


GOOD GOVERNANCE, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, WELLBEING, SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY



“Protesting for climate justice is a legal and moral right. The criminalisation and jailing of people for exercising this right is illegal under international law and morally indefensible.”

ISHR DIRECTOR PHIL LYNCH QUOTED IN THE GUARDIAN, 3 DECEMBER 2022

ISHR is deeply committed to principles of good governance, transparency and accountability.

- In 2022, ISHR's finances and financial management and reporting systems were independently audited by Beau HLB.
- The ISHR Board met on four occasions during 2022, with an average attendance of 72% per meeting, addressing issues including the external environment, governance, strategy, policy, risk, holistic security, human resources and staff wellbeing, programmatic outcomes and impacts, evaluations and learnings, and fundraising and financial resource management.
- The Board also convened two expert panel discussions to inform ISHR strategy and programmes. The first panel, in June, focused on the implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine for international human rights law and institutions, together with strategies to ensure principled responses to current and future human rights crises. The second panel, in December, focused on decolonising international human rights law, institutions and discourse.



ISHR is committed to addressing all forms of discrimination and promoting diversity and inclusion, both internally and through our programmatic support to women human rights defenders, defenders of LGBTI rights, and anti-racism defenders, among others.

- There were no formally reported breaches of ISHR's Code of Conduct or Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy in 2022.
- Of ISHR's Board members, six of nine are women, including the Chair and Vice Chair. The composition of ISHR's Board reflects organisational values of diversity and representation, with members from the Asia-Pacific, Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, North America, and Western and Eastern Europe. Their work as human rights defenders across various sectors – NGOs, NHRIs, academia, government, courts and private sector – brings diverse experience and expertise to ISHR.
- Four of six members of ISHR's Senior Management Team are women, while eight of ten members of the Directors' Group are women. ISHR's Executive Director is a member of the International Gender Champions initiative.
- ISHR's Working Group on Non-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion, which reports both to the Director and directly to the ISHR Board, continued to monitor and make recommendations on ways to better address structural and systemic discrimination and promote diversity and inclusivity. In collaboration with the Human Resources Manager, this resulted in an update of recruitment policies as well as the development of a mandatory staff training programme.

- In 2022, the Working Group commissioned an independent assessment of ISHR’s internal policies and practices on diversity, equity and inclusion, with a primary focus on anti-racism. The assessment gave ISHR a racial equity index score of 4.03/5, indicating an ‘environment that promotes racial equity with room for growth and learning’. Together with the Working Group, ISHR management, staff and Board are now considering key insights and recommendations from the assessment and developing an implementation plan.

We consider that holistic security and a focus on wellbeing are paramount to the safety and sustainability of defenders and their work, as well as that of ISHR staff.

- Throughout 2022, ISHR continued to strengthen its approach on these vital issues, implementing our Holistic Security Policy as well as advice and recommendations from our Working Group on Digital Security. During the year we experienced a significant increase in phishing attacks. We are working with external experts to further strengthen our digital security practices and update our IT infrastructure.
- We continued to implement our organisational Wellbeing Policy under the leadership of the Wellbeing Working Group. ISHR’s staff strategy retreat included dedicated sessions on wellbeing, project planning, workload management, and effective and empowering staff management.
- In her December report to the ISHR Board, ISHR’s Staff Representative noted ‘considerable improvement’ in workload management and wellbeing at ISHR in the post-pandemic period, while noting there remains scope for enhancement. The streamlining of practices on planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning (PMEL), as well as an institutional reorganisation into dynamic clusters, has contributed to this improvement.

We are committed to climate justice and to a healthy and sustainable environment. We stand with and support environmental human rights defenders. ISHR also recognises that it has a responsibility to the environment beyond legal and regulatory requirements.

- In 2022, we continued to implement our Environmental Policy, setting out our commitment to promote a healthy and sustainable environment, reduce our environmental impact, and continually improve our environmental performance including as a member of the [2050 today initiative](#).
- With the pandemic precipitating a period of digital innovation at ISHR, and with the continued evolution of hybrid work practices, we have considerably reduced both staff and partner emissions associated with our activities.
- ISHR’s [Strategic Framework 2021-25](#) identifies defenders working on issues of environmental justice and sustainability as a priority group for support.
- ISHR is proud to have contributed to the successful adoption of an historic resolution at the UN General Assembly in 2022 recognising the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.