

NASU ABDULAZIZ,

NIGERIA

NO HOME, NO DIGNITY

**WRITE
FOR
RIGHTS**

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL 



**LEARNING ABOUT
OUR HUMAN RIGHTS
ACTIVITIES**

HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

ABOUT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who take injustice personally. We are campaigning for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

We investigate and expose the facts, whenever and wherever abuses happen. We lobby governments as well as other powerful groups such as companies, making sure they keep their promises and respect international law. By telling the powerful stories of the people we work with, we mobilize millions of supporters around the world to campaign for change and to stand in the defence of activists on the frontline. We support people to claim their rights through education and training.

Our work protects and empowers people – from abolishing the death penalty to advancing sexual and reproductive rights, and from combating discrimination to defending refugees' and migrants' rights. We help to bring torturers to justice. Change oppressive laws... And free people who have been jailed just for voicing their opinion. We speak out for anyone and everyone whose freedom or dignity are under threat.



Amnesty International members protesting at the Turkish embassy in Paris, July 2017.
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Letter writing for W4R in Algeria.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS

Amnesty International's "Write for Rights" campaign takes place annually around 10 December, which is Human Rights Day (commemorating the day when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948). Write for Rights aims to bring about change to the lives of people or communities that have suffered or are at risk of human rights violations. Among the many actions that take place as part of Write for Rights, Amnesty raises individual cases with decision-makers who can change the situation, gives visibility to those cases by organizing protests and public actions, and brings international attention through media and internet exposure.

A major part of the Write for Rights campaign consists of a letter-writing marathon and involves millions of people around the globe. As a result of the international call to action, public officials are bombarded with letters. Victims of torture, prisoners of conscience, and people facing the death penalty

or other human rights violations receive messages of solidarity from thousands of people in far-off corners of the globe. Those suffering the violations know that their cases are being brought to public attention. They know that they are not forgotten.

The results of similar campaigns in previous years have been striking. Individuals affected by the violations report the difference that these letters make, they express their gratitude to those who have written, and they often describe the strength they derive from knowing that so many people are concerned about their case.

Often there is a noticeable change by officials towards these individuals: charges are dropped, treatment becomes less harsh, and laws or regulations addressing the problem are introduced.

HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE 2018 CAMPAIGN

ARRESTS IN BRAZIL

In March 2019, two ex-police officers were arrested for killing Marielle Franco, the charismatic local politician and defender of the poorest in Brazil. It was a small step towards justice. People worldwide wrote over half a million messages demanding: "Who killed Marielle Franco?"

"It helps me to get up in the morning... knowing that there is this big global network of affection."

Monica Benicio, Marielle's partner



© Elisângela Leite

DISABILITY RIGHTS WIN IN KYRGYZSTAN

Gulzar Duishenova had been championing disability rights in her country for years. In March 2019, her persistence paid off when Kyrgyzstan finally signed up to the Disability Rights Convention. Supporters wrote nearly a quarter of a million messages backing Gulzar.

"I am grateful for all the support and solidarity from so many of Amnesty International's activists who care about our rights despite being from a different country."



© Svetlana Zelenskaya/Amnesty International

VITAL HEALTH CARE RECEIVED IN IRAN

Jailed for handing out leaflets criticizing the death penalty, Atena Daemi has endured physical attacks while in prison. She needed specialist medical care urgently, and thanks to the more than 700,000 actions taken by people worldwide, Iran finally gave her the treatment she needed.

"I am wholeheartedly grateful to all people around the world who have showered me with compassion and kindness and spared no effort in supporting me."



© Private



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HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that belong to every single one of us. They are based on principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect – regardless of age, nationality, gender, race, beliefs and personal orientations.

Your rights are about being treated fairly and treating others fairly, and having the ability to make choices about your own life. These basic human rights are universal – they belong to all of us; everybody in the world. They are inalienable – they cannot be taken away from us. And they are indivisible and interdependent – they are all of equal importance and are interrelated.

Since the atrocities committed during World War II, international human rights instruments, beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have provided a solid framework for national, regional and international legislation designed to improve lives around the world. Human rights can be seen as laws for governments. They create obligations for governments or state officials to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of those within their jurisdiction and also abroad.

Human rights are not luxuries that can be met only when practicalities allow.



W4R activists in Togo.



THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)

The UDHR was drawn up by the newly formed United Nations in the years immediately following World War II. Since 1948, it has formed the backbone of the international human rights system. Every country in the world has agreed that they are bound by the general principles expressed within the 30 articles of this document.

The UDHR itself is, as its name suggests, a declaration. It is a declaration of intent by every government around the world that they will abide by certain standards in the treatment of individual human beings. Human rights have become part of international law: since the adoption of the UDHR, numerous other binding laws and agreements have been drawn up on the basis of its principles. It is these laws and agreements which provide the basis for organizations like Amnesty International to call on governments to refrain from the type of behaviour or treatment that the people highlighted in our Write for Rights cases have experienced.

HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES

Right to life, freedom from torture and slavery, right to non-discrimination.

Article 1 Freedom and equality in dignity and rights

Article 2 Non-discrimination

Article 3 Right to life, liberty and security of person

Article 4 Freedom from slavery

Article 5 Freedom from torture



LEGAL RIGHTS

Right to be presumed innocent, right to a fair trial, right to be free from arbitrary arrest or detention.

Article 6 All are protected by the law

Article 7 All are equal before the law

Article 8 A remedy when rights have been violated

Article 9 No unjust detention, imprisonment or exile

Article 10 Right to a fair trial

Article 11 Innocent until proven guilty

Article 14 Right to go to another country and ask for protection



SOCIAL RIGHTS

Right to education, to found and maintain a family, to recreation, to health care.

Article 12 Privacy and the right to home and family life

Article 13 Freedom to live and travel freely within state borders

Article 16 Right to marry and start a family

Article 24 Right to rest and leisure

Article 26 Right to education, including free primary education



ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Right to property, to work, to housing, to a pension, to an adequate standard of living.

Article 15 Right to a nationality

Article 17 Right to own property and possessions

Article 22 Right to social security

Article 23 Right to work for a fair wage and to join a trade union

Article 25 Right to a standard of living adequate for your health and well-being



POLITICAL RIGHTS

Right to participate in the government of the country, right to vote, right to peaceful assembly, freedoms of expression, belief and religion

Article 18 Freedom of belief (including religious belief)

Article 19 Freedom of expression and the right to spread information

Article 20 Freedom to join associations and meet with others in a peaceful way

Article 21 Right to take part in the government of your country



CULTURAL RIGHTS, SOLIDARITY RIGHTS

Right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

Article 27 Right to share in your community's cultural life

Article 28 Right to an international order where all these rights can be fully realized

Article 29 Responsibility to respect the rights of others

Article 30 No taking away any of these rights!

ACTIVITY

NO HOME, NO DIGNITY

KEY CONCEPTS

- Young human rights defenders
- Forced eviction
- Legal safeguards
- Right to housing

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Participants will learn about forced evictions and what human rights are affected by forced evictions. They will find out what role authorities may play in evictions under international law. They will explore how young people organize to defend their rights and those of their community in Nigeria.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Participants understand what a forced eviction is, what impact it has on individuals and families, and how it violates a number of human rights, including the right to housing.
- Participants understand what the State must do to protect individuals and communities if an eviction is carried out.
- Participants know about Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign and are prepared to write a letter in support of Nasu Abdulaziz.

PREPARATION AND RESOURCES

- Paper and pens/markers
- Optional: post-its
- Optional: timer with alarm to go off after two minutes

TIME NEEDED:

60 minutes

AGE: 12+

INTRODUCTION:

PACK YOUR BAG

1. Ask participants to imagine the following situation (you may want to ask them to close their eyes in order to visualise it):

Authorities arrive in the middle of the night with bulldozers. They start crushing and burning down buildings in your neighbourhood. The noise and panic wake you up. The authorities enter your house and declare that your family is being evicted and you must leave in a few minutes. You look around quickly and grab a few things. You can take only whatever you can fit into a backpack.

2. Hand out paper and pens. Ask each participant to write on a piece of paper what they would put in their backpack. Prompt them with questions such as:

- What would you take with you?
- What would you find hard to leave behind?
- What did you think about before deciding what to take?

Tell them they have two minutes to decide and set a timer (or estimate yourself).

 25 MINUTES



3. Ask participants to form groups of three or four and compare their answers. Give the groups a few minutes to look at similarities and differences and allow participants to change their lists if they want to.
4. Ask participants to share their reflections with the group and discuss the following questions:
 - Did you manage to select the things you wanted in two minutes?
 - How did you decide on what things to take from your home?
 - What things did most people in your group take with you?
 - What things were hard to leave behind? How did it make you feel?
 - Did you change your list of what to take? Why? Would you be able to change what you took with you in a real situation?
 - How would this impact your life?
5. Using the background information on page 10 share with the group what a forced eviction is and what effects it has.



INTRODUCING NASU

🕒 15 MINUTES

6. Share Nasu's story with the group, either by reading the short passage to the right or sharing the photo story on page 11. Tell participants that the events described really happened:
7. Have an open conversation with the group about the story. The following questions can be used as guidelines:
 - How might you have felt, if you were Nasu?
 - Apart from losing their homes, how else might the lives of Nasu and his peers be impacted? What other things might they have lost as a result of the forced eviction (for example, friends, access to schools, clinics, work, food, water and sanitation, etc)?
 - Why would the government forcibly evict people from their homes?
 - Have you ever heard of something like this happening close to your home?
 - What might 'to live in dignity' mean, in relation to this case?

Nasu Abdulaziz loves football and cycling – normal pastimes for a young person in Nigeria – except that Nasu's circumstances are nowhere near normal. When he was 23 and should have been enjoying life like any other young person, Nasu and his community in Lagos were evicted without warning from their century-old settlement in the megacity of Lagos. Government forces came with guns and bulldozers and razed their homes to the ground, leaving 30,000 people, including Nasu, homeless. They were forced to live in canoes, under bridges or with friends and family. Today, Nasu and his peers are demanding to live in dignity.



HOUSING AND HUMAN RIGHTS

15 MINUTES

- If participants are not familiar with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, use the background information on page 4 to give a brief introduction.
- Divide the participants into smaller groups and hand out the list of human rights on page 5 to each. Give each group three pieces of paper or post-its and allow them a couple of minutes to identify and write down one human right which was violated in Nasu's case, and how, on each piece of paper.
- Ask the first group to read aloud one of the rights they identified, and to come forward to stick it on a board or flipchart, explaining why this was relevant in Nasu's case. Check if other groups agree. If not, hear them out and ask each group to place the relevant post-its or paper also on the board. Ask the next group to explain a second right, and so on, until there is a full collection of human rights violated in Nasu's story. To guide the conversation, see the background information on page 10 for more information on forced evictions and human rights.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND WRITE FOR RIGHTS

5 MINUTES

- Use the information on page 2 to introduce Amnesty International briefly, and explain the Write for Rights campaign. Tell participants that Amnesty is calling on people around the world to write two letters to help Nasu and his community:
 - A letter of support for Nasu, so that he feels that people around the world back him in his struggle a home and his right to adequate housing.
 - A letter of protest to the Governor of Lagos State in Nigeria.
- Arrange a follow-up activity during which participants have the opportunity to write these letters.

Optional:
You could use the short course available at academy.amnesty.org to introduce the Write for Rights campaign.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS INSTRUCTIONS

WRITE A LETTER – SAVE A LIFE

- Encourage participants to write to Nasu expressing their solidarity or anything else they feel towards him. Ask them to think about what he might want to hear at this difficult time.

*c/o Amnesty International Nigeria
34, Colorado Street, off Alvan Ikoku Way
Maitama, Abuja, FCT Nigeria*

- Encourage them to write to Governor of Lagos State at the following address:

*H.E. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu
Governor of Lagos State, Governor's Office
Ikeja, Lagos State
Email: info@lagosstate.gov.ng*

Participants can use the template letters at www.amnesty.org/writeforrights, or you can give them the following guidelines to write a more personal letter:

TELL THE GOVERNOR SOMETHING TO MAKE THIS A PERSONAL LETTER:

- ▶ Tell him something about yourself
- ▶ Tell him what shocks you about the case

Demand that he investigates the forced eviction of Nasu's community, and to make sure they are resettled and given full compensation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WHAT IS FORCED EVICTION?

Forced eviction is the removal of people against their will from the homes or land they occupy without due process and other legal safeguards. Because evictions can have such devastating impacts on people's lives, they may only be carried out as a last resort.

Some people are more vulnerable to forced evictions than others, for example people living in informal settlements or those whose right to live there has not been formally recognised.

Before any eviction, government authorities must genuinely consult everyone who may be affected by the eviction to identify all feasible alternatives to evictions. People must be provided with adequate notice, legal remedies and compensation for their losses.

Governments must also make sure that no one is made homeless or vulnerable to human rights abuses because of an eviction. Those who are unable to provide for themselves must be given adequate alternative housing. These standards also apply when landlords or companies carry out evictions; the government has the responsibility for regulating how private actors carry out evictions.

It is not the use of force which makes an eviction a forced eviction, although force is often used: it is the failure to comply with all the legal safeguards.

WHEN MAY AN EVICTION BE CARRIED OUT?

Evictions can happen for a variety of reasons, such as when people continue to not pay their rent or when the land they are living on is needed for a public project such as building a hospital. However, governments must try to do everything they can to avoid or minimize evictions.

The authorities are required to adhere to appropriate procedural and legal safeguards. These include:

- Genuine consultation with the affected people.
- Adequate and reasonable notice provided to the community.
- Adequate alternative housing and compensation for all losses.



After the eviction at Otodo Gbame
© Justice & Empowerment Initiatives

- Safeguards on how evictions are carried out.
- Access to legal remedies and procedures, including access to legal aid where necessary.
- No one is rendered homeless or vulnerable to other human rights violations as a consequence of an eviction.

It is when these laws and conditions are not upheld that the action becomes a forced eviction and is a violation of human rights.

HOUSING AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to adequate housing is the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity. Housing means more than merely having a roof over one's head.

- Housing should be accessible and affordable to all without discrimination.
- Housing should provide people with adequate space, privacy and protection from rain, wind, and other weather conditions.
- Governments should take steps to ensure that housing is: located in safe areas, away from dangerous emissions or pollution; near transport links and employment opportunities; and respects cultural rights.
- People should be able to access water, sanitation and other facilities that are essential for health, security, comfort and nutrition. The right to adequate housing includes protection from forced evictions.

As well as violating the right to adequate housing, forced evictions can affect the enjoyment of other human rights:

- The right to work: people may lose their jobs or their businesses if they are relocated following a forced eviction to a place further away from employment opportunities.
- The right to health: if houses and settlements have limited or no safe drinking water and sanitation, for example, their residents may fall seriously ill.
- The right to education: children's schooling is often interrupted or completely stopped, and the trauma experienced following a forced eviction can also impair a child's capacity to attend classes.
- The right to life and the right to freedom from inhumane or degrading treatment: during forced evictions, people are frequently harassed or beaten and occasionally even subjected to inhuman treatment or killed. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to violence, including sexual violence, before, during and after an eviction.
- The right to liberty and security of person: human rights defenders working to protect the right of individuals and communities to adequate housing have been subjected to violence, arbitrary arrest, and arbitrary and prolonged detention.



After the eviction at Otodo Gbame
© MoAdebayo

NASU ABDULAZIZ AND THE OTODO GBAME COMMUNITY

HOMELESS BUT STILL HOPEFUL



© Nasu Abdulaziz

Nasu Abdulaziz is a dedicated Arsenal football fan. He also loves cycling – normal pastimes for a young person in Nigeria. Except that Nasu's circumstances are nowhere near normal. Right now, he's fighting for his right to a home.

In 2017, the night before the final eviction, Nasu was shot in the arm by hoodlums. The next day, the Lagos State Taskforce swarmed the community again, shooting at and teargassing them. Panicked residents fled, some jumping into the nearby lagoon and drowning.



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Nine people were believed to have been killed with another 15 still missing. At the end, 30,000 people were homeless, forced to live in canoes, under bridges or with friends and family.

When he was 23 and should have been enjoying life, men with guns and in bulldozers descended without warning on his community of Otodo Gbame in Nigeria's megacity, Lagos. Government forces set upon the homes of this century old community, crushing and burning down houses, shooting families, destroying livelihoods.



© Deji Akinpelu

Nasu, too, lost his home but he still has hope. Today, Nasu has joined the Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation, a mass movement of people like him, who demand to live in dignity and won't rest until they secure their right to a home.

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

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