetings, Manju, Kiruthika, Thenu and Samanali **told their experiences** and **showed photos** and pieces of clothing to discuss what they themselves, their surroundings and other people in their stories should look like in the comics.

They **remained equally involved during the entire drawing stage**, **reviewing** and **approving** the **storyboards** and **sketches** as well as the **final artwork**.

Portrait of Manju



Artist: Gimhani Galagedera

# CAMPAIGN REACH AND EVALUATION

## CAMPAIGN REACH AND RECEPTION

The Spectrum project is very successful as a campaign. Since its publication, the comic has continued to receive a lot of media attention in major newspapers and media publications, including front page articles and, even as late as June 2020, a feature celebrating Pride Month in Sri Lankan newspaper The Morning.

The comic was distributed to libraries around Sri Lanka, including the National Library, as a resource for students. It has also been widely distributed among activists who use the comic as a resource for their work on education and awareness raising.

Internationally, the comic also received a lot of interest and praise from other sections and groups within Amnesty as well as from a number of LGBTIQ\* media publications.

„At the launch young LGBT people were so excited to see a comic about someone/something they could relate to, and the general audience was extremely interested in learning more about the kinds of discrimination faced by LGBT people.

This was the first time we had used comics in this manner, and given the response it is definitely a medium we will look at using in the future.“

[Rehab Mahamoor, Research, Campaigns and Communications Assistant at Amnesty Sri Lanka]

### Detail from Thenu's story



Artist: Shenuka Corea

## HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

The comic has been used as an HRE resource by both Amnesty Sri Lanka and LGBTIQ\* organisations across the country.

If it were not for the Covid-19 pandemic, Amnesty Sri Lanka's campaign and Spectrum HRE activities would still be in full swing. Unfortunately, a number of events, e.g. a workshop on the themes and the design process of the comic with students at one of Sri Lanka's biggest design institutes, had to be cancelled or postponed.

Amnesty Sri Lanka hopes to run more campaigns using the comic, and plans to use the medium of comics even more often in the future.

## INTERVIEW WITH SPECTRUM ARTIST AKIEL SURAJDEEN

As part of our research for this presentation, we also contacted the artists involved in the Spectrum comics project to hear about their point of view and their involvement in the project.

We asked the artists about the creative process in general, but also invited them to comment on their own connection/approach to the issue of discrimination against the LGBTIQ community in Sri Lanka.

Had they received feedback from readers or activists, or heard back from Amnesty regarding the reception of the comic? Given the context in which this comic was published, were they at risk of facing pushback or losing clients as a result of their openly standing up for LGBTIQ rights?

**We are very grateful to share the reply from artist Akiel Surajdeen, who contributed the story of Samanali, in full:**



Akiel Surajdeen

## WORKING ON THE SCRIPT

*The scripts were provided to us by Amnesty, so I can't say much about their development process. That said they were always very open to suggestions and interpretation on our end. I really liked the script I received and had nothing to add to it. We all met with the subjects of our respective comics. Rehab [Rehab Mahamoor – Research, Campaigns and Communications Assistant at Amnesty International] and I spoke to Samanali at her home and she described her experiences and what she wanted communicated by the story. She was unfamiliar with the concept of comics so we brought some layouts with us to explain it, and she wanted us to communicate the specific barriers and discrimination experienced by trans people in Sri Lanka and how this was not a unique incident.*

## VISUAL REPRESENTATION

*When it comes to visual representation, I think the comic served as education and insight for the wider public into the systemic discrimination LGBTIQ people face in Sri Lanka, so there had to be a balance struck between having an honest, authentic depiction, while simultaneously not telling a story that wasn't ours to tell. Samanali's experience was a traumatic one, and I felt like it was our responsibility to communicate that it happened, that it happens to trans people often here, but beyond that not use someone else's trauma for shock value. The simple visual style hopefully would still communicate the fact that this kind of discrimination is happening, while not retraumatizing people who've experienced similar police violence or being exploitative. That was how I approached the style and I hope it accomplished that.*

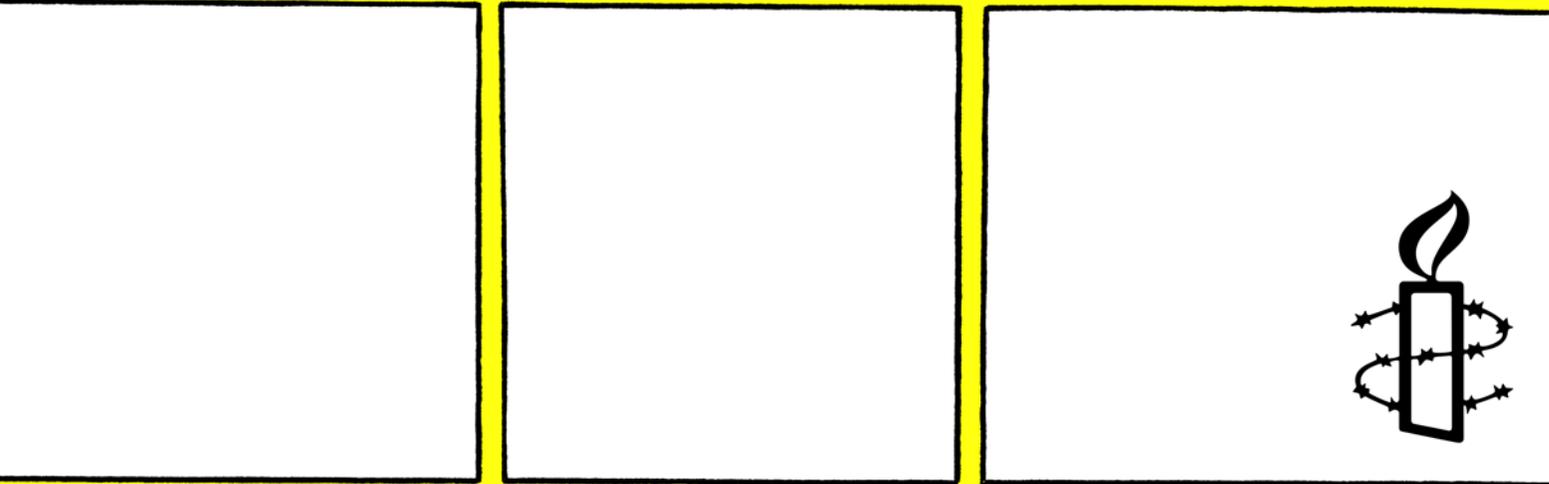
## RECEPTION AND IMPACT OF THE COMIC

*I did hear back from Amnesty about the success of the comic and the plans to translate it into other languages for showcase and release elsewhere. There was also significant local press coverage which I found heartening, because these are conversations that mainstream media often shies away from here. I did hear from readers at the [Lanka] Comic Con where the comic was distributed, and while a lot of my work is aimed at queer audiences, I think this in particular was aimed at educating a cis, straight audience who are unaware of these issues. A lot of the readers who I spoke to were cis and straight and shocked to hear about the widespread discrimination LGBTIQ people face in Sri Lanka, that beyond slurs there was also the risk of intimidation, workplace discrimination, and police harassment. The extent of this is often completely unknown to straight cis people in Sri Lanka and I hope this was one step forward into educating them.*

## WORKING ON QUEER THEMES AS AN ARTIST IN SRI LANKA

*As for the situation in Sri Lanka, this project didn't feel particularly dangerous to me. There have always been queer characters and themes in my work and it hasn't received much pushback, and I think an element of that is that the discrimination falls on class lines as well. While all queer people are discriminated against, being a middle class artist insulates me from a lot of the difficulties poor queer people face. I don't think my being involved in this project was anything as risky as what the subjects of it go through just for existing. I have experienced negative comments (not about this comic but about myself and broader body of work) but I have not experienced the kind of danger that I often hear of poor, working class and rural queer people experiencing.*

# WHO DEFENDS HUMAN RIGHTS? [Amnesty International Germany]



„It is necessary that our HRE materials become more inclusive and accessible for large and diverse target groups, including those younger than 15, L2-speakers with a language proficiency from CEFR A1 to B1 (mostly students with refugee status) and students with learning disabilities. This can be achieved by communicating important content through comics.“

[Wiebke Buth, Speaker of HRE Coordination Group at Amnesty Germany]

Title: **Wer verteidigt Menschenrechte?**  
[translation: Who defends human rights?]

Section: **Amnesty International Germany**

Date of publication: **December 2018**

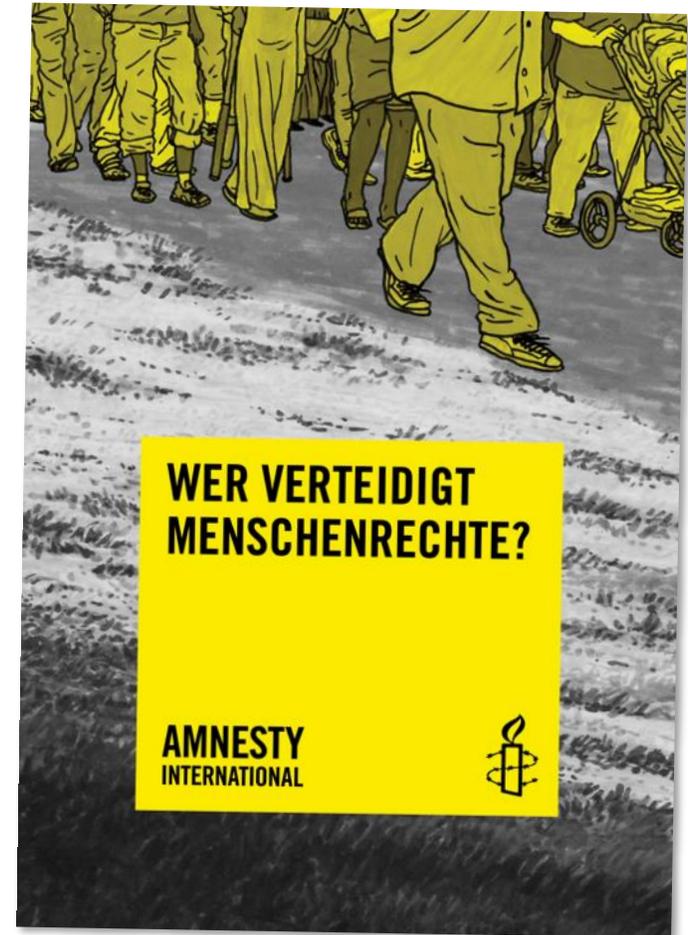
Script: **Amnesty Germany HRE Coordination Group  
and Jeff Hemmer**

Comic artist: **Jeff Hemmer**

Language: **wordless comic / title: German**

Format: **E-Book (free download)  
Printed HRE information leaflet**

Also published in: **Wiebke Buth, Dr. Julia Hagen & Tihomir Vrdoljak,  
eds., 2020, *Amnesty macht Schule*, Berlin: Amnesty  
International Deutschland e.V.  
(e-book / printed run of 3,000 copies to be  
distributed in schools)**



# PROJECT DESIGN AND CREATIVE PROCESS

Amnesty Germany's wordless comic **Who defends human rights?** was created as an **educational tool** for the German section's **2018 Write for Rights campaign**.

Write for Rights (W4R), known in some countries as **Letter Writing Marathon**, is not only Amnesty International's most important campaign event during the year, but its **most important annual human rights education project** as well.

All over the world, but especially in European countries, **secondary school students** write letters to governments, read about human rights defenders' (HRD) cases and **act in solidarity with people whose rights are violated**.

**147,00 letters** were written in organised letter writing events in **German schools in 2019**.



Write for Rights in German schools



Excerpts from the case file comic on Vitalina Koval



As part of every W4R campaign, Amnesty offers a special **online resource containing teaching materials** (including ready-to-use units designed for different subjects and age clusters), **topical HRD case files** and **introductory materials on human rights education** (HRE).

However, **not all** of Amnesty Germany's **HRE materials are suitable to address as diverse and large target groups as possible**. Most 'case file excerpts' are **too difficult to read** for those younger than 15, for L2-speakers with a language proficiency from CEFR A1 to B1 (mostly students with refugee status) and for students with learning disabilities.

Hence, with this project, Amnesty Germany's HRE Coordination Group wanted to **provide additional approaches to information about human rights** and about **empowerment** through the translation of **key contents in comics** and to make HRE materials more diverse and inclusive through a depiction that reflects **diversity and inclusion**.

2018 saw the inclusion of two comics as part of the W4R resource package. Besides the wordless HRD comic, there was also a **comic version of the case file for Ukrainian HRD Vitalina Koval** (to be told using as little text as possible).

The HRE Coordination Group's **objective** was to come up with

a **low-threshold educational comic**  
**to relate the concept** of Human Rights Defenders  
within the space of **two pages**  
**without resorting to any written language,**  
**using story-telling** rather than a more explanatory approach.



In a truly **collaborative process**, an **Amnesty project group** composed of HRE volunteers and HRE staff formed a team together with the **artist Jeff Hemmer** to design the conceptual implementation and develop the story.

Early on in this process, it was decided to keep the **comic in greyscale** and include **colour only as a marker**.

The colour yellow is used **to exemplify** different possible **ways of becoming active** and **to illustrate how** the human rights **activism of many** different **individuals interconnects and spreads**.

Characters turn from passive grey to active yellow once they start to take action for human rights.

**YELLOW:**

- human rights
- human rights defenders
- tools and actions used to defend human rights



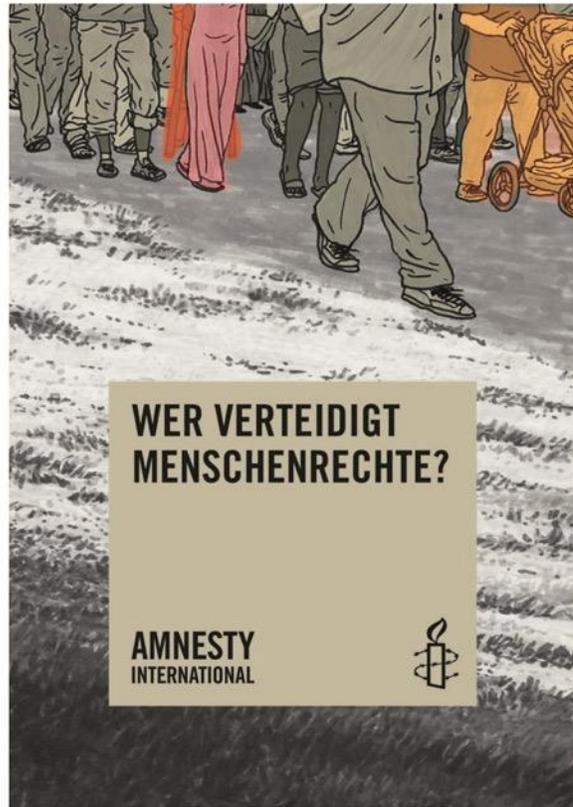
Opening panels: a celebration of human rights

The decision to use colour-coding allowed for a **much wider narrative space** and made it possible to develop a **coherent story** with a large and **diverse cast of characters**.

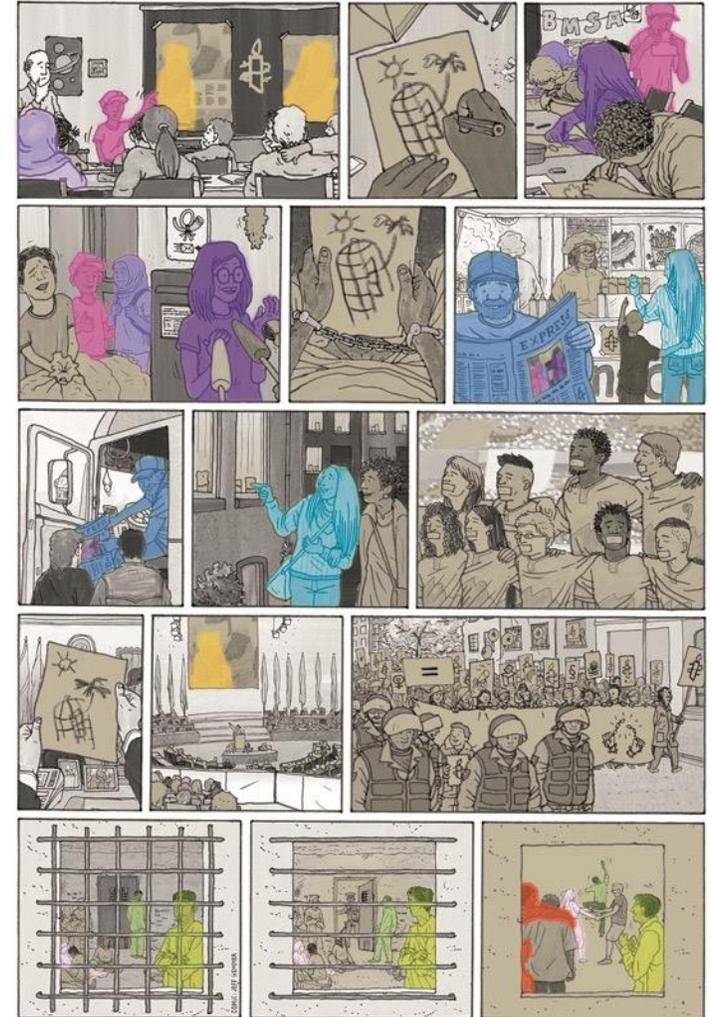
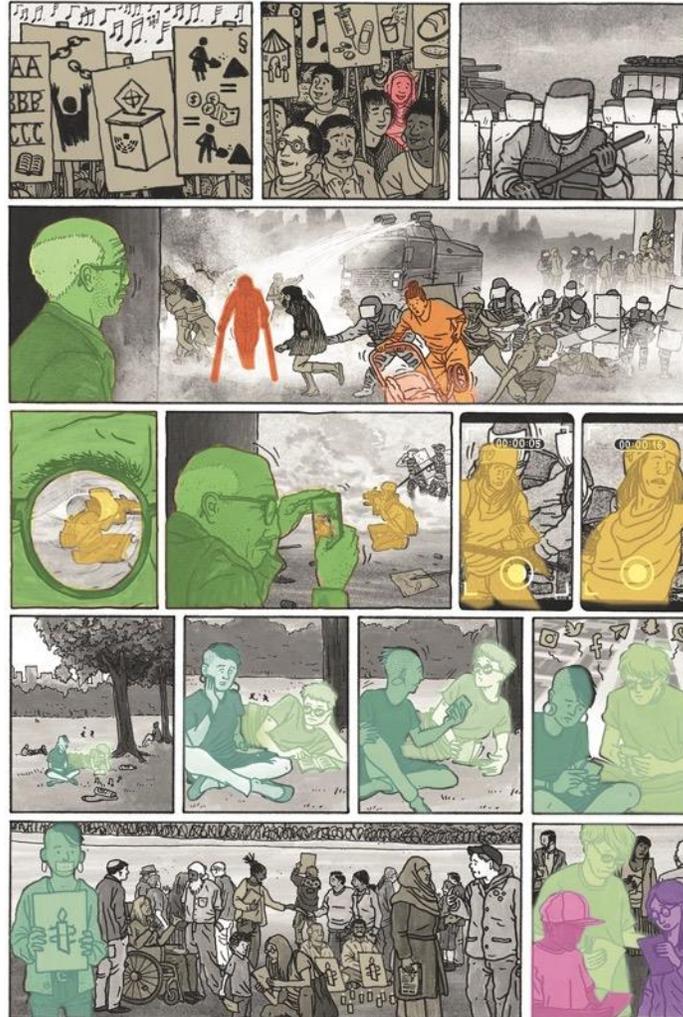
It also opened up a lot of room to incorporate **additional details within some of the panels** without risking to overcrowd the overall narrative.



Every action does count.



Recurring characters across the comic



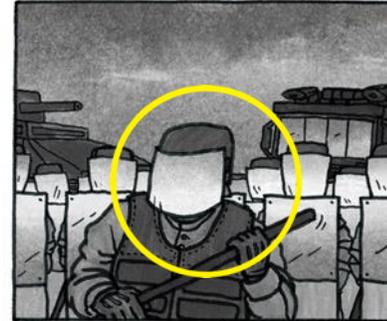
„We wanted the story to be told in a way that young people in Germany could identify with the depicted persons and their situations - so, we did not want to tell a story of human rights violations that happen ‘somewhere in the world’.

Therefore, we had to choose carefully which kind of human rights violation could be shown and decided to tell the story of a demonstration broken up by the police. Several peoples’ rights are violated during this process and witnesses start to fight for them using different methods to spread the news and raise awareness.

It was very important, though, to not depict the police as the ‘enemy’ here - which would give a distorted image of the reality in Germany - but as a protector of citizens fighting non-violently for their rights as well.

Therefore, in the end, we can see the police protecting the second demonstration, smiling friendly.“

[Wiebke Buth, Speaker of HRE Coordination Group  
at Amnesty Germany]





Since the comic uses no words at all, it can be used for **story-telling activities** in the classroom or elsewhere, either for the comic as a whole or focusing on selected scenes.

The details in some panels also allow for **further in-depth discussions of specific aspects**:

The opening panels can be used to kick-start a **basic introduction to human rights**, e.g. by asking participants which rights they can recognise on the placards.

Similarly, a comparison of the two scenes involving police might lead on to a discussion of **separation of powers** and the **role of the authorities in a democratic society**.

Or, in more general terms, what about the individuals in this comic? Who is active? How do they interact with each other? How might we imagine a society rooted firmly in a living **culture of human rights**?

What might they be saying?



# PROJECT EVALUATION

## WRITE FOR RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

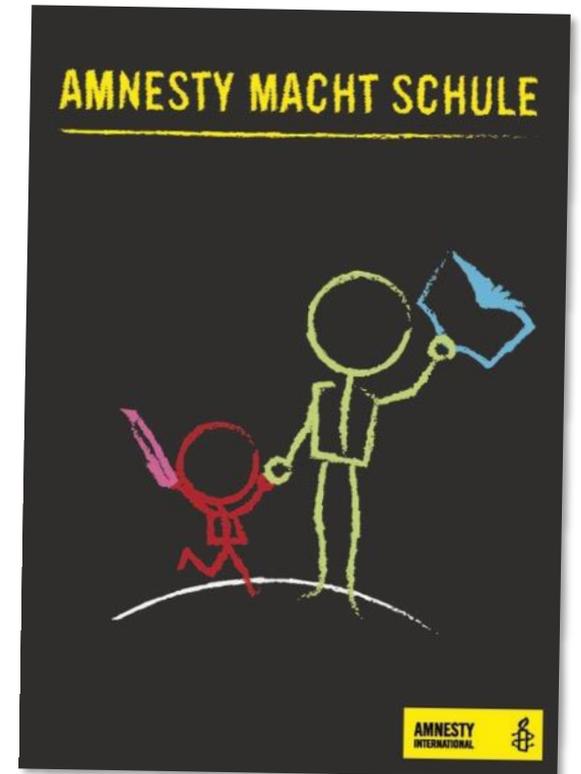
This comic did not constitute a campaign in itself (like the UK and Sri Lanka examples) but, instead, was created to form part of the teaching materials made available for the W4R campaign.

As such, according to the evaluatory feedback collected by Amnesty Germany in the wake of the campaign, the comic resources were very well-received by teachers and trainers.

## WORKSHOP AND TEACHING RESOURCES

The comic has since been used in workshops and is included in the permanent collection of free online HRE teaching resources on the website of Amnesty Germany's HRE Coordination Group.

It has also been reprinted in Amnesty Germany's free collection of teaching materials **Amnesty macht Schule**, a brochure with an outline of HRE in schools aimed at teachers.



# ABOUT US



**Rowena Seabrook** is the Human Rights Education (HRE) Manager at Amnesty International UK. Rowena is particularly involved in creating resources and delivering professional development around children's books. She is currently doing a PhD in HRE and literature with the University of Glasgow.

Research / Rowena will take part in the Live Q&A session during the conference.



**Jeff Hemmer** lives and works in Germany as a comic artist and workshop trainer. Jeff was involved in the creation of Amnesty Germany's 2018 W4R educational comics **Who defends human rights?** and **Vitalina Koval** and has since become a member of the HRE Coordination Group of Amnesty International Germany.

Research and presentation / Jeff will take part in the Live Q&A session during the conference.

Instagram: @afurnishedsoul

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SOURCES

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**Sara Rydkvist** [Amnesty International UK] **Rehab Mahamoor** [Amnesty International Sri Lanka] **Wiebke Buth and Mitja Seibold** [Amnesty International Germany]  
**Akiel Surajdeen** [Spectrum / Insta: @herearepixels] **Shenuka Corea** [Spectrum / Insta: @baka.moona] **Gimhani Galagedera** [Spectrum / Insta: @gimi\_underarock]

## IMAGE CREDITS

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### Amnesty and the arts

Amnesty artworks by Franquin, Enki Bilal, Tove Jansson & Lasse scanned from:

Caroline Cano & Sarah Carrière-Chardon, eds., 2001, *Amnesty International: 40 ans d'affiches pour la liberté*, Paris: le cherche midi éditeur.

### The Human Rights Defenders

Photo of Neil Edwards: [https://marvelcinematicuniverse.fandom.com/wiki/Neil\\_Edwards](https://marvelcinematicuniverse.fandom.com/wiki/Neil_Edwards)

Product photos of the printed magazine and Evie action figure box: <https://mb8y.uk/defenders> [Online portfolio of Mitchell Baitey]

### Spectrum

Artist selfportrait of Akiel Surajdeen: <https://www.akielsurajdeen.com/about> [Artist website of Akiel Surajdeen]

## FURTHER READING / SOURCES

**United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, adopted by General Assembly on 19 December 2011 [A/RES/66/137]**

<https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/66/137>

**Statute of Amnesty International [POL 20/1045/2019]**

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol20/1045/2019/en/>

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