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TOWARDS TRANSFORMATIVE SOLIDARITY: REFLECTIONS FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S GLOBAL TRANSITION PROGRAMME

*Sarah Jackson**

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, Amnesty International (“Amnesty”)—the world’s largest international human rights organization—made a big shift. A people’s movement of seven million members, supporters and activists, its International Secretariat was previously based in London. In a bold movement-led decision, Amnesty decided to go-global, dispersing its presence around the world through Regional Offices under a Global Transition Programme (GTP).¹ Most Amnesty members were, and still are, based in the Global North, but the organization is growing its membership elsewhere to become truly global.²

This Article looks at how this process metamorphosed Amnesty’s model of international solidarity. It looks at what it would take for Amnesty’s solidarity—and by extension that of other historically Northern-based international human rights groups—to become even more transformative. It is unique in two ways. First, it develops a new concept of the solidarity spectrum building on the emerging concept of transformative solidarity. This can be used to map collaborations between partners with different kinds of power—not only within the human rights movement, but also more broadly in civic, political, and social

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¹ Salil Shetty, *Globalising Amnesty International*, DISRUPT & INNOVATE (Feb. 23, 2016), <https://disrupt-and-innovate.org/globalising-amnesty-international/>.

² Telephone Interview with Michael Dixon, Head of Dig. Mktg., Amnesty Int’l (Apr. 8, 2020); E-mail from Netsanet Belay, Afr. Research & Advocacy Dir., Amnesty Int’l to Sarah Jackson, Deputy Reg’l Dir., Amnesty Int’l (Apr. 6, 2020, 01:06 PM) (on file with author).

organizing. Second, it is the first external study on the GTP from an Amnesty International Secretariat employee.

Human rights can liberate people from fear and want, but the human rights practice can also—sometimes unwittingly—entrench existing power relations. To be truly emancipatory, such relations must instead be transformed. The efficacy of old models of Global North pressure on Global South governments may also be fading. This partially stems from growing awareness of Global North governments picking and choosing which rights to respect.³ Together with the ethical imperative to respect the agency and leadership of those most affected by human rights abuses, new forms of power are needed to claim space and negotiate respect for human rights. Transformative solidarity—standing in solidarity with people taking their agency as a starting point, rather than acting for people—looks at how human rights can be domestically, cross-regionally, and transnationally reinterpreted as a language of liberation, ensuring that it does not reproduce the hierarchies that it stands against.

Doing this requires international human rights groups to work in a more horizontal and humble way. This Article is about *how* to do that. It is also about the tensions that emerge in deciding *when* to do so. These include choosing between “command and control” and participatory organizing models; adherence to strict policies and enabling broad-based engagement; brand and collaboration; and catering to a Global North-based audience and speaking to a more global one. Inevitably, this Article cannot resolve these tensions, but it proposes that recognizing these tensions is the first step. It constructs a framework and language to discuss them. It further suggests that international human rights organizations need to explicitly decide where to situate specific areas of work on the solidarity spectrum in a contextually grounded way.

Amnesty is the case study for this research, and the organization’s membership offers unique opportunities and challenges to transformative solidarity. But many of the Article’s reflections are relevant to other major international human rights groups too, and it intends to be a useful contribution to broader reform efforts. In September 2018, Human Rights Watch launched its Alliances and Partnerships Initiative.⁴ At the same time, Amnesty started

³ Salil Shetty, Former Sec’y Gen., Amnesty Int’l, Address at the London School of Economics: Decolonising Human Rights (May 22, 2018); Aryeh Neier, *Naming and Shaming: Still the Human Rights Movement’s Best Weapon*, OPEN GLOBAL RTS. (July 11, 2018), <https://www.openglobalrights.org/Naming-and-shaming-still-the-human-rights-movements-best-weapon/>.

⁴ *Noted Kenyan Activist Launches Partnership Initiative*, HUM. RTS. WATCH (Sept. 20, 2018, 4:00 AM), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/09/20/noted-kenyan-activist-launches-partnership-initiative>.

designing its next global strategic planning process based on *how* the organization works, rather than *what* it works on.⁵ How such organizations work—what they choose to work on, ways of working, and the solutions they prioritize—also affect the landscape and consciousness of human rights work more broadly.

This Article begins by describing the methodology used for the semi-structured interviews conducted within the Amnesty International Secretariat (staff servicing the movement), movement (the Amnesty membership base), and with other civil society and social movement activists. Part II follows with an exploration of different kinds of solidarity and an explanation of the solidarity spectrum, a new concept based on both the theory and practice on which this study is grounded.. Part III examines Amnesty’s solidarity model before the GTP, showing the premise on which it was based and demonstrating its limits. Shifting then to solidarity after the GTP, Part IV looks at how converging external and internal pressures created a paradigm shift in Amnesty’s solidarity model. It shows how with this increasingly transformative model, many Global North sections—national membership chapters—are contributing to building solidarity domestically, Regional Offices are being more selective about where international solidarity is strategic, and partnerships with less formal organizations are underway.

The latter half of this Article identifies what it would take for Amnesty—and by extension other traditionally Northern-based human rights organizations—to move towards a more transformative solidarity. Part V looks at barriers to transformative solidarity, including balancing collaboration with others subject to internal policies, brand management, and speed of response at critical moments. Part VI outlines how international human rights groups can act in transformative solidarity domestically by listening to partners, identifying when to step up and aside, considerations for aligning with social movements, the potential—and limits—of participatory research, and new domestic organizing models. Cross-regionally, it then looks at ways to flip the solidarity script through South–North and South–South solidarity. Transnationally, it looks at the role of global solidarity in responding to interconnected issues. Part VII argues that to transform solidarity among others, international human rights actors first need to transform solidarity among themselves. Solidarity must become a key feature of internal organizational culture and how staff relate to

⁵ Maro Pantazidou, *Three Questions on Designing a Global Human Rights Strategy in the Year 2019*, MEDIUM (Nov. 20, 2019), <https://medium.com/@maro.pantaz/three-questions-on-designing-a-global-human-rights-strategy-in-the-year-2019-76ed4c696c18>.

each other to prevent a cognitive dissonance between their work and how it is done.

I. METHODOLOGY

This Article is based on research as a Practitioner-in-Residence at Columbia Law School's Human Rights Institute from March to September 2018. The author was on sabbatical from Amnesty as Deputy Regional Director (Campaigns) for East Africa, the Horn and the Great Lakes. Though the organization's Senior Leadership Team reviewed the concept note, this project is independent and does not reflect an official organizational view.

As praxis, this work sits at the nexus of academic and activist knowledge. It is based on forty-three semi-structured interviews with twenty individuals from within Amnesty's International Secretariat; seven individuals from within the Amnesty movement, national offices and Secretary General-managed offices; and sixteen civil society or social movement activists. Interviews were conducted between May and October 2018, primarily by Skype with two people responding in writing. Interviewees' roles and affiliations are listed as they were at the time of interview or correspondence. Although the interviews have good geographical and gender representation, the interviews do not purport to be a representative sample. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, the research integrates concepts from political science, international relations, law, sociology, psychology, post-colonial studies, feminism and gender studies, and organizational development and leadership.

II. SOLIDARITY SPECTRUM

This study is grounded in a new concept, the "solidarity spectrum," ranging from charitable solidarity *for* people to more transformative solidarity *with* people. Solidarity is defined as political activism for social change based on unity of purpose.⁶ This may stem from a common identity, e.g., gender; common interests, e.g., workers who have professional interests or bargain collectively; or common moral, political, or faith-based beliefs.⁷ Responding to injustice or oppression, solidarity brings together people with shared commitment to a cause. Solidarity can be oppositional by resisting injustice, but also propositional

⁶ SALLY J. SCHOLZ, *POLITICAL SOLIDARITY* 5 (Penn State Univ. Press 2008) (discussing different levels and types of "solidarity"). This Article is primarily concerned with the type Scholz calls "political solidarity." *See id.*

⁷ *Introduction to PEOPLE POWER: UNARMED RESISTANCE AND GLOBAL SOLIDARITY* 153 (Howard Clark ed., 2009).

with a shared vision for change.⁸ Solidarity is both rationally based on logic and interests, as well as emotionally grounded in sentiments.⁹ These may include anger, hope, sympathy, empathy, fear, and friendship.¹⁰

One end of the solidarity spectrum has a unidirectional approach to solidarity rooted in charity. Activists in the Global North see victims or survivors of human rights abuses in the Global South as *objects* of their solidarity.¹¹ They take campaign actions *for* people or speak *for* them, replacing the agency of affected people and communities.¹² Such actions target third parties, largely Global North governments, aiming to affect change through a “boomerang effect.”¹³ This transnational advocacy model has information flowing from South to North, leading to state-to-state pressure from North to South.¹⁴

The other end of the spectrum—transformative solidarity—takes the agency of affected people and communities as its starting point.¹⁵ Activists take campaign actions *with* these groups to support each other in their interconnected struggles.¹⁶ Recognizing asymmetries of power, this approach is grounded in empathy and connectedness and tries to leverage collective strengths.¹⁷ It can be built domestically across people and organizations or transnationally using “multiple boomerangs” with pressure for human rights change coming from several geographic locations and directed towards multiple targets.¹⁸ Both are inclusive models of solidarity, engaging those who are not most affected by a

⁸ SCHOLZ, *supra* note 6, at 24.

⁹ *Id.* at 4.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 51.

¹¹ See Louis Bickford, *Transnational Advocacy and Human Rights Activism at the Global Middle*, in *TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS – TWENTY YEARS OF EVOLVING THEORY AND PRACTICE 78–79* (Peter Evans & César Rodríguez-Garavito eds., 2018).

¹² *See id.*

¹³ MARGARET E. KECK & KATHRYN SIKKINK, *ACTIVISTS BEYOND BORDERS: ADVOCACY NETWORKS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS* 36 (Cornell Univ. Press 1998).

¹⁴ Bickford, *supra* note 11, at 79.

¹⁵ See generally Deepa Lyster, *Beyond Hashtags and Slogans: When Solidarity Becomes Transformative*, BUILDING MOVEMENT PROJECT, https://www.buildingmovement.org/blog/entry/beyond_hashtags_and_slogans_when_solidarity_becomes_transformative (last visited Feb. 5, 2020).

¹⁶ Sara Koopman, *Imperialism Within: Can the Master’s Tools Bring Down Empire?*, 7 *ACME* 293, 294 (2008).

¹⁷ The centrality of empathy is influenced by HARSH MANDER, *LOOKING AWAY: INEQUALITY, PREJUDICE AND INDIFFERENCE IN NEW INDIA* 274 (2015). See Bickford, *supra* note 11 (for discussion generally around the comparative advantage of different INGOs, NGOs, and activist groups).

¹⁸ César Rodríguez-Garavito, *Multiple Boomerangs: New Models of Global Human Rights Advocacy*, *OPEN DEMOCRACY* (Jan. 21, 2015), <https://www.opendemocracy.net/openglobalrights/césar-rodr%C3%ADguezgaravito/multiple-boomerangs-new-models-of-global-human-rights-advoc>.

specific human rights concern. However, the first reinforces existing power inequities, and the second seeks to transform them.

Transformative solidarity is influenced by Sara Koopman's work on decolonizing solidarity movements. She writes:

If I do this work *for* others, rather than bringing me closer, it seems to set me apart from them, even above them, as someone with the power to reach down and help. . . . I enact my solidarity upon them. I turn them into the *object* of my solidarity. . . . Instead of “being” helpers in a way that makes us more of a person, and those helped less of one, I want to argue for “becoming” ever more *compas*, as part of a broader movement, supporting each other, all together “helping” to create a better world.¹⁹

Koopman uses the Spanish *compa*—short for *compañera*—meaning companion, colleague, and comrade. Seeing people experiencing human rights abuses as “victims” implies a “savior” is needed. Instead, she conceptualizes them as “the most affected” with others affected in different ways.²⁰ Similarly, Makau Mutua warns against Eurocentric conceptions of human rights struggles with “savages, victims, and saviors.”²¹ This is not a change in language for language sake, but new language reflecting a different approach respecting agency and transforming power dynamics. *Compas* are allies *with*—not *of*—those most affected in the same struggle from different positions.²² This is a reflective solidarity framed by Jodi Dean as “I ask you to stand by me over and against a third.”²³ It reflects a mutuality—a shared feeling and relationship. In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”²⁴ Human rights struggles are interconnected with “no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”²⁵

This is motivated by empathy, rather than sympathy, conceptualized by Harsh Mander as:

¹⁹ Koopman, *supra* note 16, at 294 (emphasis added).

²⁰ *Id.* at 294.

²¹ See generally Makau Mutua, *Savages, Victims, and Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights*, 42 HARV. INT'L L.J. 201, 201 (2001).

²² Koopman, *supra* note 16, at 295.

²³ JODI DEAN, SOLIDARITY OF STRANGERS: FEMINISM AFTER IDENTITY POLITICS 3 (1996).

²⁴ Martin Luther King Jr., *Letter from Birmingham Jail* (Apr. 16, 1963), in WHY WE CAN'T WAIT 77 (1964).

²⁵ See AUDRE LORDE, SISTER OUTSIDER: ESSAYS AND SPEECHES 138 (1st ed., 1984).

[E]galitarian compassion, because it does not place the giver on a pedestal above the receiver. The idea is that of two human beings, each equal in dignity and worth, but one in difficult circumstances, to whom the other reaches out with care and—importantly—with respect. Compassion is constructed through feeling the pain of the other as one’s own. The related idea of empathy involves both the cognitive act of imagination, of understanding the feelings of another human being; and the emotional, of actually experiencing the feelings of another.²⁶

Just as we act in solidarity *for* people, we often speak *for* them too. In Arundhati Roy’s words: “There’s really no such thing as the ‘voiceless.’ There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.”²⁷ Koopman cautions against believing that simply sharing more testimony from the most affected is enough. Instead of appropriating stories, solidarity also involves opening space for the “silenced” or “unheard” to speak.²⁸

While “transformative solidarity” is a core principle of some trade union movements and racial justice organizing, its meaning has rarely been theorized. Katherine Nastovski’s study of international solidarity work of Canadian trade unions bucks that trend. She sees transformative solidarity as a way of building working class power through solidarity between rank and file union members and allies in different contexts and countries. By supporting worker self-organizing and facilitating exchanges, this conception enables workers to draw connections between—and rethink the nature of—their own struggles, including across different countries.²⁹

Radical feminist scholars deconstruct the complexities of building solidarity across diversity. Instead of focusing on “common oppression,” they recognize that privileges and prejudices—including class and race—affect how women experience gender. Honest critique of diversity and difference is essential.³⁰ While actors may be united for a common goal, they do not experience human rights oppression in the same way. Acknowledging and respecting these asymmetries of material conditions and power is critical to building solidarity.³¹

²⁶ MANDER, *supra* note 17.

²⁷ Arundhati Roy, Sydney Peace Prize Lecture at the University of Sydney: Seymour Theatre Centre, (Nov. 4, 2004), <https://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=279>.

²⁸ Koopman, *supra* note 16, at 295–96.

²⁹ Katherine Nastovski, *Towards Transformative Solidarities: Wars of Position in the Making of Labour Internationalism in Canada* (Sept. 2016) (unpublished doctoral thesis, York University) (on file with YorkSpace Institutional Repository, York University).

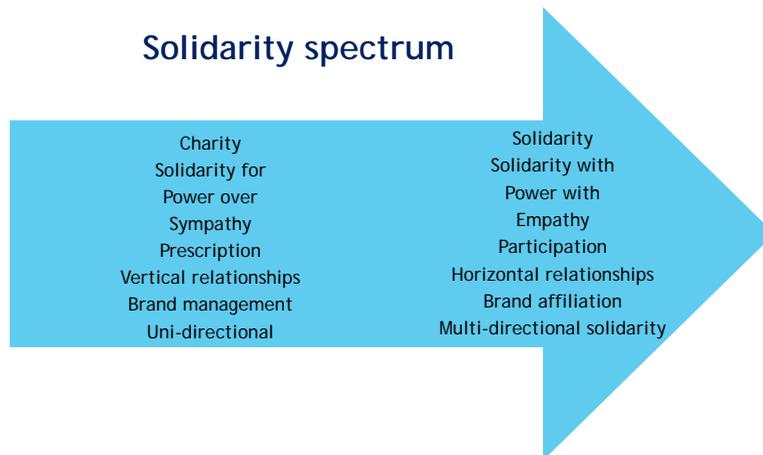
³⁰ BELL HOOKS, *FEMINIST THEORY FROM MARGINS TO CENTER* 65 (1st ed., 1984).

³¹ CHANDRA TALPADE MOHANTY, *FEMINISM WITHOUT BORDERS: DECOLONISING THEORY, PRACTICING SOLIDARITY* 7 (2003).

Solidarity includes accountability to rights holders or the most affected community. For Harsha Walia, “moving beyond a politics of solidarity towards a practice of decolonization” involves “taking leadership” from the community.³² She defines this as “being humble and honouring frontline voices of resistance, as well as offering tangible solidarity as needed and requested.”³³ Organizing requires a mandate from the community, recognition of the mandate’s limits, clear communications, and not just being “present” in crisis moments.³⁴ This is particularly important given the multiplicity of the affected people’s identities. Standpoint theory posits that your vantage point—the intersection of class, gender, race, disability amongst others—affects how you see and understand things.³⁵ Even when people are working on their country of origin or descent, given the multiplicity of identities people hold, solidarity still requires accountability to those most affected.³⁶

A. *Solidarity as Spoken by Activists*

A common thread runs through activist reflections on the meaning of solidarity, but they also show solidarity as personal and subjective. Contextually grounded, they change over time and reflect a person’s background, political outlook and lived experiences.



³² Harsha Walia, *Moving Beyond a Politics of Solidarity Towards a Practice of Decolonization*, COLOURS OF RESISTANCE (Sept. 25, 2018), <http://www.coloursofresistance.org/769/moving-beyond-a-politics-of-solidarity-towards-a-practice-of-decolonization>.

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ SCHOLZ, *supra* note 6, at 168–71.

³⁶ *See id.* at 171.

1. *What Is Solidarity?*

Samah Hadid, Amnesty’s Deputy Regional Director (Campaigns) for the Middle East, differentiated between solidarity as an experience and solidarity to an end. The latter is impact-driven, whereas experiential solidarity is a process where activists feel able to contribute regardless of the immediate outcome.³⁷ For Godiva Akullo—a Ugandan feminist activist involved in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) organizing—solidarity has to be public to hold meaning: “Solidarities or being an ally are public displays of affection, public claiming of other people’s struggles.”³⁸

2. *Why Do We Act in Solidarity?*

Irungu Houghton, Amnesty Kenya Director, sees Amnesty as acting “in solidarity with people at risk because it believes in their agency and innate worth.”³⁹ This speaks to people’s actions as important and solidarity coming in to bolster their morale and having a protective function.⁴⁰ Others reflected on the importance of strength in numbers and the collective power of bringing together diverse skills and resources.

While solidarity is political, it is also grounded in emotions of “communal care,” as a “demonstration of love,”⁴¹ or “indignation with love.”⁴² Feminist activists characterized solidarity as a linked liberation grounded in our shared humanity. As Gabriela Quevedo, Amnesty’s Lead Advisor on Organizational Learning and Accountability, shared the idea that “you’re here not to help me, but to be with me, because your liberation is tied to my liberation . . . [and it is not] because you are in a position of presumed power.”⁴³ Some interviewees felt there was a spoken or unspoken expectation of reciprocity if you were in a similar situation.⁴⁴ Raees Noorbhai, an activist formerly associated with Amnesty in South Africa, sees solidarity as a duty and recognizes the role played

³⁷ Telephone Interview with Samah Hadid, Deputy Reg’l Dir. (Campaigns) Middle E., Amnesty Int’l (July 25, 2018).

³⁸ Telephone Interview with Godiva Akullo, Deputy Dir., Chapter Four Uganda (June 13, 2018).

³⁹ Telephone Interview with Irungu Houghton, Dir., Amnesty Kenya (July 18, 2018).

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ Telephone Interview with Makmid Kamara, Acting Head of the ESCR Team, Amnesty Int’l (June 6, 2018).

⁴² Telephone Interview with Dardan Isufi, Member, Amnesty Int’l Can. (July 16, 2018).

⁴³ Telephone Interview with Gabriela Quevedo, Senior Learning & Impact Advisor, Amnesty Int’l (May 25, 2018).

⁴⁴ Telephone Interview with Makmid Kamara, *supra* note 41; Telephone Interview with Heba Morayef, Middle E. & N. Afr. Reg’l Dir., Amnesty Int’l (June 14, 2018).

by international solidarity in South Africa's liberation from apartheid.⁴⁵ During his term as chairperson of the Wits University Amnesty chapter, the chapter's activism sought to embody this principle of "reciprocal solidarity."⁴⁶

3. *How Do We Act in Solidarity?*

Interviewees spoke of the dilemmas of navigating power relations when acting in solidarity. Some saw power relations as unequal, others saw differently valued types of power with those directly affected by abuses having greater knowledge, a more authentic voice, and power in people, and Amnesty having a membership, more financial resources, and a brand that can open (and close) doors. Irungu Houghton said that Amnesty "will always be working with organizations more marginalized without seeking to erode their voices. We have to be very careful with 400 years of [the] missionary modernizing agenda . . . As we push forward, we need to use our brand, our reputation, and [our] capacity to open up space for others."⁴⁷ The responsibility to act not in charity, but in a transformative way comes through.

B. *Global South and North*

This study charts the dispersal of Amnesty's presence through Regional Offices, primarily in the Global South. Global South is used to describe non-European, postcolonial countries,⁴⁸ and countries lower on the Human Development Index. This Article will not use "Global South" to mean the southern hemisphere. Rooted in the legacy of European colonialism, the wealth of many Global North countries was built off the violent extraction of Global South resources.⁴⁹ Asymmetries of power are also reflected in the disproportionate representation of Global North countries in international institutions and in the concurrent formal power and soft influence to set the rules of global, political security and economic diplomacy.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Telephone Interview with Raees Noorbhai, Student & Former Chairperson, Amnesty Int'l Student Chapter, Wits Univ. (July 12, 2018).

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ Telephone Interview with Irungu Houghton, *supra* note 39.

⁴⁸ Jean Comaroff & John L. Comaroff, *Theory from the South: Or, How Euro-America Is Evolving Toward Africa*, 22 ANTHROPOLOGICAL F. 113, 113 (2012).

⁴⁹ *See id.* at 123.

⁵⁰ On decision making with the United Nations, see UN General Assembly, *Security Council Must Expand, Adapt to Current Realities or Risk Losing Legitimacy, Delegates Tell General Assembly Amid Proposals for Reform*, GA/12217, (Nov. 25, 2019) <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/ga12217.doc.htm>. On voting powers in the World Bank, see *Voting Powers*, WORLD BANK, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/leadership/votingpowers> (last visited Apr. 9, 2020), and on the top eight countries' voting power, see World Bank Group, *Top 8 Countries Voting Power*, WORLD BANK: FINANCES, <https://finances.worldbank.org/>

This binary distinction obscures numerous complexities. It negates power imbalances between Global North and Global South countries. Similarly, it conceals inequality, downplays class cleavages, and masks the daily struggles of people living in poverty in the Global North and the privilege of Global South elites.⁵¹ Antonio Gramsci's work on cultural hegemony and Indian subaltern scholars have highlighted the importance of building analysis from the bottom-up, rooted in the experiences of the marginalized.⁵² Applying a similar lens to human rights work, Salil Shetty, Amnesty's former Secretary General, wrote that North–South analyses “tend to miss . . . the historical connection between the human rights system and the element of people's struggles against oppression. The whole purpose of human rights demands that our vantage point is not top-down, but bottom-up.”⁵³ Furthermore, neither the conceptual nor geographical understanding of this dualism is static. Over the past decade, the upward trajectory of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa led to greater optimism about prospective economic growth in some Global South countries.⁵⁴ Similarly, countries in Europe have experienced the effects of austerity and growing inequality.⁵⁵ In analyzing Amnesty's dispersal of its global presence, this Article employs this binary categorization, recognizing its limitations and nuancing analysis through the above critiques.

III. AMNESTY'S OLD MODEL OF SOLIDARITY

Before the GTP most International Secretariat staff were in London, with some in Kampala, Hong Kong, and Paris. They would travel for short periods, often about two weeks, before returning to London—variously critiqued as the “exploring and coming back,” “parachute,” or “fly-in-fly-out” model. Steve Crawshaw, former Director of Amnesty's Office of the Secretary General,

Shareholder-Equity/Top-8-countries-voting-power/udm3-vzz9 (last visited Apr. 9, 2020).

⁵¹ Andrea Wolvers et al., *Introduction to CONCEPTS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH: VOICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD 2* (Glob. S. Studies Ctr. 2015), https://kups.uni-koeln.de/6399/1/voices012015_concepts_of_the_global_south.pdf.

⁵² See Kaela Jubas, *Reading Antonio Gramsci as a Methodologist*, 9 INT'L J. QUALITATIVE METHODS 225, 227 (2010) (stating that Gramsci “center[ed] research on the experiences of marginalized groups.”).

⁵³ Address at the London School of Economics: Decolonising Human Rights, *supra* note 3.

⁵⁴ Alvaro Mendez, *Discussion on the Global South*, in CONCEPTS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH: VOICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD, 2 (Glob. S. Studies Ctr. 2015), https://kups.uni-koeln.de/6399/1/voices012015_concepts_of_the_global_south.pdf.

⁵⁵ Oxfam, *A Cautionary Tale: The True Cost of Austerity and Inequality in Europe*, (Sept. 2013), https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/bp174-cautionary-tale-austerity-inequality-europe-120913-en_1_1.pdf.

contrasted this with the Regional Office model of we are “not just spiritually close, but geographically close.”⁵⁶

From the 1980s until 2001, Amnesty’s Work on Own Country Rule (WOOC), ostensibly designed to prevent accusations of bias, prevented staff from working on their own countries.⁵⁷ This limited the organization’s work domestically and constrained possibilities for sections to work on human rights issues at home.⁵⁸ WOOC was replaced with an impartiality and independence policy in 2004, followed by a conflict of interest policy in 2007. Although there was a long-standing practice of some staff working on other countries in the same region as their own, it was not until the GTP from 2013 onwards that staff were increasingly hired to cover their own country.⁵⁹ WOOC’s legacy is still felt, as some long-standing Amnesty members are driven by an interest in injustice abroad and sections face the trade-off of focusing on their interests versus growing membership engagement on domestic issues.

During this period, Amnesty primarily engaged Global North members to express international solidarity with struggles in the Global South and to lobby those governments. Based on the premise that change could be driven from outside, Amnesty relied on behavioral change coming from naming and shaming.⁶⁰ Often accompanied by advocacy from Global North donors, this approach used development assistance, residual colonial ties, as well as the soft power of the United States and European countries as leverage to extract human rights concessions from Global South governments.⁶¹ This outside-focused approach capitalized on—and reinforced—unequal, postcolonial power dynamics. The reliance of human rights advocacy on leveraging state agendas is often understated.⁶²

⁵⁶ Telephone Interview with Steve Crawshaw, Policy & Advocacy Dir., Freedom from Torture (June 7, 2018).

⁵⁷ Amnesty Int’l, *International Council Meeting Decision 16: Practical Application of the Work on Own Country Policy*, (1999); Amnesty Int’l, *International Council Meeting Decision 13: Work on Own Country*, (2001).

⁵⁸ Telephone Interview with Phillippe Hensmans, Dir., Amnesty Belg. (July 11, 2018).

⁵⁹ Amnesty Int’l, *Impartiality and Independence Policy*, POL 30/020/2005 (June 2015) (internal document on file with the author); Amnesty Int’l, *Conflict of Interest Policy* (July 25, 2007) (internal document on file with the author); E-mail from Philip Luther, Research, Advocacy & Branch Office Dir., Middle E. & N. Afr. Reg’l Office, Amnesty Int’l to Author (April 8, 2020, 11:08 AM) (on file with author).

⁶⁰ Kim Dongwook, *Mobilizing “Third-Party Influence”: The Impact of Amnesty International’s Naming and Shaming*, in *THE POLITICS OF LEVERAGE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS* 61–62 (H.R. Friman ed., 2015).

⁶¹ Sarah Jackson, *Revisioning Avenues for Advocacy*, Amnesty Int’l (May 2017) (internal document on file with the author).

⁶² This draws inspiration from Kayum Ahmed’s conceptualization of “human rights as sovereignty,” looking at how the state, conservative civil society organizations, and businesses entrench power through

International solidarity was—and is—an important form of support and protection. As Netsanet Belay, a former prisoner of conscience in Ethiopia and now Amnesty’s Africa Research and Advocacy Director, recounts:

When friends, family members and colleagues were silenced and others were reluctant or afraid to speak out, I felt alone, abandoned and that my truth will never be heard, especially in the first few months in jail. This soon changed when I started to receive messages from all over the world, when people started speaking on my behalf and when I felt people were sharing my pain and outrage. This was really what I treasured most, knowing that I’m not alone in the struggle and the sense of sharing the pain and outrage.⁶³

Such international protective solidarity also manifested visually. When Gégé Katana, a women’s rights activist from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was at risk, she covered her walls in solidarity postcards from Amnesty members and invited local officials to see the extent of the international support she had.⁶⁴ Many interviewees see international solidarity as still enormously valuable. Reflecting on past work, Kayum Ahmed, former CEO of the South African Human Rights Commission said, “When you had Amnesty behind you, you had a huge amount of credibility . . . certain things shouldn’t change.”⁶⁵

Despite the focus on international solidarity, Amnesty’s internal policies guiding collaboration suggest that the organization also saw work with partners at a domestic level as contributing to human rights change. A 1996 policy envisages collaboration with a wide range of actors, including trade unions, professional organizations, women’s, youth, faith-based groups, and environmental groups, and academics.⁶⁶ While it sees this work as “mutually beneficial,” it focuses on how partnerships can contribute to Amnesty’s work, rather than how Amnesty can work in solidarity with others.⁶⁷ Partnerships are formalized under this policy to protect “independence, impartiality, integrity, and credibility.”⁶⁸ If International Secretariat staff spoke at public meetings

narratives rooted in human rights language. Kayum Ahmed, *Decolonizing Human Rights: Sovereignty, Tactics, and Disruption*, OXFORD HUM. RTS. HUB: BLOG (Jan. 9, 2017), <https://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/decolonizing-human-rights-sovereignty-tactics-and-disruption/>.

⁶³ Telephone Interview with Netsanet Belay, Afr. Research & Advocacy Dir., Amnesty Int’l (June 4, 2018).

⁶⁴ Telephone Interview with Phillipe Hensmans, *supra* note 58.

⁶⁵ Telephone Interview with Kayum Ahmed, Former CEO, S. Afr. Human Rights Comm’n (May 31, 2018).

⁶⁶ Amnesty Int’l, *Policy and Guidelines on Cooperative Activities Between Amnesty International and the Human Rights Movement*, AI Index ORG 20/01/96 (July 16, 1996), at 3–4.

⁶⁷ *Id.* at 2–3, 7, 11.

⁶⁸ *Id.* at 3.

convened by other NGOs, or endorsed their statements, this appeared to require approval from the Secretary General.⁶⁹ Sections planning joint press conferences or public meetings needed approval from their boards.⁷⁰ By 2012, a year before the GTP was rolled out, this policy was replaced with a guide on “partnering for change.”⁷¹ While primarily focused on formal partnerships, and relatively risk averse, this guide was framed more in terms of how Amnesty can learn from others, jointly identify priorities, and contribute to strengthening human rights constituencies.⁷² Both the 1996 and 2012 documents speak to the importance of sharing credit with partners—something we return to in the section on brand affinity.

International solidarity enabled Global North citizens to support Global South struggles, but this “often became a substitute for *agency*.”⁷³ The turning point for Amnesty thinking more deeply about participation and agency seems to have been the Demand Dignity campaign launched in 2009.⁷⁴ Tackling violations that make and keep people poor, it brought economic, social, and cultural rights closer to mainstream Amnesty work.⁷⁵ It focused on rights violations linked to living in slums and informal settlements, preventable maternal mortality, and corporate accountability.⁷⁶ The campaign sought recognition (there was recognition on paper but not in practice) that these rights are human rights, that freedom from fear and want are indivisible, and that states must respect, protect, and fulfill those rights.⁷⁷ At the micro-level, it pushed governments to place affected people’s needs at the heart of decisions and to progressively realize these rights.⁷⁸ Citizens were seen as change agents, claiming rights and holding their governments accountable.⁷⁹ Around this time, Amnesty’s Activism and Youth Unit began training staff on active participation. Acting Head of the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR) Team,

⁶⁹ *Id.* at 5.

⁷⁰ *Id.* at 5–6.

⁷¹ Amnesty Int’l, *Partnering for Change: A Guide to Working Effectively with Others in Campaigning*, AI Index ACT 10/005/2012 (Nov. 2012).

⁷² *Id.*

⁷³ Address at the London School of Economics: Decolonising Human Rights, *supra* note 3 (emphasis in original).

⁷⁴ Courtney Majocha, *Michael Bochenek Interview, Part I*, HARVARD HUM. RTS. J. (May 15, 2012), <https://harvardhrj.com/2012/05/michael-bochenek-interview-part-i/>; E-mail from Savio Carvalho, Glob. Advocacy & Campaigns Specialist (& Dir. of Demand Dignity & Econ., Soc. & Cultural Rights Programme, Amnesty Int’l, 2010–2014), to Author (Apr. 7, 2020, 12:11 PM) (on file with author).

⁷⁵ See Majocha, *supra* note 74.

⁷⁶ *Id.*

⁷⁷ *Id.*

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ *Id.*

Makmid Kamara—who was also on Amnesty’s Nigeria team before the GTP—said: “Grassroots engagement is one of the most important elements in our work You can’t speak on behalf of people without creating a space where they can talk about their experiences and what that means The only way our work will have longevity is when we engage with the community.”⁸⁰

IV. SOLIDARITY IN AMNESTY POST-GTP

The GTP dispersed Amnesty’s presence through Regional Offices. This was more than a geographical shift. A Brazilian advocate who followed Amnesty’s transition closely pictured this as Amnesty no longer “speaking with a megaphone out.”⁸¹ Heba Morayef, Amnesty’s Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, has a comparative lens from her work before and after the GTP. She felt an in-country presence led to “shared feelings, values, and reciprocity” with domestic civil society colleagues.⁸²

Premised on the idea that change would increasingly come from within countries, the GTP envisaged people claiming their rights in new ways. This also responded to what Amnesty saw as shifting global power dynamics marked by the decline of American hegemony, a more multipolar world, and the growth of regional powers.⁸³ The new Amnesty sought to grow membership in the Global South to build a truly global movement. Greater human rights impact and relevance would be achieved through close collaboration with domestic human rights organizations and by responding more quickly and effectively to abuses. Regional Offices would engage in robust advocacy with domestic governments. Where domestic civil society organizations were under too much threat to be vocal, Regional Offices would leverage their concerns. More focus on regional institutions would eventually cultivate regional human rights leadership.

While the GTP’s vision was quite prescient, it did not anticipate the extent and pace of declining Northern influence. Rolled out between 2013 and 2018, the GTP was implemented in a different external context to the one in which it was conceived. Governments that had previously championed human rights—in name if not always in deeds—were increasingly demonizing human rights and polarizing publics. President Trump’s election eroded U.S. support for

⁸⁰ Telephone Interview with Makmid Kamara, *supra* note 41.

⁸¹ Telephone Interview with Lucia Nader, Consultant for Founds., Former Exec. Dir., Conectas Human Rights (June 25, 2018).

⁸² Telephone Interview with Heba Morayef, *supra* note 44.

⁸³ Increasing multipolarity, the international influence of emerging powers, and their engagement on human rights issues is contested within academic writing. *See* Bickford, *supra* note 11, at 79–80, 85.

multilateral institutions.⁸⁴ The United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union reflected rising anti-immigration rhetoric and fragmenting social cohesion.⁸⁵ The impacts of austerity began to affect poorer communities disproportionately across Europe, especially in Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and the UK.⁸⁶ A wave of increasingly populist right-wing political parties gained prominence in Europe.⁸⁷ One of many countries to do so, India intensified their politics of demonization against student activists, journalists, academics and human rights defenders.⁸⁸

A. *Building Solidarity Domestically*

Global North sections organically focused on building solidarity domestically more and more.⁸⁹ In Poland, where the government, elected in 2015, tried to exert political control over the judiciary, cracked down on peaceful protestors, and criminalized peaceful protest; Amnesty Poland pioneered new form of activities, including observation of peaceful protest organized by different social movements.⁹⁰ With support from the Regional Office for Europe, Amnesty Poland had conversations to define space and took a conscious decision to be supportive of domestic civil society initiatives and more informal women's groups, rather than playing a lead role themselves. When its director was targeted in a xenophobic online smear campaign, after calling for investigations into the use of tear gas during a protest, Polish civil society mounted a solidarity campaign with Amnesty.⁹¹

⁸⁴ Alex Pascal, *Against Washington's 'Great Power' Obsession*, ATLANTIC (Sept. 23, 2019), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/09/multilateralism-nearly-dead-s-terrible-news/598615/>.

⁸⁵ Reihan Salam, *Why Immigration Pushed Britons to Brexit*, SLATE (June 24, 2016, 3:39 PM), <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2016/06/immigration-and-brexit-how-a-rising-tide-of-european-immigrants-fueled-the-leave-vote.html> (explaining the tension between anti-immigration politics and core European Union principles in the United Kingdom).

⁸⁶ Oxfam, *supra* note 55.

⁸⁷ Ian Bremmer, *These 5 Countries Show How the European Far-Right Is Growing in Power*, TIME (Sept. 13, 2018), <https://time.com/5395444/europe-far-right-italy-salvini-sweden-france-germany/>.

⁸⁸ See Amnesty Int'l, *'Politics of Demonization' Breeding Division and Fear*, AMNESTY INT'L (Feb 22, 2017 12:01 AM), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/02/amnesty-international-annual-report-201617/>.

⁸⁹ Telephone Interview with David Griffiths, Dir. of the Sec'y Gen.'s Office, Amnesty Int'l (May 24, 2018); Telephone Interview with Daniel Valls, Youth & Activism Coordinator for Eur., Amnesty Int'l (July 16, 2018).

⁹⁰ Rick Lyman, *In Poland, an Assault on the Courts Provokes Outrage*, N.Y. TIMES (July 19, 2017), <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/19/world/europe/poland-courts-law-and-justice-party.html>; AMNESTY INT'L, POLAND: ON THE STREETS TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS HARASSMENT, SURVEILLANCE, AND PROSECUTION OF PROTESTERS (2017).

⁹¹ ZUZANNA WARSO ET AL., INFORMATION ON THE RECENT CHALLENGES FACED BY HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN POLAND (2016) (prepared for the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders).

Global North sections are also piloting new organizing models to engage members on domestic issues. Michael Quinn, a community organizer from Amnesty U.K., explained how Amnesty is “moving closer to the ground” in the United Kingdom too.⁹² They are creating rights-holder-led activist structures which serve the community’s agenda first, and Amnesty’s agenda second.⁹³ Amnesty U.K. staff still have heavy involvement in the network, both to ensure activists work within broad policies and to manage risk. In this way, it falls short of “train and trust” distributed organizing models, in which activists are trained and developed to support other activists to mobilize people but is a new approach to enable activists to cocreate campaigns.⁹⁴

B. Demanding Less International Solidarity

Global South Regional Offices decided to be more selective about when to request international solidarity. Initially, Erika Guevara-Rosas, America’s Regional Director, was resistant to connect with sections in the North. She recounts wanting to move away from the “charitable approach.”⁹⁵ Later realizing that few organizations can match Amnesty’s level of global connections, her team is now increasingly seeing where engagement of Global North sections can supplement their collaboration with movements in the region.⁹⁶ Samah Hadid, Deputy Regional Director (Campaigns) for the Middle East, also requests Global North section engagement where she thinks it can be effective or impactful, as opposed to where it would primarily create experiences for Global North activists to contribute regardless of the outcome.⁹⁷ Quevedo echoed the need for Amnesty to identify where solidarity at scale could be counterproductive, as solidarity is “so central to our model, that perhaps it could blind us.”⁹⁸ Some Regional Offices went through a period of crafting their identities, strategizing, and then figuring out the place of international solidarity within this.⁹⁹

This shift has been more complicated for Northern sections with members motivated by human rights abroad. In the Netherlands, the section reports that

⁹² Telephone Interview with Michael Quinn, Cmty. Organizer, Amnesty U.K. (July 10, 2018).

⁹³ *Id.*

⁹⁴ For discussion of train and trust organizing models compared to mobilization, see AMNESTY INT’L, REFUGEE RIGHTS ACTION LAB LEARNING DOCUMENT (2017), <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/EUR0196802019ENGLISH.pdf>.

⁹⁵ Telephone Interview with Erika Guevara-Rosas, Ams. Dir., Amnesty Int’l (June 26, 2018).

⁹⁶ *Id.*

⁹⁷ Telephone Interview with Samah Hadid, *supra* note 37.

⁹⁸ Telephone Interview with Gabriela Quevedo *supra* note 43.

⁹⁹ Telephone Interview with Erika Guevara-Rosas *supra* note 95; E-mail from Netsanet Belay, Research & Advocacy Dir., Amnesty Int’l to Author (April 6, 2020) (on file with author).

96% of people know about Amnesty, and Amnesty Netherlands has the highest per capita membership in the world after Iceland and Norway.¹⁰⁰ Despite some new innovative domestic work, Paul Helsloot, Media and Political Affairs Director for Amnesty International Netherlands estimates 98% of his section's membership actions are focused on other countries.¹⁰¹ Regional Offices, he felt, focused increasingly on locally relevant work, reducing scope for international media work, which is crucial to mobilizing their activists. Amnesty Netherlands remains introspective about when direct pressure is useful, and it is open to new ideas about rethinking solidarity.¹⁰²

Converging external and internal pressures contributed to a paradigm shift in Amnesty's international solidarity work.

C. *Solidarity Through New Partnerships*

New partnerships emerged with some Regional Offices starting to collaborate with less formal organizations. Increasingly, staff were thinking about where to situate Amnesty within the wider ecosystem of human rights actors. Driven also in part by the external context, teams recognized that the "problems [we are] dealing with [are] so structural and systemic, [that] unless [we] target them as a wider group of civil society, we won't get anywhere."¹⁰³ This recognition mirrored the intent of the GTP to "work with communities affected to lay claim to their rights."¹⁰⁴ Erika Guevara-Rosas recounts how this led to a shift in working with more rural communities, indigenous organizations, and social movements. The Americas Regional Office saw "how complex solidarity can be" by challenging themselves and being challenged by external actors in spaces that were "not necessarily comfortable or clear."¹⁰⁵ Similarly, the Europe Regional Office entered into more complex spaces, working with organizations without hierarchical structures, including people in the streets. Recognizing that meanings of solidarity are situational, it called this project "Solidarity According to Women in Europe."¹⁰⁶ It involved the Europe Regional Office opening its mind on who works with the Office, who designs the project, and who participates in it.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ Telephone Interview with Paul Helsloot, Media & Political Affairs Dir., Amnesty Int'l Neth. (July 18, 2018).

¹⁰¹ *Id.*

¹⁰² *Id.*

¹⁰³ Telephone Interview with Fotis Filippou, Deputy Reg'l Dir. (Campaigns), Eur. (June 29, 2018).

¹⁰⁴ Telephone Interview with David Griffiths, *supra* note 89.

¹⁰⁵ Telephone Interview with Erika Guevara-Rosas, *supra* note 95.

¹⁰⁶ Telephone Interview with Fotis Filippou, *supra* note 103.

¹⁰⁷ *Id.*

D. *Metamorphosis of Amnesty's Model*

Amnesty's solidarity model is metamorphosing as a result of the GTP. The past model of solidarity is waning; the newer model of solidarity it will transform into is still developing.

At the heart of this struggle are unresolved questions about Amnesty's identity. Is Amnesty the change-maker itself or is it an intermediary that invests in citizens to make change? And if the latter, are these citizens organized as Amnesty members or as different constituencies? Does Amnesty want to be at the forefront or is it a facilitator? Is Amnesty trying to grow the membership, develop new ways of working with others through alliances and partnerships, or both?¹⁰⁸ Approaches will vary region to region based on challenges and opportunities, but interviewees—internal and external—generally called for greater clarity, here.

Desire for solidarity to be underpinned by a more transformative vision of long-term social change also emerged. Some interviewees felt that Amnesty, and other international human rights organizations, were often caught up in immediate violations to the detriment of the long view of change needed. They variously likened this to being “firefighters” and “paramedics” reacting to human rights violations or “investing in managing conflict” rather than addressing the drivers and causes of these violations or having a longer-term vision for change.¹⁰⁹ Mona Younis sees this as a reflection of an implicit assumption that the cumulative effect of small successes will get the human rights community to where we want to be.¹¹⁰ However, she sees small gains being offset by other losses leading to a “constant struggle . . . like quicksand and still sinking” with international human rights groups “having lost sight of the long view, the big picture, which requires other kinds of work.”¹¹¹ A long-term, social change-based approach necessitates working in close collaboration with partners¹¹² and others who seek human rights, while remaining vigilant in

¹⁰⁸ Telephone Interview with Ben Phillips, Founding Dir., Fight Inequality All. (May 29, 2018); Telephone Interview with Mona Younis, Strategic Programming, Planning & Evaluations Consultant (July 11, 2018); Telephone Interview with MingYu Hah, Deputy Reg'l Dir. (Campaigns), Se. Asia, Amnesty Int'l (July 10, 2018); Telephone Interview with Biraj Patnaik, Reg'l Dir., S. Asia, Amnesty Int'l (July 16, 2018).

¹⁰⁹ Telephone Interview with Mona Younis, *supra* note 108; Telephone Interview with Irungu Houghton, *supra* note 39; Telephone Interview with Waleed Alahiri, Head of N.Y. Office, Sana'a Ctr. for Strategic Studies (July 10, 2018).

¹¹⁰ Telephone Interview with Mona Younis, *supra* note 108.

¹¹¹ *Id.*

¹¹² Telephone Interview with MingYu Hah, *supra* note 108.

safeguarding progress.¹¹³ Conversely, in the “firefighting” mode it is much easier to feel the need to move fast and alone.

For Amnesty to be a solidarity platform, more can be done to develop collective ownership on issues that resonate with people most affected by violations. One of the founders of South Africa’s Fees Must Fall student movement, who sits on Amnesty’s Africa Regional Advisory Group, reflected “it is not the membership that binds [Amnesty], but collective struggles and beliefs. In South Africa, people don’t see Amnesty as a movement, they see it as an international NGO.”¹¹⁴ Broadening our idea of who Amnesty is from paid professional experts to volunteer solidarity witnesses,¹¹⁵ and reconceptualizing who we work with by “stepping out of the [human rights] aristocracy” would contribute to this.¹¹⁶ There was general consensus among interviewees that investing in alliances would bring new people into the movement, but requires greater flexibility and more openness to unbranded work.

V. BARRIERS TO MORE TRANSFORMATIVE SOLIDARITY

Part V looks at barriers to more transformative solidarity, including balancing collaboration with others with internal policies, brand management, and speed of response at critical moments.

A. *Balancing Collaboration with Amnesty Policies*

Amnesty has internal policies governing the organization’s positions, largely in line with and interpreting international human rights and international humanitarian law. Some more contentious policies are the outcome of discussions within the Amnesty movement. Positions taken across the International Secretariat are reviewed by the legal and policy team, largely based in London, to ensure consistency across the organization.¹¹⁷ Together with regional management approval of documents, this also acts as a check against politically partisan views.¹¹⁸

This tension between centralized policy and regional influence came through in some interviews with external actors. Mona Younis, a strategy consultant,

¹¹³ Telephone Interview with Mona Younis, *supra* note 108.

¹¹⁴ Telephone Interview with Shaeera Kalla, Indep. Expert, Afr. Reg’l Advisory Grp., Amnesty Int’l (June 28, 2018).

¹¹⁵ Telephone Interview with Ben Phillips, *supra* note 108.

¹¹⁶ Telephone Interview with Biraj Patnaik, *supra* note 108.

¹¹⁷ AMNESTY INT’L, QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES (2017).

¹¹⁸ *Id.*

said that in her work she heard views that suggested the “move South has been brilliant and increased legitimacy. And although Amnesty works well with local partners, it is not yet clear whether decisions or calls are now generated there or continue to come from London. Something’s still missing.”¹¹⁹ Ben Phillips felt that if Amnesty were a force of solidarity, it would act differently—“you can’t sound like a lawyer with a checklist, you have to sound like a friend.”¹²⁰ Both Amnesty’s positions and document review process make it harder for the organization to be flexible with language and quick in taking positions or development outputs in coalition working with others, but add strength to the legal analysis of publications. One section director described this as a “balance between collaborating with others and law and policy.”¹²¹

Policies shape the contours of when and how Amnesty—both as the International Secretariat and the membership—can express solidarity. Raees Noorbhai was formerly the Chairperson of the Amnesty International chapter at Wits University in South Africa, a group with a student activist base and a strong focus on solidarity with Palestinians.¹²² By condemning what its members saw as “apartheid” in Israel, and calling for economic boycott, divestment, and sanctions against the country, the chapter went beyond Amnesty’s policy to ask states to stop financially sustaining Israel’s illegal settlement policy.¹²³ Noorbhai felt a duty to support the Palestinian call for boycotts, given South Africa’s experience of international boycotts of South African goods during apartheid.¹²⁴ When he was told that the chapter could not take this position, which had popular support from their members, Noorbhai resigned, seeing Amnesty’s International Secretariat as “infringing upon the autonomy of democratic student chapters” in “seeking to reverse progressive positions.”¹²⁵ With each policy position, there are trade-offs; had Amnesty taken the reverse position would have also affected with whom it could collaborate.

New forms of “human rights as disruption”—approaches to rights claims often constructed outside existing legal frameworks—are emerging in the Global South. Kayum Ahmed looks at people in the Global South as architects

¹¹⁹ Telephone Interview with Mona Younis, *supra* note 108.

¹²⁰ Telephone Interview with Ben Phillips, *supra* note 108.

¹²¹ Telephone Interview with Phillipe Hensmans, *supra* note 58.

¹²² Telephone Interview with Raees Noorbhai, *supra* note 45.

¹²³ AMNESTY INT’L, BAN ISRAELI SETTLEMENT GOODS CAMPAIGN: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 4 (2017), https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/Israeli-settlements-good-ban-FAQs-FINAL_0.pdf.

¹²⁴ *Sanctions and the South African Economy*, OVERSEAS DEV. INST. (Dec. 1986), <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/6704.pdf>.

¹²⁵ Telephone Interview with Raees Noorbhai, *supra* note 45.

of human rights discourses, particularly socioeconomic rights.¹²⁶ Now that people are increasingly questioning the exclusion of socio-economic inequality as a human rights issue, Amnesty will experience new challenges in reconciling policy with collaboration. Ben Phillips, cofounder of the Fight Inequality Alliance, sees Amnesty acting sometimes as a “referee” that records violations of treaties after they happen and “if solidarity were at the core, [they] would get involved upstream, be more visibly involved on one side.”¹²⁷ Ashfaq Khalfan, Amnesty’s Legal and Policy Director, does see inequality as a human rights issue and explained that while Amnesty would not support or oppose capitalism, socialism, or neoliberalism, it could oppose any policy prescriptions based on these ideologies that directly contravene human rights.¹²⁸ As such, the organization must increase its work on inequality, including by saying that states need to mobilize more resources through taxation where this is needed to guarantee socioeconomic rights.¹²⁹

For Amnesty to alter its solidarity work to include more collaboration and mobilization, it is important to foster more movement engagement with the policymaking process. The Law and Policy Directorate has started identifying which policies need review.¹³⁰ A process for reviewing contentious policies, developed in 2017, highlights the importance of taking into account regional and national contexts and views across the movement.¹³¹ The Law and Policy Directorate has also sought views from partners, including reviews of policies on conscientious objection, drugs, and abortion.¹³² Governance structures have changed so that each section has one vote at the General Assembly to ensure greater Global South representation in policy decisions.¹³³ Currently, Amnesty section consultation with their members varies widely, ranging from consultations at Annual General Meetings to limited or no consultation with members.¹³⁴ While there is a trade-off between the speed of policy review and

¹²⁶ Ahmed, *supra* note 62.

¹²⁷ Telephone Interview with Ben Phillips, *supra* note 108.

¹²⁸ Telephone Interview with Ashfaq Khalfan, Law & Policy Dir., Amnesty Int’l, Int’l Secretariat (Oct. 30, 2018).

¹²⁹ *Id.*

¹³⁰ *Id.*

¹³¹ Amnesty Int’l, *Developing Policies on Contentious Issues*, POL 10/5913/2017 (2017) (internal document).

¹³² E-mail from Ashfaq Khalfan, Legal & Policy Dir., Amnesty Int’l to Author (Apr. 7, 2020: 06:53 PM) (on file with author).

¹³³ Amnesty Int’l, *Statute of Amnesty International—As amended by the 2019 Global Assembly Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa*, 2–4 Aug. 2019, POL 20/1045/2019 (Sept. 2019), <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/POL2010452019ENGLISH.PDF>.

¹³⁴ *Id.*

democratic engagement across the movement, it may be helpful for sections to engage their members in developing their positions on key policy issues before the General Assembly. If members feel vested in a democratic process, it may be easier for them to accept working within policies with which they disagree.

B. “*Beyond Egos and Logos*”

Transformative solidarity—rooted in the agency of those most affected and working in partnership—requires a strategic approach to brand management focused on human rights impact. Brand is “a psychological construct,” and logos make brands recognizable.¹³⁵ To foster transformative solidarity, brand transitions from being predominantly about communications or fundraising to being part of an ethos reflecting who we are and how we work, which then integrates communications and fundraising. International human rights groups have multiple brand consumers—those who fund work, and in Amnesty’s case, members, as well as those who associate with the organization to advance their struggles. Brand competition can undermine collaboration, inhibiting solidarity. Arthur Larok warns that civil society organizations need to move “beyond egos and logos.”¹³⁶ He writes that civil society organizations should “relearn the ethos and value of solidarity and collective actions rather than getting caught up in the cutthroat competition among NGOs that celebrate brands and logos rather than substantive change.”¹³⁷ Nathalie Kylander and Christopher Stone note that “when larger nonprofits insist that joint activities conform to their idea of quality, brand management by the larger organization can feel to the weaker organization like bullying.”¹³⁸ They recommend brand affinity as a guiding approach where

the brand is a good team player, working well alongside other brands, sharing space and credit generously, and promoting collective over individual interests. An organization with strong brand affinity attracts partners and collaborators because it lends value to the partnerships without exploiting them. . . . Organizations with the highest brand affinity promote the brands of their partners as much as or more than they promote their own brands, redressing rather than exploiting the

¹³⁵ Nathalie Kylander & Christopher Stone, *The Role of Brand in the Nonprofit Sector*, 10 STAN. SOC. INNOVATION REV. 36, 38 (2012).

¹³⁶ Arthur Larok, *Uganda’s New Civic Activism: Beyond Egos and Logos*, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INT’L PEACE (Aug. 9, 2018), <http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/07/24/uganda-s-new-civic-activism-beyond-egos-and-logos-pub-71600>.

¹³⁷ *Id.*

¹³⁸ Kylander & Stone, *supra* note 135, at 39.

power imbalances that inevitably exist in any partnership or collaboration.¹³⁹

Managing brand entails consciously deciding when stepping up and stepping back will foster solidarity.¹⁴⁰ Stepping back involves listening to partners, respecting domestic leadership in framing human rights struggles, opening space for other voices, and crediting collaboration.¹⁴¹ Being reflective and consultative about when to deploy the organization's brand should not make Amnesty "uncomfortable to provide leadership" when partner groups want Amnesty to drive broader human rights movements by speaking out about a broader range of issues.¹⁴² Anya Neistat, Senior Director for Research, talked about the importance of Amnesty speaking in its own voice, particularly when sharing major research findings: "[We] cannot achieve the same result if we just use other voices If Amnesty says it's war crimes or genocide, [then] it is, given Amnesty's expertise in international law."¹⁴³ Sometimes Amnesty can also step up by adding its name and brand to the work of others, even when it has not done its own in-depth research. Shaera Kalla conceptualizes Amnesty's name and brand stating that, "Amnesty supports initiative led by X. Amnesty sometimes doesn't realize the social capital it has."¹⁴⁴ These decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in a consultative way, contextually driven, and with fostering solidarity as an organizing principle.

C. Funding Pulling Together and Pulling Apart

When asked what inhibits solidarity within the human rights sector, some interviewees mentioned competition for donor or foundation funding. Godiva Akullo explained that competition for funding encourages Ugandan human rights organizations to work in silos by encouraging them to seek credit, often through branding.¹⁴⁵ Conversely, speaking to her experience of working in grassroots organizations in India, Lysa Johns, Save the Children's Campaign Director, said that when resources are more limited, "solidarity is not an option, but a must."¹⁴⁶ Even though interviewees were mainly referring to domestic organizations, these considerations impact how Amnesty positions itself in the

¹³⁹ *Id.* at 40.

¹⁴⁰ Telephone Interview with Irungu Houghton, *supra* note 39.

¹⁴¹ *Id.*

¹⁴² Telephone Interview with Ashfaq Khalfan, *supra* note 128.

¹⁴³ Telephone Interview with Anya Neistat, Senior Dir. for Research, Amnesty Int'l, Int'l Secretariat (Oct. 24, 2018).

¹⁴⁴ Telephone Interview with Shaera Kalla, *supra* note 114.

¹⁴⁵ Telephone Interview with Godiva Akullo, *supra* note 38.

¹⁴⁶ Telephone Interview with Lysa Johns, Campaigns Dir., Save the Children Int'l (June 13, 2018).

Global South. Mona Younis said, “Southern groups are still at a big disadvantage in terms of funding. There is need for more equitable division of resources within civil society, and it is crucial that greater Southern presence of Amnesty does not further exacerbate that through competition for funding from foundations.”¹⁴⁷ Here, Amnesty benefits from most of its funding coming from members. The organization is looking at how to experiment with membership fundraising in the Global South too, for example, through developing a “giving circles of conscience” in Kenya.¹⁴⁸ Where the organization seeks foundation funding, some Regional Offices are piloting consortium models where a group of actors will apply for joint funding with mutual accountability for how the funds are used in a way that leverages the strengths of the wider human rights ecosystem.¹⁴⁹

D. *Showing Up When It Counts*

Transformative solidarity requires showing up for partners when they need solidarity most. It means standing with them, as they respond to unforeseen human rights crises, especially those with a symbolic character that manifest opportunities.¹⁵⁰ These are *kairos* moments—critical and opportune times, marked by change and transition, bringing risks and opportunities, and demanding collective action.¹⁵¹ Such moments resonate with people, stimulating short-lived surges of solidarity—*al faza’a*—a Bedouin term for when other tribes are called to support people in imminent danger.¹⁵² International human rights groups need to schedule time and resources to respond quickly to reactive opportunities, and have nimble structures enabling real time responses. In Greenpeace speak, they need to move with “fast feet.”¹⁵³

VI. TOWARDS A TRANSFORMATIVE SOLIDARITY

A. *Domestic Solidarity*

Transformative solidarity builds on existing solidarities and attempts to

¹⁴⁷ Telephone Interview with Mona Younis, *supra* note 108.

¹⁴⁸ See discussion *infra* Section VII.A.7.

¹⁴⁹ Telephone Interview with Biraj Patnaik, *supra* note 79.

¹⁵⁰ *Who We Are*, KAIROS, <https://kairoscenter.org> (last visited Sept. 4, 2018); MICAH WHITE, END OF PROTEST 65 (2016).

¹⁵¹ WHITE, *supra* note 150, at 65.

¹⁵² BEAUTIFUL RISING: CREATIVE RESISTANCE FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH 172–73 (Juman Abujbara et al. eds., 2017).

¹⁵³ EMILY HUNTER, GREENPEACE, THE MOBILIZATION COOKBOOK: A GREENPEACE GUIDE TO COOKING UP PEOPLE POWERED CAMPAIGNS 17 (Michael Silberman & Ted Fickes eds., 2016).

destroy solidarity. This section situates domestic solidarity within contemporary trends of how old solidarities are strained and new solidarities are emerging. It then charts a process for international human rights organizations to act in transformative solidarity with domestic actors advancing their struggles.

1. *Old Solidarities Strained*

History is replete with politicians demonizing and dehumanizing others in ways that contravene human rights, but now this rhetoric is increasingly widespread and popular.¹⁵⁴ In this context, politicians are using digital platforms to spread inflammatory rhetoric and disinformation.¹⁵⁵ As Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms wrote, “The tools that bring us closer together can also drive us further apart.”¹⁵⁶ Building on Section V which summarized how this has manifested in several countries; this Section examines two theories that may illuminate why such attempts have found fertile ground.

A quantitative study by Christian Lahusen and Maria Grasso investigated attitudes and practices of solidarity in eight European countries, within individual states and transnationally.¹⁵⁷ Although their definition of solidarity—“the preparedness to share resources with others, including money and time and support state redistribution through taxes”—differs from this Article, their findings remain pertinent.¹⁵⁸ Lahusen and Grasso found that interpersonal solidarity activity levels across individual European countries were more similar than they expected.¹⁵⁹ Conversely, public support for fiscal redistribution varied widely between countries based on prevailing inequalities and political

¹⁵⁴ See Amnesty Int’l, *supra* note 88, on the growing politics of demonization. With thanks to Amnesty International’s David Griffiths, Director of the Office of the Secretary General, and Paola Gioffredi, Project Manager and Advisor on “Us vs. Them,” for aiding these reflections in advance of a forthcoming Amnesty International publication on the same topic.

¹⁵⁵ Kate Jones, *Online Disinformation and Political Discourse: Applying a Human Rights Framework*, CHATHAM HOUSE (Nov. 2019), <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2019-11-05-Online-Disinformation-Human-Rights.pdf>; Rohit Chopra, *In India, WhatsApp Is a Weapon of Antisocial Hatred*, CONVERSATION (Apr. 2019), <https://theconversation.com/in-india-whatsapp-is-a-weapon-of-antisocial-hatred-115673>; Council on Foreign Relations, *WhatsApp’s Influence in the Brazilian Election and How It Helped Jair Bolsonaro Win*, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN REL. (Nov. 13, 2018), <https://www.cfr.org/blog/whatsapps-influence-brazilian-election-and-how-it-helped-jair-bolsonaro-win>.

¹⁵⁶ JEREMY HEIMANS & HENRY TIMMS, *NEW POWER: HOW POWER WORKS IN OUR HYPERCONNECTED WORLD—AND HOW TO MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU* 11 (2018).

¹⁵⁷ See generally Christian Lahusen & Maria Grasso, *Solidarity in Europe—European Solidarity: An Introduction*, in *SOLIDARITY IN EUROPE: CITIZENS’ RESPONSES IN TIMES OF CRISIS I* (Christian Lahusen & Maria Grasso eds., 2018).

¹⁵⁸ *Id.* at 4.

¹⁵⁹ Lahusen & Grasso, *Solidary in Europe*, in *SOLIDARITY IN EUROPE: CITIZENS’ RESPONSES IN TIMES OF CRISIS* *supra* note 157, at 253, 256.

values.¹⁶⁰ Support for solidarity varied according to the identity of the recipient and people's perceptions of their trustworthiness.¹⁶¹ It was higher where people had contact with the recipient group, such as people with disabilities, the unemployed, and refugees, and identified with the spatial entity in which solidarity was expressed, like the state or the European Union.¹⁶² Despite disparities between countries, higher education, and incomes were positively correlated with support for solidarity.¹⁶³ Perceived economic downturns reduced solidarity with immigrants.¹⁶⁴ In summary, contact, trust, and economic circumstances may impact individual solidarity.

Turning now to a second theory, Harsh Mander, a human rights worker and educator, conducted a qualitative review of India's political economy of demonization.¹⁶⁵ Empathy—a key basis for solidarity—is easier, he theorizes, when you can relate to the affected person.¹⁶⁶ Conversely, it breaks down when we see the other person as “not fully human.”¹⁶⁷ Rising economic inequality and limited social interaction across widening class disparities erode compassion and fosters indifference.¹⁶⁸ Empathy fatigue then provides a more fertile ground for prejudice and discrimination against minority groups.¹⁶⁹

While it is not possible to infer broader conclusions from these two studies, they both indicate that contact between different groups is critical to domestic solidarity. The link, if any, between economic inequality and strains on domestic solidarity on human rights issues merits further investigation. This includes the link between rising economic inequality, social segregation, and the openness—or lack thereof—of higher socioeconomic groups to domestic solidarity on human rights issues, such as the right to healthcare, housing, and education. Similarly, it includes the disproportionate impact of inequality and austerity on lower socioeconomic groups and their openness, or lack thereof, to domestic solidarity on other human rights issues, such as immigrants' rights. If transformative solidarity is an organizing principle, the research outlined in this Article may further inform both what international human rights groups work on and how this work is done.

¹⁶⁰ *Id.* at 257.

¹⁶¹ *Id.* at 273.

¹⁶² *Id.* at 275.

¹⁶³ *Id.* at 276.

¹⁶⁴ *Id.* at 265.

¹⁶⁵ *See generally* MANDER, *supra* note 17.

¹⁶⁶ *Id.* at 283.

¹⁶⁷ *Id.*

¹⁶⁸ *See id.*

¹⁶⁹ *See id.*

2. *Transient Solidarities Emerging*

New solidarities are emerging through new civic activism which is less conformist than older models of NGO, political party, or trade union organizing.¹⁷⁰ Rooted in grievance, this activism articulates dissent in ways ranging from peaceful protest to nonviolent direct action to violent actions.¹⁷¹ At one end of the spectrum are peaceful, creative, symbolic actions, such as Uganda's Black Monday movement against corruption¹⁷² and Burundi's Vendredi Vert movement to free political prisoners.¹⁷³ Creative actions can also fill gaps where the state is falling short, like Stella Nyanzi's campaign in Uganda providing sanitary pads to school girls.¹⁷⁴ This highlights the government's failure to deliver on their promises.¹⁷⁵ Nonviolent direct actions, such as the occupation of public spaces through the Occupy Movement against socio-economic inequality and corporate influence, transgress national laws, but are not usually violent. At the other end of the spectrum, some scholars place illegal, sometimes violent actions, such as riots against police brutality or the hacking of websites by cyber-activists.¹⁷⁶

Characterized by horizontal, network-based organizing, new civic activism mixes digital and off-line mobilizing. Jeremy Heiman and Henry Timms developed the concept of "new power," which is the power of people to spread hope and ideas, to share and cocreate content, and to organize themselves using technology.¹⁷⁷ Because new power is not mediated or controlled by institutions, participants have significant agency in shaping activism.¹⁷⁸ Some new civic activism is disruptive, operating outside national legal frameworks to agitate for rights, as well as broader systemic political and economic transformation. These groups go beyond seeing justice as a relationship with the state, instead looking at justice as a societal condition. As such, their claims often go beyond the human rights framework. Activists transgress national laws or social norms where they feel excluded or lacking influence over traditional institutions, or

¹⁷⁰ See, e.g., Larok, *supra* note 136.

¹⁷¹ *Id.* For some analysis for Stella Nyanzi's activism, see *id.*

¹⁷² *Id.*

¹⁷³ For more information on the genesis of the Vendredi Vert movement, see Public Statement, Amnesty Int'l, Pierre Claver Mbonimpa Is a Prisoner of Conscience (Aug. 22, 2014), <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/4000/afr160032014en.pdf>.

¹⁷⁴ *Id.*

¹⁷⁵ See *id.*

¹⁷⁶ Doutje Lettinga & Femke Kaulingfreks, *Clashing Activisms: International Human Rights Organizations and Unruly Politics*, 7 J. HUM. RTS. PRAC. 343, 348 (2015).

¹⁷⁷ HEIMANS & TIMMS, *supra* note 156, at 9.

¹⁷⁸ See *id.*

faith in them.¹⁷⁹ Activist-practitioners often see new civic activism as spontaneous,¹⁸⁰ but this is sometimes a misnomer. While new civil activism can develop organically, it often builds on mobilization efforts and previous consciousness raising. However, without agreed objectives, a joint strategy, and clear leadership, it can fade quickly.¹⁸¹ Solidarities that emerge are spatially and temporally bound, contingent on joint action which is often relatively transient.

New civic activism's fluidity and agility contrasts with "solid" institutions,¹⁸² such as NGOs wielding "old power."¹⁸³ Old power is formal, stemming from hierarchical institutions, whose experts produce content for public consumption, with limited popular participation.¹⁸⁴ New civic activism creates or claims space, rather than operating in "donated space" funded by donors.¹⁸⁵ It is also unlike the "contentious politics" of the social movements of the 1970s.¹⁸⁶ Such groups had clearer agendas related to gender, race, and the environment, amongst others, rooted in collectively constructed identities.¹⁸⁷

The role of international human rights organizations in transformative domestic solidarity, to which the Article now turn, sits within this shifting landscape of solidarities under strain and emergent transient solidarities.

3. *Listening to Partners*

Summarized by the disability rights movement's slogan, "nothing about us without us," transformational solidarity starts with listening to domestic partners and those most affected.¹⁸⁸ The principle of "tak[ing] leadership from the most impacted" recognizes that they have the most to gain from success and the most to lose if things go badly.¹⁸⁹ People have engaged issues for a long time on their own, and international human rights groups need to "build on this groundswell,

¹⁷⁹ Lettinga & Kaulingfreks, *supra* note 176, at 350; Telephone Interview with Ahmed, *supra* note 65.

¹⁸⁰ BURKHARD GNÄRIG, *THE HEDGEHOG AND THE BEETLE: DISRUPTION AND INNOVATION IN THE CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR* 33 (Victoria Redmond ed., 2015); Lettinga & Kaulingfreks, *supra* note 176, at 362.

¹⁸¹ *Id.*

¹⁸² Lucia Nader, *Solid Organisations in a Liquid World*, 11 *SUR INT'L J. ON HUM. RTS.* 483, 484 (2014).

¹⁸³ For a definition of "old power," see HEIMANS & TIMMS, *supra* note 156, at 2.

¹⁸⁴ *Id.* at 29.

¹⁸⁵ Larok, *supra* note 136, at 3.

¹⁸⁶ CHARLES TILLY & SIDNEY TARROW, *CONTENTIOUS POLITICS* 122–33 (2d ed. 2015).

¹⁸⁷ Lettinga & Kaulingfreks, *supra* note 176, at 350.

¹⁸⁸ For the origins of this slogan, see JAMES I. CHARLTON, *NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US: DISABILITY OPPRESSION AND EMPOWERMENT* 3 (Univ. of Cal. Press, 2000).

¹⁸⁹ Joshua K. Russell, *Principle: Take Leadership from the Most Impacted*, in *BEAUTIFUL TROUBLE: A TOOLBOX FOR REVOLUTION* 180 (Andrew Boyd & Dave O. Mitchell eds., 2016).

rather than build on ground zero.”¹⁹⁰ Youth groups have fed back to Amnesty that they “want to be fully fledged partners in devising the human rights agenda” necessitating humility and horizontal relationships, “so that they tell us—this is something we need to stand up for together.”¹⁹¹ Such consultations inform what level of participation is desirable and viable.

Living up to this ideal is complicated where international human rights organizations do not have access to a particular country, where meeting human rights activists may lead to reprisals, or where resources are limited. Where civil society has been infiltrated, knowing who to consult with is tricky. Operating in a transparent way may place other interlocutors or research participants at risk. Some workarounds include convening partners outside the country or consulting through secure on-line mechanisms. These approaches lend themselves more to work with formal groups, than with communities. Additional complexities can arise if partners or communities have yet to reach agreement on the approach to take, and if international non-governmental organizations must choose which group’s leadership should be taken. Unequal power dynamics can replicate themselves within grassroots groups too, so carefully navigating these dynamics is critical.¹⁹² Furthermore, while consultations with defenders in exile can be useful, they may seek to escalate rights struggles in ways that activists remaining in the country are not ready to combat.¹⁹³

4. *Stepping Up and Stepping Aside*

Working in a participatory way that fully respects agency takes more time. While participation is an ethical imperative, it can only be done in an ethical way if we have enough energy to deliver on mutual agreements. In deciding when and how to partner with NGOs, people’s movements, communities and the most affected, an Amnesty staffer working on issues of participation explained that one needs to see the extent to which “active participation” helps reach the project’s objectives.¹⁹⁴ Ideally, the project itself would be developed with involvement from the most affected or domestic civil society colleagues working closely with them. Those discussions should help inform Amnesty’s thinking about what level of participation is needed. If change cannot happen

¹⁹⁰ Telephone Interview with Helena Okiring, Founder, Dream Initiation (July 3, 2018).

¹⁹¹ Telephone Interview with Diakhoumba Gassama, Reg’l Youth & Activism Coordinator for Afr., Amnesty Int’l (May 24, 2018).

¹⁹² Telephone Interview with Gabriela Quevedo, *supra* note 43.

¹⁹³ E-mail from Mona Younis, Strategic Programming, Planning & Evaluations Consultant to Author (July 15, 2018) (on file with author).

¹⁹⁴ Telephone interview with Anonymous, Staff Member, Amnesty Int’l (July 17, 2018).

from outside the country, if domestic ownership and capacities are crucial to delivering change, and if Amnesty wants to support or develop a constituency for this, then a deeper level of participation is needed.¹⁹⁵ These could be, as Netsanet Belay puts it, a “few but scalable ideas where we can be viewed as not just amplifiers, but genuine collaborators.”¹⁹⁶ Drawing on her experience working with Amnesty Australia and now the Regional Office for South East Asia and the Pacific, MingYu Hah advises the approach to solidarity should flow from the theory of change.¹⁹⁷ For example, a short-term campaign will involve different partner relations when compared to a longer-term theory of behavioral change.¹⁹⁸ Decisions about when Amnesty should step up and step aside cannot always be collaborative. But partners can reasonably expect clarity and transparency as part of a strategy when Amnesty explains how they are able to work and the limits to that.¹⁹⁹

If done in this way, partnerships can also be empowering. As Gabriela Quevedo from Amnesty’s Global Strategy and Impact Programme puts it, Amnesty staff have a “sense of responsibility which doesn’t match with resources.”²⁰⁰ Thinking more broadly about where Amnesty or other human rights organizations fit within the wider human rights ecosystem, and situating the organization’s limited contribution in relation to other partners and actors, is liberating.

5. *Transformative Domestic Solidarity: Aligning with Social Movements*

International human rights groups can look for synergies, alliances, and partnerships with new civic activists where their mandates overlap and nurture networks of activists seeking to build power. Where mandates differ, they can still support the rights of social movements to speak freely and organize peacefully. Supporting new ways of organizing could include acting as a witness, documenting violations, enhancing documentation capacities of domestic actors, developing legal defense funds, and performing solidarity visits to prisons and at risk people to strengthen the morale of activists.²⁰¹ Additionally, where it would add value and do no harm, they can endorse

¹⁹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁹⁶ Telephone Interview with Netsanet Belay, *supra* note 63.

¹⁹⁷ Telephone Interview with MingYu Hah, *supra* note 108.

¹⁹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹⁹ Telephone Interview with Guevara-Rosas, *supra* note 95.

²⁰⁰ Telephone Interview with Gabriela Quevedo, *supra* note 43.

²⁰¹ *See, e.g.*, Telephone Interview with Ben Phillips, *supra* note 108; Telephone Interview with Ellen Vermuelen, Dir., Human Rights Capacity Bldg. Programme, Amnesty Int’l (July 13, 2018).

initiatives lending credibility to them.²⁰² Many African youth groups and activists, especially those from marginalized communities, have asked Amnesty to amplify their voices, expressing the need to be “legitimized beyond the mainstream middle-class movement.”²⁰³ International human rights groups can also sustain advocacy on specific rights violations beyond new civic activism’s transient mobilization.²⁰⁴ As a Brazilian journalist told human rights advocate Lucia Nader, conventional civil society organizations “are the before and the after of the streets.”²⁰⁵

Given pressures to achieve short-term tangible impact, interviewees highlighted the complexities of deciding when to align with social movements. Amnesty’s Regional Director for the Americas recognizes that the work they are doing with rural social movements might take twenty years to have impact.²⁰⁶ Steve Crawshaw, a human rights campaigner and author of two books on nonviolent protest, said you need to “accept that there will be things you chip away, like water on stone. You really can’t see the moment at which the water will soften the stone. It may not have visible impact within the decade.”²⁰⁷ Working with groups that have a strategy, rather than simply tactics, is key according to Srjda Popovic, a Serbian activist and cofounder of the Centre for Applied Nonviolent Action and Strategies.²⁰⁸ Membership funding gives Amnesty the flexibility to be experimental, to try and to fail, and to build a mixed portfolio of work designed for long-term and short-term wins.

Some interviewees questioned whether international human rights organizations can contest power structures and institutions that perpetrate human rights violations and simultaneously advocate within them for concessions.²⁰⁹ Raees Noorbhai, an activist formerly affiliated with Amnesty South Africa, felt that Amnesty needed to take a bolder approach: “[w]e can’t function as the conscience of the status quo, [the] tactic of appealing to the moral sensibilities of oppressors and the positioning of our activism as neutral and above the realities of oppression is something we need to critically deconstruct.”²¹⁰

²⁰² Telephone Interview with Shacera Kalla, *supra* note 114.

²⁰³ Telephone Interview with Diakhoumba Gassama, *supra* note 191.

²⁰⁴ Lettinga & Kaulingfreks, *supra* note 176, at 359.

²⁰⁵ Nader, *supra* note 182, at 483.

²⁰⁶ Telephone Interview with Erika Guevara-Rosas, *supra* note 95.

²⁰⁷ Telephone Interview with Steve Crawshaw, *supra* note 56.

²⁰⁸ Telephone Interview with Srjda Popovic, Exec. Dir., Ctr. for Applied Nonviolent Action & Strategy (June 26, 2018).

²⁰⁹ Telephone Interview with Maro Pantazidou, Deputy Dir. Glob. Strategy & Impact, Amnesty Int’l (June 13, 2018); Telephone Interview with Raees Noorbhai, *supra* note 45.

²¹⁰ Telephone Interview with Noorbhai, *supra* note 45.

Beyond a principled stance of opposition to injustice, the likely impact of support for new non-violent civic activism on advocacy needs to be gauged on a case-by-case basis. Interviewees spoke to perceptions of “diminishing returns when it comes to naming and shaming”²¹¹ and that human rights organizations can no longer rely on “lobbying and being on the inside.”²¹² From a strategic lens, protest is a prologue to dialogue, rather than purely protest for protest’s sake. As Martin Luther King wrote in his letter from Birmingham Jail:

[C]alling for negotiation . . . is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored.²¹³

Conceptualized in this way, protest is designed to create dialogue, rather than monologue. It is framed as part of organizing, rather than a spectacle.²¹⁴ Different approaches can also complement each other. Lettinga and Kaulingfreks argue that combining disruption by protesters with engagement by international human rights groups might be effective with each effectively staying in their lane.²¹⁵

Working more with new civic activists requires a humbler, less hierarchical attitude. Rachael Mwikali, a Kenyan grassroots feminist activist from Mathare, said that international human rights organizations need to “stop stereotyping grassroots activists as failure, noisemakers and only needed when there is need to mobilize for demonstrations. . . . Give them space to feel Amnesty is home for them.”²¹⁶ This is part of recognizing that Amnesty is also learning from grassroots groups.

6. *Potential and Limits of Participatory Research*

Solidarity is also fostered—or broken—through how international human rights groups do research. Research is multifaceted; it involves assessing when Amnesty can best add value, contextualizing work, documenting violations and

²¹¹ Telephone Interview with Omar Waraich, Deputy Reg’l Dir. (Campaigns), S. Asia, Amnesty Int’l (July 5, 2018).

²¹² Telephone Interview with Ben Phillips, *supra* note 108.

²¹³ Martin Luther King Jr., *supra* note 24.

²¹⁴ See Rafia Zakaria, *A March for the Marchers*, BAFFLER (Sept. 26, 2018), <https://thebaffler.com/alienated/march-for-the-marchers-zakaria> (critiquing U.S. anti-Trump protests as a “spectacle”).

²¹⁵ Lettinga & Kaulingfreks, *supra* note 176, at 359.

²¹⁶ E-mail from Rachael Mwikali, Grassroots Feminist Activist to Author (July 21, 2018) (on file with author).

abuses, and informing impact strategies through advocacy research. Transformative solidarity is not an add-on after research is conducted; instead, it affects how research is approached. Participatory research works with people, rather than on them, conceptualizing them as research participants or agents, rather than subjects.²¹⁷ It recognizes that people are experts on the human rights violations they have experienced.²¹⁸ Empowering people to claim their rights can contribute to constituencies demanding human rights.²¹⁹ The research process is as important as the product itself in generating solidarity.²²⁰

Traditional human rights fact-finding is done by professionals who gather and evaluate testimony and other evidence against the international human rights and international humanitarian law framework.²²¹ They analyze compliance of state and non-state actors with international legal norms, determining responsibility for violations and abuses.²²² Usually this includes advocacy research which recognizes that “the best way to find solutions for stakeholders is to ask them what the solutions are.”²²³

Critics see traditional human rights research as extractive reproduction, rather than transforming power hierarchies between experts and those most affected by rights violations.²²⁴ One article documented how they negotiated collaboration with a women’s group in Thailand who felt exploited by previous researchers.²²⁵ It reported false expectations of assistance, lack of feedback from researchers, including copies of reports, mistrust of white researchers, distrust of local researchers on class or ethnic lines, distrust of researchers who fly in and out of camps and conflict zones without considering the local social, economic, and political consequences, lack of input to strategy and

²¹⁷ Cristina Bacalso, Research Coordinator, Youth Policy Labs, Learning from Experience: Participatory Research with Young People Presentation at Amnesty International’s Global Participatory Tools and Approaches Workshop (July 2–6, 2018); Molly K. Land, *Democratizing Human Rights Fact-Finding*, in THE TRANSFORMATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FACT-FINDING 399 (Philip Alston & Sarah Knuckey eds., 2016).

²¹⁸ Bacalso, *supra* note 217.

²¹⁹ See Land, *supra* note 217, at 399–40; Eileen Pittaway et al., ‘*Stop Stealing Our Stories*’: *The Ethics of Research with Vulnerable Groups*, 2 J. HUM. RTS. PRAC. 229, 245 (2010); Dustin Sharp, *Human Rights Fact-Finding and the Reproduction of Hierarchies*, in THE TRANSFORMATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FACT-FINDING 69, 71 (Philip Alston & Sarah Knuckey eds., 2016).

²²⁰ See Land, *supra* note 217, at 411.

²²¹ *Id.*

²²² *Id.*

²²³ Telephone Interview with Anya Neistat, *supra* note 143.

²²⁴ See Sharp, *supra* note 219, at 74.

²²⁵ See generally Pittaway et al., *supra* note 219.

recommendations, and potential for re-traumatization without follow-up support.²²⁶ Far from fostering solidarity, these approaches undermined it.

In contrast to the prior approach, the article developed a model of “reciprocal research,” working with rights-holders as research participants.²²⁷ Starting with the training of rights-holders, the human rights framework is used for participants to identify abuses they have experienced before interviews begin.²²⁸ An agreement is developed with the community owning the data and signing-off on decisions and outputs.²²⁹ On a spectrum of participation, this is the most participatory form of research and may not always lend itself to verifying human rights abuses. It will not work where resource constraints or crisis situations do not permit research over a longer timeframe.²³⁰ Hostile or repressive contexts where researchers need to mitigate potential reprisals against research participants may not allow this kind of collaboration or community ownership of data. But the ethos of “reciprocal research” could infuse, and elements of it inform, approaches in many contexts. For example, peer-produced information can help identify priorities for human rights documentation.²³¹ Where research is collaborative, crediting that collaboration where it is safe to do so, is crucial in fostering solidarity. As feminist activist Godiva Akullo explained, “[t]here’s no way you’re saying something that hasn’t already been said. Make an effort to find the voices.”²³²

Working with national human rights organizations through capacity building workshops or accompaniment also makes research more participatory. Dustin Sharp notes that “capacity building” is often conceptualized as a “one-way transmission of expertise” from international groups, but in reality, learning goes both ways.²³³ Anya Neistat, Senior Director for Research, explained how partnering with local NGOs may impact who Amnesty interviews and cites the need to develop a shared methodology that safeguards our impartiality.²³⁴ Additionally, because joint research can also heighten risks to partners, she

²²⁶ *Id.* at 236.

²²⁷ *Id.*

²²⁸ *Id.*

²²⁹ *Id.* at 238–39.

²³⁰ See Telephone Interview with MingYu Hah, *supra* note 108.

²³¹ See Land, *supra* note 217, at 411 (citing Jessica Heinzelman & Patrick Meier, *Crowdsourcing for Human Rights Monitoring: Challenges and Opportunities for Information Collection and Verification*, in *HUMAN RIGHTS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES: TRENDS AND CONSEQUENCES OF USE* 123, 125–26 (John Lannon & Edward F. Halpin eds., 2012)).

²³² Telephone Interview with Godiva Akullo, *supra* note 38.

²³³ See Sharp, *supra* note 219, at 70.

²³⁴ Telephone Interview with Anya Neistat, *supra* note 143.

recommends that the organization weighs these risks against the potential impact of the work.²³⁵

New technology can also enable peer-produced knowledge through citizen journalism, crowdsourcing, online mapping, and verification.²³⁶ New power leverages the power of the crowd and horizontal networks generating solidarity with those most affected.²³⁷ Amnesty has already used such tools, including with the Decode Darfur project, asking volunteers to review 326,000 square kilometers of satellite images looking for evidence of attacks by identifying major changes in structures over time.²³⁸ Surpassing what qualitative testimony alone could demonstrate, such data can underpin conclusions about the scope and scale of abuses and their progress over time.²³⁹ It is particularly effective in some situations, including documenting states' positive obligations to fulfill socioeconomic rights.²⁴⁰ The value of peer-produced research should not be overstated, as some abuses cannot be documented or the integrity of data verified using these tools.²⁴¹

This research did not set out to examine how Amnesty's research evolved during the GTP and, as such, does not map the extent to which Amnesty's research is contributing to transformative solidarity. Amnesty does not have disaggregated data on the number of missions to specific countries each year, so it is difficult to know the extent to which the organization's move closer to the ground has led to more in-country research outside where Regional Offices are hosted.²⁴² Amnesty's Legal and Policy Director, Ashfaq Khalfan, says that their department reviews lots of joint statements with civil society partners but has not seen a change in the number of International Secretariat statements that involve local partners or joint reports following the GTP.²⁴³ Some of the new technology trends outlined above have developed in parallel to the Global Transition Programme, but not necessarily because of it.

²³⁵ *Id.*

²³⁶ See Land, *supra* note 217, at 400–14.

²³⁷ See HEIMANS & TIMMS, *supra* note 156, at 54–80, on new power and the power of the crowd.

²³⁸ *Decode Darfur*, AMNESTY INT'L, <https://decoders.amnesty.org/projects/decode-darfur> (last visited Feb. 11, 2020).

²³⁹ See Land, *supra* note 217, at 406.

²⁴⁰ *Id.* at 399.

²⁴¹ *Id.* at 406.

²⁴² E-mail from Keith McClintock, Senior Dir. for Research Office's Coordinator, Amnesty Int'l, to Author, (Oct. 29, 2018) (on file with author).

²⁴³ Telephone Interview with Ashfaq Khalfan, *supra* note 128.

During the GTP the Regional Office for East Africa, Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes has piloted research in partnership with domestic partners. Together with twenty-three Kenyan civil society groups, Amnesty developed an online platform called Missing Voices to place power into the hands of communities affected by enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings to anonymously report them.²⁴⁴ This is designed to facilitate information sharing and verification by the civil society collective to underpin campaigning and advocacy with the Kenyan authorities.²⁴⁵ In collaboration with Amnesty Netherlands Human Rights Capacity Building Programme, the office undertook research on conflict-related sexual violence in South Sudan together with ten South Sudanese human rights defenders.²⁴⁶ The research focus, methodology and report drafting was done jointly.²⁴⁷ Two of the human rights defenders who contributed to the report experienced threats underscoring that joint work can involve collaborating with partners at risk. Such risks may be more acute when working with Amnesty, but collaboration can also enhance protection as well.²⁴⁸ These are illustrative examples of how more participatory aspects could be incorporated into Amnesty's research.

7. *Deeper Membership Participation Through New Domestic Organizing Models*

Strained solidarities make building popular support for human rights crucial. As Lucia Nader put it, “membership and solidarity are more important than ever to give human rights the roots that are being questioned, and to keep the flame burning.”²⁴⁹ Ben Phillips challenges Amnesty stating that it “represents something about human spirit. How would you multiply that?”²⁵⁰ Successfully doing this depends on the ability to engage members in deeper ways blending new power with old power. Having a “movement mindset” involves shifting from one-way campaigning mobilizing people around set asks to supporting members to organize.²⁵¹ Several Amnesty colleagues interviewed were

²⁴⁴ *About Us*, MISSING VOICES, <https://missingvoices.or.ke/about-us/> (last visited Apr. 9, 2020).

²⁴⁵ *Kenya: Real-Time Reporting to Lift the Lid on Police Killings, Abductions*, AMNESTY INT'L (Aug. 30, 2018, 7:00 AM), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/08/kenya-real-time-reporting-to-lift-the-lid-on-police-killings-and-abductions>.

²⁴⁶ AMNESTY INT'L, *DO NOT REMAIN SILENT: SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN CALL FOR JUSTICE AND REPARATIONS* (2017).

²⁴⁷ *Id.*

²⁴⁸ Vermuelen, *supra* note 204.

²⁴⁹ Telephone Interview with Lucia Nader, *supra* note 81.

²⁵⁰ Telephone Interview with Ben Phillips, *supra* note 108.

²⁵¹ Michael Silberman, *Four Ways Nonprofits Are Learning from March for Our Lives, Keep Families Together, and a New Wave of People-Powered Action*, MOBILAB (July 2, 2018), <https://mobilisationlab.org/four->

grappling with how Amnesty can go back to its roots revamping old forms of mobilization for the digital era.²⁵² Amnesty USA has launched an innovation lab to test different structures, after seeing a drop in local groups as a rejection of the structure, rather than activism.²⁵³ In Kenya, Amnesty plans to develop “circles of conscience” allowing people “to organize on what matters to them and see a partnership in us.”²⁵⁴ Profiling the engagement of individual members will also help to inspire wider engagement, as “people support other human beings.”²⁵⁵

Distributed organizing models are one way for organizations like Amnesty to build deeper domestic solidarity networks. They leverage a network of volunteer organizers in several locations. Volunteers start groups and lead teams. Their level of autonomy depends on the organization. Often a central coordination group launches the network and provides some support or guidance to groups, but this differs from vertical “command and control” leadership, a more top-down way of mobilizing supporters to take part in pre-defined, rather than supporter-led, actions.²⁵⁶ Central staff may frame the approach, create the strategy, develop action kits, build capacity of organizers, and curate content while local groups might be free to create their own messaging and actions within this. It can enable a movement or campaign to rapidly scale up. Mobilisation Lab’s research shows that distributed organizing works best when the campaign issue is urgent to many people, when people power can help make the change happen, and where the campaign outcome is fairly straightforward, for example, changing a policy position.²⁵⁷ Conversely, it is harder when campaign goals are complex, grassroots pressure not useful, and the issues less visible or understood by people. It requires a different mindset focused on the membership constituency. Instead of activists thinking about what they are trying to do and then negotiating buy-in, Mobilisation Lab encourages thinking about what would motivate an organization’s base to build the campaign with them, then designing a campaign around this with key roles for them.²⁵⁸

ways-nonprofits-learn-marchforourlives; Telephone Interview with Najia Bounaim, Reg’l Dir. (Campaigns), Se. Asia, Amnesty Int’l (July 10, 2018).

²⁵² See, e.g., Telephone Interview with Netsanet Belay, *supra* note 63.

²⁵³ Telephone Interview with Margaret Hwang, Exec. Dir., Amnesty USA (Aug. 9, 2018).

²⁵⁴ Telephone Interview with Irungu Houghton, *supra* note 39.

²⁵⁵ Telephone Interview with Godiva Akullo, *supra* note 38.

²⁵⁶ Tom Licas, *Beyond Command-and-Control Campaigns*, STAN. SOC. INNOVATION REV. (Aug. 2, 2017), https://ssir.org/articles/entry/beyond_command_and_control_campaigns.

²⁵⁷ MOBILISATION LAB, BLUEPRINTS FOR CHANGE: DISTRIBUTED ORGANIZING 7 (Sept. 21, 2018) (unpublished manual).

²⁵⁸ *Id.* at 11.

Moving from consumption to cocreation of campaigns is a shift from old power to new power. Heimans and Timms are clear that this will not work for all organizations. They recommend sticking with old power if the answer to any of these questions is no:

Do you need the involvement of the crowd to get a better outcome?
Does the crowd need you?

Do you have enough legitimacy with the people you're trying to engage so that you're not ignored or crowd-jacked?

Are you willing to cede some control to the crowd within parameters you set, and accept outcomes that are unexpected or suboptimal?

Are you prepared and able to sustain the engagement of the crowd and feed their agency over the longer term?²⁵⁹

Burkhard Gnärig conceptualizes such shifts as INGOs giving up control to have more influence.²⁶⁰

Greenpeace has made this transition. The impetus for this came in 2009 after the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference did not secure a binding treaty despite intensive campaigning.²⁶¹ Greenpeace—led then by Kumi Naidoo, later Amnesty's Secretary General—decided to invest in campaign innovation. They developed a center, now known as Mobilisation Lab that focuses on digital and community “people-powered” campaigning.²⁶² Seeing themselves as a “mentor, enabler, and aggregator of supporter action,” all Greenpeace planning now includes people as partners in advocacy, not just supporters or followers.²⁶³ Dan Cannon, Engagement Specialist at Greenpeace USA, explained how volunteers work in their communities with limited support from staff.²⁶⁴ They give some level of support or direction by providing toolkits for activists, conference calls, and occasionally in-person training.²⁶⁵ By utilizing requests that require different levels of time and engagement, they move committed activists up the

²⁵⁹ HEIMANS & TIMMS, *supra* note 156, at 144.

²⁶⁰ GNÄRIG, *supra* note 180, at 197.

²⁶¹ *Our Roots*, MOBILISATION LAB, <https://mobilisationlab.org/about/our-roots/> (last visited Apr. 6, 2020) (“The crisis that led to the creation of the MobLab began in 2009, when the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference failed to yield a binding treaty despite a massive advocacy campaign led by the world’s major environmental organisations. It was a brutal setback. International Executive Director Kumi Naidoo called it a ‘burning platform’ moment—a time to embrace a new model for impact or risk becoming irrelevant.”).

²⁶² *About*, MOBILISATION LAB, <https://mobilisationlab.org/about/> (last visited Apr. 1, 2020).

²⁶³ *The Anatomy of People-Powered Campaigns*, MOBILISATION LAB, <https://mobilisationlab.org/resources/the-anatomy-of-people-powered-campaigns/> (last visited Feb. 17, 2020).

²⁶⁴ Telephone Interview with Dan Cannon, Engagement Specialist, Greenpeace USA (Aug. 31, 2018).

²⁶⁵ *Id.*

“ladder of engagement.”²⁶⁶ He reports varying levels of success and an attrition rate as activists move up the ladder.²⁶⁷

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is beginning to make the shift towards distributed organizing. Phil Aroneanu was brought in as Digital Organizing Strategy Director to help lead this.²⁶⁸ He describes the ACLU as “largely a legal services organization without a longstanding organizing culture.”²⁶⁹ After President Trump’s election in the United States, the ACLU wanted to increase grassroots organizing to build popular support, a kind of “National Rifle Association for civil liberties.”²⁷⁰ As part of its People Power platform, a grassroots action network to support local activism on civil liberties, people organized within their communities, met local officials, and lobbied for policies to create Freedom Cities through grassroots activism to drive local policy change, including through protecting communities from the Trump Administration’s anti-immigrant policies.²⁷¹ Some ACLU staff have been critical of volunteers without much training and legal experience playing this role.²⁷² Initially, People Power was launched as a parallel structure because of sensitivities around volunteers taking on brand identity, but after its successful launch, the ACLU is integrating the platform with its field operation to create a new organizing program.²⁷³ Between five to ten people are working on People Power at any one time nationally.²⁷⁴ The volume of support needed fluctuates and at campaign launch mode the ACLU People Power team was responding to around 200 emails from activists daily.²⁷⁵ Many aspects of the national campaign, including a help desk, text and call teams are volunteer-staffed.²⁷⁶ Drawing on his past work with 350.org and as the state director of Bernie Sander’s presidential campaign in New York, Phil Aroneanu cautions that this approach only works if you are ready to cede control, build from the bottom up, respect volunteers’ agency, and have staff act as servant leaders.²⁷⁷

²⁶⁶ *Id.*

²⁶⁷ *Id.*

²⁶⁸ Telephone Interview with Phil Aroneanu, Dig. Org. Strategy Dir., Am. Civil Liberties Union, Amnesty USA (Aug. 3, 2018).

²⁶⁹ *Id.*

²⁷⁰ *Id.*

²⁷¹ *Id.*

²⁷² *Id.*

²⁷³ *Id.*

²⁷⁴ *Id.*

²⁷⁵ *Id.*

²⁷⁶ *Id.*

²⁷⁷ *Id.*

Amnesty sections working domestically could develop solidarity portals for members to volunteer their time and skills. Shaera Kalla explained, “If you have power to get people to buy-in to what you stand for, but you don’t use [their energy], then you’re robbing yourself of something big.”²⁷⁸ She suggested setting up an online platform for members to track areas of work and to sign-up to volunteer their professional skills, as designers, lawyers, doctors, or mobilizers, in service of human rights work.²⁷⁹

B. Flipping the Solidarity Script

Moving along the solidarity spectrum offers new opportunities to flip the solidarity script. Solidarity moves from being unidirectional—from the Global North to the Global South—to being multidirectional—South–South, South–North, North–North, as well as North–South.²⁸⁰ César Rodríguez-Garavito conceptualizes this as “multiple boomerangs.”²⁸¹ Sometimes this is people-to-people solidarity which goes beyond pressuring the state as the primary target of action. This section looks at how social movements are already operating in this way and what mainstream international human rights organizations can learn from this. Reflecting the transcontinental nature of injustice, activists infuse each other’s struggles and act in solidarity with each other, too.

1. South–North Solidarity

Traditionally, international human rights organizations have looked at how activists in the Global North can extend solidarity to those most affected by human rights abuses in the Global South. Flipping the solidarity script turns that on its head. Old margins for human rights abuses in the Global South become new frontiers for innovative responses globally. This draws on the work of the Comaroffs. They argue that the Global South feels the impact on world-historical processes first, they innovate responses, and these responses migrate northwards.²⁸² According to their analysis, the South first felt the effects of global capital with minimal regulations, but now countries in the Global North are “evolving southward” due to “increasing fiscal meltdown, state privatization, corruption and ethnic conflict.”²⁸³ Kayum Ahmed builds on this showing how

²⁷⁸ Telephone Interview with Shaera Kalla, *supra* 114.

²⁷⁹ *Id.*

²⁸⁰ Rodríguez-Garavito, *supra* note 18.

²⁸¹ *Id.*

²⁸² Comaroff & Comaroff, *supra* note 48.

²⁸³ *Id.*

Southern activists are pioneering new, disruptive rights discourses which then influence the North.²⁸⁴

One example is the increasingly visible solidarity between Palestinians and African Americans in the summer of 2014. Following protests in Ferguson, Missouri, and other parts of the United States and the police killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown, debate around race and policing in America reignited; activists in the West Bank and Gaza sent solidarity messages and practical advice on how to deal with tear gas.²⁸⁵ This marked the intensification of solidarity dating back to the 1960s and 1970s. Beyond creating hashtags, activists across these two communities engaged in each other's organizing spaces learning from each other. Bailey, a participant in this, theorizes this as multidirectional solidarity:

In the context of these histories and tensions, the most recent chapter in Black–Palestinian solidarity—the Ferguson–Gaza moment—marked an increase in mainstream [United States] political awareness and momentum shift for both Black and Palestinian liberation struggles. For Black and Palestinian people in the United States, and Palestinians in Palestine itself, this moment created a new opportunity for multidirectional solidarity both on the ground and online.²⁸⁶

Black and Palestinian activists coined the phrase “when I see them, I see us.”²⁸⁷ Here, multidimensional solidarity is conceptualized as looking in the mirror to foster joint action, seeing your struggles and responses reflected in those of others.

To construct a more multi-directional solidarity, mainstream human rights organizations can seek inspiration from the way social movements in the South and North are seeing their struggles reflected in one another. Amnesty is increasingly experimenting with members in the Global South acting in solidarity with those most affected in the Global North. In July 2018, Amnesty's Human Rights Education Programme organized school children from Argentina, Burkina Faso, India, Kenya, Senegal, Thailand, Togo, and Venezuela to send solidarity messages to thousands of child asylum-seekers who were detained and

²⁸⁴ Ahmed, *supra* note 62.

²⁸⁵ Kristian Davis Bailey, *Black Palestinian Solidarity in the Ferguson-Gaza Era*, 67 AM. Q. 1017, 1017–18 (2015).

²⁸⁶ *Id.*

²⁸⁷ Sandra Tamari & Tara Thompson, *From Ferguson to Palestine, We See Us*, HUFFINGTON POST (Oct. 16, 2015, 2:45 PM), https://www.huffingtonpost.com/sandra-tamari/from-ferguson-to-palestine_b_8307832.html.

separated from their families at the U.S. border.²⁸⁸ The action was designed to empower children to speak out, share hope across borders, and urge the U.S. government to respect the rights of children and asylum seekers.²⁸⁹ In reference to a similar campaigning initiative, David Griffiths, Director of the Secretary General's Office, stated that our "sweet spot as a movement is when you find the right blend between local agency and global solidarity [T]here is something powerful and poignant about that."²⁹⁰

2. South–South Solidarity

More visible South–South solidarity is emerging between civil society and citizens' movements too. Global South solidarity for the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa shows that this is not without precedent, but digital organizing creates new possibilities to connect transnational online and offline organizing. More NGOs from the Global South, such as Conectas, are now engaged in advocacy at the international level, creating new types of transnational advocacy networks.²⁹¹ This Section looks at Pan-African human rights solidarity as a lens to reflect on South–South solidarity to think about what international human rights organizations can learn from this.

Over recent years, new Pan-African platforms have emerged with movements that have converged and seek solidarity with each other. Often framing their activism in terms of social justice or democracy, they speak to similar values as international human rights groups, though their mandate is broader going beyond rights as encapsulated in international human rights law. In 2016, the Pan-African solidarity platform—later named Afrikki—was created by citizens' movements from Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Congo-Brazzaville, Chad, Madagascar, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Senegal.²⁹² This grew out of connections between Y'en a Marre, who played a key role in mobilizing Senegalese to vote for political change in 2012, Balai Citoyen, a youth group in Burkina Faso involved in protests that contributed to President Compaore's departure after twenty-seven years, and La

²⁸⁸ "You Will Always Have a Friend": Children from India to Venezuela Express Solidarity with Kids Locked Up Under Trump's Orders, AMNESTY INT'L (July 3, 2018, 4:10 PM), https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/07/children-send-solidarity-messages-to-kids-locked-up-under-trump/?utm_source=FBPAGE-IS&utm_medium=social&utm_content=1644817975/&utm_campaign=Amnesty&utm_term=News.

²⁸⁹ *Id.*

²⁹⁰ Telephone Interview with David Griffiths, *supra* note 89.

²⁹¹ Bickford, *supra* note 11, at 85.

²⁹² Amandine Rushenguziminega, *The Continental AFRIKKI Platform: The Power of Pan-African Solidarity*, PAMBAZUKA (Sept. 15, 2018), <https://www.pambazuka.org/pan-africanism/continental-afrikki-platform-power-pan-african-solidarity>.

Lutte pour le Changement, a Congolese youth movement for human rights and political transition in the DRC.²⁹³ In 2015, Fadel Barro of Y'en a Marre was arrested in DRC at a joint press conference, and this adversity strengthened solidarity between these collectives.²⁹⁴ This platform organized the first Université Populaire de l'Engagement Citoyen, a summer school connecting social movements to learn from each other, in 2018.²⁹⁵

In August 2018, Kenyan activists mobilized in solidarity with their Ugandan counterparts following the arrest of Ugandan singer-turned-parliamentarian, Robert Kyagulanyi, also known as Bobi Wine.²⁹⁶ Wine's 2017 song *Freedom*, a song against lifting of Uganda's presidential age limit, became a rallying call for Uganda's youth.²⁹⁷ Social justice centers in Kenya recorded a music video in solidarity, Pawa 254—an art-for-social-change center—organized a solidarity concert, Kenyan musicians issued solidarity messages, and activists organized a march to the Ugandan High Commission in Kenya.²⁹⁸ Kyagulanyi was released the following week.²⁹⁹ This is an example of activists in one country creatively using the ability they have to stand in solidarity with others. In some cases, the activists may not have the same space to work on similar issues in their own country in the same way.

Amnesty has piloted some South–South solidarity approaches, but interviewees felt this had been relatively ad hoc and organic to date, and they saw the need to enhance South-to-South cooperation for impact and movement building. The South Asia Office is looking at how to engage Latin American interlocutors in its advocacy on enforced disappearances in Pakistan because these interlocutors have endured traumatic histories of enforced disappearances themselves.³⁰⁰ The Office is exploring South–South advocacy because Western

²⁹³ *Id.*

²⁹⁴ *Activists Arrested in Kinshasa Pro-Democracy Event*, ALJAZEERA (Mar. 17, 2015), <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2015/03/activists-arrested-kinshasa-drc-pro-democracy-event-150317050333028.html>.

²⁹⁵ See Rushenguziminega, *supra* note 292.

²⁹⁶ Rael Ombuor, *Kenya Rights Activists Demand Bobi Wine Release*, VOICE AM., (Aug. 23, 2018, 3:27 AM), <https://www.voanews.com/africa/kenya-rights-activists-demand-bobi-wines-release>.

²⁹⁷ Abdullahi Boru Halakhe, *The Bobi Wine Phenomenon – The Youthful Face of Uganda's Resistance*, ELEPHANT (Sept. 6, 2018), <https://www.theelephant.info/features/2018/09/06/the-bobi-wine-phenomenon-the-youthful-face-of-ugandas-resistance/>.

²⁹⁸ Ombuor, *supra* note 296.

²⁹⁹ Monitor Reporter, *Bobi Wine, Wadri Granted Bail*, DAILY MONITOR (Aug. 27, 2018), <https://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Bobi-Wine-Mubiri-Wadri-Mwiru-bail-/688334-4730688-t8ohh2/index.html>.

³⁰⁰ Int'l Comm. of the Red Cross, *The Missing in Latin America: Families Will Not Stop Searching, Nor Will We Stop Helping*, INT'L COMM. RED CROSS (July 23, 2019), <https://www.icrc.org/en/>

pressure can be seen as an instrumentalization of human rights towards other ends and is consequently resented.³⁰¹ West African sections have stood in solidarity on the Burundi crises and arrests of human rights defenders in DRC. South–South membership solidarity has been hindered by limited, but growing, membership in the Global South. While it is difficult to know the extent to which new members in the Global South will be interested in campaigning on issues outside their country, Amnesty interviewees see potential. Amnesty Kenya staff are interested in solidarity work on Turkey, Egypt, and Palestine.³⁰² Netsanet Belay, Africa Research and Advocacy Director, referenced the potential for South African campaigning on Palestine.³⁰³ Phil Wilmot of Solidarity Uganda highlighted the importance of social movements having spaces to learn from each other, to experiment, and to create support systems.³⁰⁴ Rather than meeting to have workshops—which are not cost-effective and do not strengthen the movement—Phil Wilmot suggests finding time to work in each other’s contexts.³⁰⁵ This could be an area in which international human rights groups might invest.

For international human rights campaigning groups to stay relevant, they need new platforms to galvanize people-to-people solidarity in real time. Technology allows people to connect at new scales and speeds. However, technology has also disrupted the business model of organizations that have historically played an intermediary role between people in the Global North who wanted to take part in and fund actions and those most affected. New platforms like Avaaz and Change.org enable people to shape their own campaigns in real time.³⁰⁶ Amnesty could develop an online portal to facilitate solidarity. Nonviolent civil society groups and social movements could sign-up, develop their profile, and be verified. Each group with a profile could log updates, file requests for solidarity (e.g., from particular geographical, linguistic, and demographic groups), and rate solidarity received using a star-based system. This system would take away a level of control from Amnesty, and actions would not be Amnesty-branded. When Amnesty has verified facts and crafted calls within their policy, Amnesty-approved actions could be included, and

document/missing-latin-america-families-will-not-stop-searching.

³⁰¹ Interview with Omar Waraich, *supra* note 214.

³⁰² Telephone Interview with Irungu Houghton, *supra* note 39.

³⁰³ Interview with Netsanet Belay, *supra* note 63.

³⁰⁴ Telephone Interview with Phil Wilmot, Team of Dirs., Solidarity Uganda, Advisor to Glob. Movement Network Beautiful Rising (July 13, 2018).

³⁰⁵ *Id.*

³⁰⁶ See Lanka Horstink, *Online Participation and the New Global Democracy: Avaaz, a Case Study*, in 31 GLOBAL SOCIETY 101, 105 (2016).

members could act through this platform. The platform could also act as a database helping Amnesty connect the dots between different struggles to figure out where to flip the solidarity script.

C. Global Framing of Human Rights Struggles from the Roots

As an increasingly global movement, Amnesty could leverage its membership and dispersed presence to be a powerful platform for transnational solidarity. The organization would work with those most affected by human rights concerns of a global nature by framing these issues from the bottom-up. People in different parts of the world would be seeking linked liberation from interconnected struggles, experienced differently. Injustice is transcontinental and taken personally. Amnesty would align with people mobilizing around these concerns, acting as a connector, and engaging their own membership to join actions. Mobilization would be complemented by high-level advocacy. In many respects, this is what Amnesty has been trying to do through its global campaigns, although interviewees did not generally refer to this.

Global framing is based on an understanding that the “local is global” and domestic work alone cannot yield solutions to interconnected violations.³⁰⁷ As Sylvia Tamale and Joe Oloka-Onyango explain, “[l]ocal circumstances and conditions of patriarchy and exploitation in the third world are intricately connected to international conditions What in Africa appears to be a local political act is compounded by the frustrations and tensions set in motion by global forces.”³⁰⁸ Lysa Johns explains how shifts in the Global North also make connecting struggles critical.³⁰⁹ She says the “whole idea of solidarity assumes that people are better placed or unaffected, but currently we’re in an environment where everyone feels like a victim Northern countries felt [like they were] in a good place, but even that doesn’t exist anymore.”³¹⁰ Rather than seeing domestic struggles as discrete or disconnected, they are interdependent; Resistance in response to rights struggles is then framed across borders.

Transnational solidarity may link to ongoing debates about whether inequality is a human rights issue. Reflecting on Europe’s lack of solidarity during the Greek austerity crisis, Maro Pantazidou, Amnesty’s Deputy Director of Global Strategy and Impact, mused: “If we start by accepting power

³⁰⁷ J. Oloka-Onyango & Sylvia Tamale, *The Personal Is Political: Or Why Women’s Rights Are Indeed Human Rights: An African Perspective on International Feminism*, 17 HUM RTS. Q. 691, 701 (1995).

³⁰⁸ *Id.* at 701–02.

³⁰⁹ Telephone Interview with Lysa Johns, *supra* note 146.

³¹⁰ *Id.*

imbalances between European states, can we talk about genuine solidarity without suggesting that those with privilege will need to sacrifice some of that?”³¹¹ Similar questions emerged at a domestic level, with one civil society activist from a Latin American country saying, “[s]olidarity is less clear or more challenging when a country is socioeconomically and racially divided and when from your privileged position you can be somehow be part of the problem.”³¹²

Key future human rights dilemmas—protecting human rights on the internet, mitigating human rights impacts of climate change, and thinking about the rights of future generations—will require transnational solidarity. This approach requires a big vision and the development of new international norms. Rather than seeing global work as an add-on to work planned in regional silos under broad strategic goals, it requires an integrated planning process to frame global work bottom-up.

VII. SOLIDARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Both Amnesty and civil society activists interviewed spoke of solidarity starting at home. Though not originally envisaged as part of the research project, it became increasingly clear that to transform solidarity with others, we must first transform solidarity among ourselves. The interviews invoked the reimagining and reworking of our organizational cultures—the spoken and unspoken values, beliefs and principles that characterize our work environment.

Based on one of the few academic studies of Amnesty’s International Secretariat looking at the research and administration programs in London between 2003 and 2006, current and former staff felt obliged to be “selfless,” placing the interests of “victims” or the “movement” ahead of themselves, and controlling emotions of sadness and guilt to this effect.³¹³ This research gives insights into Amnesty’s organizational culture before the GTP. Over the last decade, political sociologists have also analyzed the emotional labor, whether in paid or unpaid work, that sustains activism. Brown and Pickerill built on a study characterizing “emotions” as the “glue of solidarity.”³¹⁴ They examine how activists emotionally experience their actions and make meaning out of these

³¹¹ Telephone Interview with Maro Pantazidou, *supra* note 209.

³¹² Telephone Interview with Lucia Nader, *supra* note 81.

³¹³ Kathleen Rodgers, ‘*Anger is Why We’re All Here*’: *Mobilizing and Managing Emotions in a Professional Activist Organization*, 9 SOC. MOVEMENT STUD. 273, 278–90 (2010).

³¹⁴ Gavin Brown & Jenny Pickerill, *Space for Emotion in Spaces of Activism*, 2 EMOTION, SPACE & SOC’Y 24, 32 (2009).

experiences and feelings.³¹⁵ They argue that activists must create spaces to reflect on their emotional experiences and needs.³¹⁶

Recent literature on well-being and resilience of human rights workers also links to organizational culture. In 2015, an empirical study of the mental health of human rights advocates was published by Columbia University and New York University.³¹⁷ Their findings were significant: 19% of those who took part had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), 19% had significant symptoms associated with PTSD, 15% were clinically depressed, and 19% reported burnout.³¹⁸ Psychologists have studied the link between burnout—“a condition that affects body and mind due to a broken way of working, coupled with loss of purpose”—and meaningful work.³¹⁹ One of the risk factors for burnout is an individual’s cognitive dissonance between their values and actions compounded by a perceived gap between what their organization espouses and practices.³²⁰ Taken together, this literature would suggest that solidarity should be a strong feature of Amnesty’s internal workings to prevent cognitive dissonance. Solidarity is so central to Amnesty’s external work that many interviewees described it as in “our DNA.”³²¹ The Article now turns to perspectives emerging from the interviews.

To a certain extent, Amnesty’s International Secretariat’s internal culture mirrors the adversarial nature of the organization’s work. Externally, this is represented in the motto of “taking injustice personally” and “speaking truth to power.”³²² While there is increasing internal discussion about how to become more propositional in presenting recommendations to governments and other stakeholders, much of the organization’s work maintains an oppositional stance which seeps into how employees engage with each other. This tension is not unique to Amnesty and has been conceptualized elsewhere in the non-profit sector by David Allyn as “mission mirroring” where “an organization becomes enmeshed internally in the same conflicts it was founded to deal with

³¹⁵ *Id.* at 24.

³¹⁶ *Id.* at 33.

³¹⁷ See Amy Joscelyne, et al., *Mental Health Functioning in the Human Rights Field: Findings from an International Internet-Based Survey*, PLOS ONE, Dec. 23, 2015, at 1, 2.

³¹⁸ *Id.* at 2.

³¹⁹ ALESSANDRA PIGNI, THE IDEALIST’S SURVIVAL KIT: 75 SIMPLE WAYS TO AVOID BURNOUT 28 (2016).

³²⁰ *Id.* at 30.

³²¹ Telephone Interview with Irungu Houghton, *supra* note 39; Telephone Interview with Makmid Kamara, *supra* note 41.

³²² *Taking Injustice Personally*, AMNESTY INT’L, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2016/01/amnesty-goals-2016-2019/> (last visited Mar. 31, 2020); Salil Shetty, *Speaking Truth to Power . . . And to All of Us*, AMNESTY INT’L (July 13, 2017), <https://www.amnesty.ca/news/speaking-truth-power%E2%80%A6-and-all-us>.

externally.”³²³ He finds that mission-driven cultures are “inherently conflictual” and if leaders and stakeholders identify “mission mirroring” and see it as natural, they are more likely to find ways to work through it before it escalates.³²⁴

Where governments use a politics of demonization to break solidarities within their societies, human rights workers are caught between a hostile government and an alienated public. As Najia Bounaim, Deputy Regional Director (Campaigns) for North Africa based in Tunisia, explained, “Before you were a hero working with human rights organizations, now [there is] a stigma. It’s a bit isolating.”³²⁵ Speaking to such dynamics, Pickerill and Brown stated as follows:

“[M]aintaining an oppositional stance on issues requires activists to constantly negate the hegemonic messages and norms that permeate society.” It is hardly surprising that emotional dissonance, cynicism and withdrawal can result from such processes of de-integration. Constantly feeling “different” and apart from society adds a particular emotional pressure to activism and requires a high degree of emotional reflexivity in order to overcome or cope with this dissonance.³²⁶

Regional Offices were designed to foster greater integration between colleagues with different functional remits. There is still potential, however, to break down silos to build solidarity among Amnesty staff and their struggles. Ahmed Elzobier, Amnesty International’s Sudan Researcher, has been a champion of efforts to foster solidarity within the Regional Office for East Africa based in Nairobi. He explained that:

improving human rights in Kenya or Uganda, will not mean that we should forget about South Sudan or Eritrea. Unless we inspire a rising tide to lift all these ships together, our efforts will be partial. That’s why solidarity is important within our teams and broader networks of human rights movements in the region.³²⁷

This speaks to a need for international human rights workers to dial down their egos and increase openness and collaboration. In many of the Amnesty

³²³ David Allyn, *Mission Mirroring: Understanding Conflict in Nonprofit Organizations*, 40 *NONPROFIT & VOLUNTARY SECTOR Q.* 762, 768 (2011).

³²⁴ Allyn, *supra* note 327, at 768.

³²⁵ Telephone Interview with Najia Bounaim, Reg’l Dir. (Campaigns), Se. Asia, Amnesty Int’l (July 4, 2018).

³²⁶ Brown & Pickerill, *supra* note 314, at 28 (quoting Debra King, *Sustaining Activism Through Emotional Reflexivity*, in *EMOTIONS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS* 150, 152 (Helena Flam & Debra King eds., 2005)).

³²⁷ E-mail from Ahmed Elzobier, Sudan Researcher, Amnesty Int’l to Author (May 22, 2018) (on file with author).

International Secretariat interviews, a gap came through between how colleagues saw solidarity personally—perhaps in their activism outside the organization or in a previous life—and professionally in their current role. As one interviewee said, “Amnesty is not always benefiting from that part of our experiences.”³²⁸ Greater solidarity will be fostered if staff feel able to bring their whole authentic self to work.

As this research was underway, Amnesty was shaken by the death of Gaëtan Mootoo, a West African researcher who took his own life on May 26, 2018. Gaëtan had worked with Amnesty for thirty years, and an independent external review commissioned by Amnesty showed that he struggled in the face of the GTP’s organizational change.³²⁹ An investigation into the suicide of a second Amnesty International employee, a paid intern, in 2018 was completed in January 2019.³³⁰ In response to this, an external review of staff wellbeing is underway.³³¹ These tragic incidents have made employees’ wellbeing and organizational culture urgent priorities for Amnesty. The organization is building on existing work around organizational values, behaviors and duty of care. Additionally, the research conducted by Amnesty into the suicides of their employees underscored the importance of ensuring that the value Amnesty places on solidarity externally is also mirrored in transforming solidarity internally.

Cultures which are suboptimal for solidarity replicate themselves at each level of the organization—between the International Secretariat and the Amnesty movement, and possibly between membership structures and their members. There is scope for greater solidarity between the International Secretariat and the movement it serves. MingYu Hah, the Deputy Regional Director (Campaigns) for South East Asia and the Pacific based in Bangkok, and previously with Amnesty Australia, said that “[i]f we don’t have genuine solidarity within our own paid staff within the movement, it will have domino effect on rights holders on the ground.”³³² With new International Secretariat staff joining through the GTP, and other staff leaving, the process of developing interpersonal relationships with sections is still ongoing. European sections, in

³²⁸ Pantazidou, *supra* note 5.

³²⁹ *Independent Review into the Tragic Loss of Gaëtan Mootoo, Amnesty International’s West Africa Researcher*, AMNESTY INT’L (Nov. 19, 2018, 5:19 PM), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/11/independent-review-into-the-tragic-loss-of-gaetan-mootoo>.

³³⁰ KONTERRA GROUP, ROSALIND MCGREGOR REVIEW FOR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (2019), <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ORG6097652019ENGLISH.PDF>

³³¹ *Id.*

³³² Telephone Interview with MingYu Hah, *supra* note 108.

particular, were previously used to getting to know colleagues through visits to London. Paul Helsloot, Director of Media and Political Affairs for Amnesty Netherlands, felt that you “have to know each other to build something together.”³³³ There was great openness among section staff to think through what methods could be used to nurture these relationships fostering solidarity within the movement.

CONCLUSION

This Article uses Amnesty as a case study to examine different kinds of solidarity, but its findings may also be relevant to other organizations and contribute to further reflections and reforms in human rights work.

The research outlined in this Article draws on both human rights practice and academic theory to describe different kinds of solidarity in terms of a “solidarity spectrum,” ranging from charitable solidarity *for* people to a more transformative solidarity *with* people. It identifies a framework in which solidarity can be discussed and emphasizes the importance of how we work and the language we use to speak of it. This Article shows how transformative solidarity can be an organizing principle domestically, cross-regionally and transnationally. Additionally, it identifies barriers to transformative solidarity and explores how progress can be made through addressing such impediments. Lastly, it argues that solidarity must also be promoted and emphasized in the internal organizational culture of our own human rights organizations.

Amnesty’s paradigm shift during the GTP is seen through the lens of this solidarity spectrum: a primarily unidirectional and charitable approach to international solidarity, in which the Global North pressed for change in the Global South, was complemented by some domestically-built solidarity and the development of partnerships with less formal organizations. Parts of Amnesty have also experimented with flipping the traditional solidarity script, facilitating solidarity in multiple directions—South–South, South–North, North–North, as well as North–South—and there is potential to explore this more fully. The Article also shows that there is greater scope to harness new technologies as platforms for people-to-people solidarity. Amnesty’s solidarity model is metamorphosing: the past model of solidarity is waning, and the newer models it will transform to are only beginning to take shape.

³³³ Telephone Interview with Paul Helsloot, *supra* note 100.

Figuring out where to situate work on the solidarity spectrum is both an ethical decision and informed by practical imperatives. This Article identifies numerous tensions and trade-offs which emerge between the following: control and influence; quick responses and long-term collaborative investments; volume of work and depth of participation; and brand and collaboration. It does not envisage Amnesty, or other organizations, taking a single position on the solidarity spectrum. The positions such organizations take, however, in deciding how and when to move closer to transformative solidarity, will shape the nature of human rights work and define the identity of human rights organizations.