

# ANNUAL REPORT

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## 2020



**DECEMBER 17**

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Darfur Women Action Group  
Authored by: Janus Kwong



**DARFUR WOMEN  
ACTION GROUP**

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# DARFUR WOMEN ACTION GROUP

2020 Annual Report

## Who Are We?

Darfur Women Action Group (DWAG) is a women-led anti-atrocities nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) status, founded in 2009 by a Darfuri genocide survivor to amplify the voices and empower the affected communities and to provide a platform for interested stakeholders to work on advancing its unique goals. DWAG strives to empower victims and survivors of the Darfur genocide, both in Sudan and in the Diaspora. Our work includes providing them with access to tools that will enable them to combat violence, address massive human rights abuses in their societies, and work with others to prevent future atrocities while promoting global peace.

***“Envisioning a world where justice for all, equal human rights and the respect for human dignity is the primordial ethic.”***

## What is the Annual Report?

The 2020 Annual Report lists and explores the many accomplishments, endeavors, and aspirations the Darfur Women Action Group has achieved in the past year. A re-evaluation of our efforts in 2020, this report will assess as well as highlight DWAG’s progress to encourage reflection and structural development for future endeavors. The annual report features an overview of our achievements in financial development, campaign & virtual advocacy, policy & structural developments, media coverage, new long-term projects, and miscellaneous efforts.



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# OUR PEOPLE

*What makes DWAG unique is the diversity and expertise of its board and staff members. We are pleased to be joined by a board of members from diverse professional backgrounds with a special passion for issues DWAG is striving to address. Our staff team is largely composed of volunteers, bringing together at least 12-16 interns and providing career training and mentoring opportunities to prepare them for their future careers.*

## BOARD MEMBERS



## DWAG STAFF

Niemat Ahmadi - Founder and President  
Norrie Kurtz - Chairwoman of the Board  
Fatima M. Haroun - Vice President  
Hawa Mohamed Abdalla - Vice President  
Emmanuel Itier  
Maria Bello  
Emira Woods  
Bridget Moix  
Mia Farrow  
Mukesh Kapila  
Dr. Bama Athreya  
Donna Robinson - Legal Advisor  
Dr. Mahmoud Briama

Niemat Ahmadi - Founder and President  
Tony Zhou - Program Officer  
Leah Hollar - Development Intern  
Janus Kwong - Communications Intern  
Shayna Kushner - Campaign and  
Movement Building Intern  
Caroline Kinsella - Policy Intern  
Kylie Henry - Outreach and Partnership  
Building Intern  
Natida Nivasnanda - Communications  
and Media Outreach Intern

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# THE GREATER WASHINGTON PROJECT

The Greater Washington project focuses on social justice issues and women empowerment. The project aims to empower and amplify the voices of the affected communities and the historically marginalized group in the DC area to become socially, culturally, and economically empowered, enabling them to overcome structural inequality and be agents of change in their society.

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## Women Empowering Women (WEW)

DWAG's project started in 2012 and is based on the simple but powerful idea of recognizing the strength and resilience of women survivors while mobilizing, engaging, educating, and empowering them to be champions of social change.

The project started with Darfuri women survivors and other east Africans, who came together from war zones and came to the US as refugees. With the aim of helping others like them develop their interpersonal and communication skills, our goal is to enable these women to understand and cope with cultural differences and to better integrate themselves into their new society. We were eventually joined by American friends and started organizing informal gatherings, such events celebrating International Women's Day, and sharing experiences through powerful storytelling.

What started with 12 women has grown over the years, and we have hosted strategic planning sessions and advocacy training, organized meetings with policy makers, and started a mentoring program. Today, many of our members have gotten quality education. Some have graduated with **Summa cum laude** and landed high earning jobs. This year, when the pandemic erupted, our group has served as a leading emergency response team, reaching out to our community and calling people to give them moral support and sending useful information about health and economic resources available for those impacted by COVID-19.

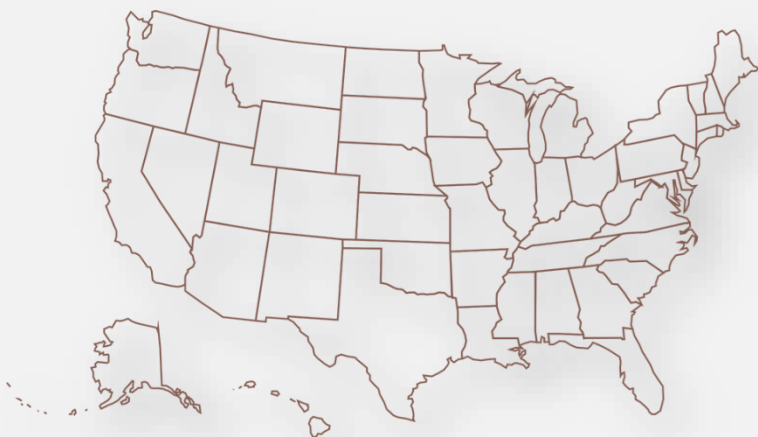
Over the last eight years, we have trained and served about 150 women, about 150 youth and men as direct beneficiaries, and about 1,500 as indirect beneficiaries. These individuals receive assistance in language and intercultural dialogue, advocacy training, digital training, strategic planning, public speaking, and access to other resources that are not often in our organizational capacity, including access to quality education. We have also provided a forum for them to participate in conferences and workshops relevant to current issues.

Our next step is to expand our project to include a diverse group of women who believe in advancing women's rights and women's broader agenda in society regardless of their social, geographic, political, and cultural background.

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# CAMPAIGN & VIRTUAL ADVOCACY

## 50/50 CAMPAIGN



The 50/50 campaign is a project in which we are working to have a DWAG representative in each US state as a DWAG National Ambassador.

The overall goal of the 50/50 campaign is to have a network of 50 volunteers who act as a focal point to promote continued awareness and education about the longstanding genocide in Darfur and its impact on the affected communities. State representatives also reach out to recruit and educate more people in order to rally the support of likeminded individuals who will not tolerate silence in the face of genocide and who are willing to do something to help.

## JUSTICE FOR DARFUR CAMPAIGN

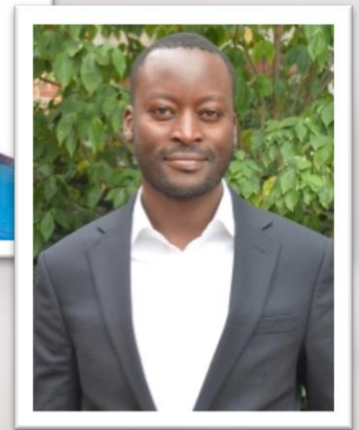
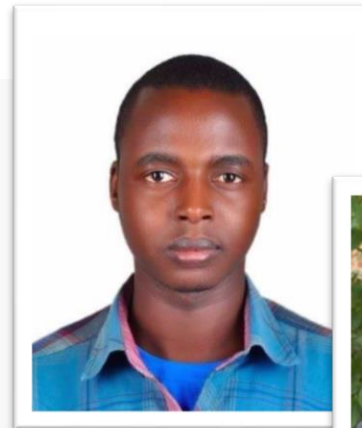
Marking the 10th anniversary of the second arrest warrant issued for Omar Al Bashir and International Justice Day, DWAG organized a week-long campaign to draw attention to the impunity for crimes committed in Darfur and call on the Interim government of Sudan to take immediate action and surrender individuals wanted by the International Criminal Court, including al-Bashir, to the ICC to face trial. By providing followers with opportunities to engage with us on social media, DWAG hoped to bring global attention to our demands for action and to the attention of international leaders. For International Justice Day, DWAG issued a statement in support of the ICC and hosted a Facebook Live event on July 17th.



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## International Justice Day Virtual Discussion

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, with special guest speakers Mutasim Ali and Jamal Alnour, DWAG hosted an online panel discussion on Facebook with Darfuri genocide survivors to discuss their thoughts on the current situation in Sudan, recent events, and their personal experiences.



## Women's Peace and Security Agenda and the Impact of COVID-19 Panel Discussion

With special guest speakers Ambassador Kelley Currie, Ms. Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini (on behalf of Senator Jaffer), and Niemat Ahmadi, DWAG hosted an online panel discussion on Facebook. The discussion addressed the role of women in peace and security with a special emphasis on women in conflict zones, taking Sudan as an example. The panel also delved into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women across the world and what needs to be done to address their needs.

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“Women and youth in Sudan showed the world that they were capable of removing 30 years of dictatorship. They must be equally involved in the transition to civilian government.”

- DWAG President, Niemat Ahmadi

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## Civilian Protection Campaign

UN Photo/Surendra Bahadur Ter



For our Civilian Protection Campaign, DWAG urged supporters to sign and call on the UNGA members and the member states of UNSC to make civilian protection in Sudan a top priority to preserve the lives of millions of civilians in Darfur and across Sudan and strongly urges the UNGA and the Security Council member to consider the following demands:

1. The UNSC must prioritize civilians' protection in Sudan throughout the interim period and authorize UN forces with a chapter VII mandate to grant them the ability to protect civilians, specifically in Darfur.
2. Pressure Sudan to surrender al-Bashir and all ICC indictees to face trial and to set the precedent for genuine accountability in Sudan.
3. Pressure Sudan to stop the Janjaweed and the Rapid Support Forces from attacking civilians and hold them accountable when they do so.
4. Pressure Sudan to take serious steps to allow the Darfur genocide victims to peacefully restore their stolen land.

## Girls Empowerment Week

In commemoration of the International Day of the Girl, DWAG presented Girl Empowerment Week. Until October 18th, DWAG provided resources for our supporters to participate in support of our cause and hosted a virtual discussion on Facebook. The discussion addressed girls coping with dire situations and other factors that may be involved with their living standards as well as the current focus of empowerment.

## Week of Appreciation

DWAG organized a week of appreciation from October 26th-31th to mark our annual symposium event and commemorate the movement that we've built with our supporters. Due to the inability to host DWAG's annual symposium on Women and Genocide in the 21st Century, we spent the week to express our deepest appreciation for our followers by sharing pictures, videos and reflection messages from previous symposium attendees to show our appreciation to those who have been working with us to build and sustain the movement for genocide prevention.





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# 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

DARFUR WOMEN ACTION GROUP

For sixteen days, DWAG will feature stories from women in Darfur and in the diaspora; female genocide survivors and activists from all over the world; and women leaders and scholars who have played an important role in the advancement of gender equality, genocide prevention, peacebuilding, and human rights advocacy.



## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM CAMPAIGN

From November 25th to December 10th, DWAG launched the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, an integrated campaign to further our efforts to draw attention to the unspeakable suffering women face during genocide and other atrocities. An annual campaign that takes place from International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (on Nov. 25th) to Human Rights Day (on Dec. 10th), 16 Days of Activism engaged individuals and organizations all over the world to collectively call for the elimination of violence against women and girls.

During this campaign, DWAG featured stories from women in Darfur and in the diaspora; female genocide survivors and activists from all over the world; and women leaders and scholars who have played an important role in the advancement of gender equality, genocide prevention, peacebuilding, and human rights advocacy.



# STARS FOR DARFUR

## VIRTUAL EVENT

### STARS FOR DARFUR EVENT

On December 10th, the International Day of Human Rights, DWAG hosted a virtual benefit concert called Stars for Darfur. As a fundraising opportunity for DWAG to raise donations, Stars for Darfur featured musicians Tony Esposito and Mark Kostabi in a virtual concert, where a silent auction featured artwork and creates donated to DWAG by Sudanese artists and craftsman. The goal was to come together for one night of art, music, and culture in support of DWAG's efforts and in solidarity for the victims of the genocide, and hopefully inspiring advocacy and activism in Darfur.

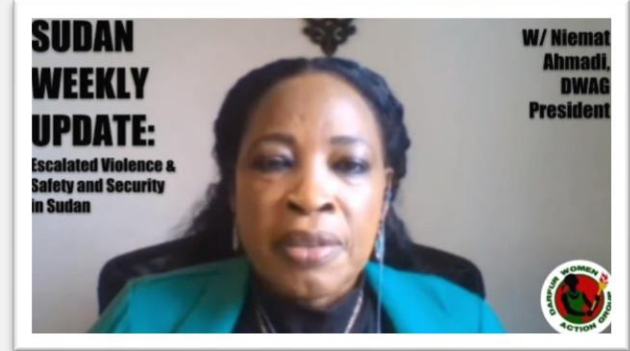
### STARS FOR DARFUR CAMPAIGN (ONGOING)

An ongoing campaign, the Stars for Darfur Campaign aims to get celebrities on board with DWAG's efforts and add DWAG to their advocacy platforms, thus informing others about the situation in Darfur and the lack of justice for victims and their families. Throughout the year, DWAG has contacted influential individuals or celebrities that have a mass following and are outspoken when it comes to social justice, anti-genocide advocacy, women empowerment, and violence against women.

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## SUDAN WEEKLY UPDATES

Weekly updates with on-the-ground and international news on Sudan with DWAG President, Niemat Ahmadi, on Facebook Live



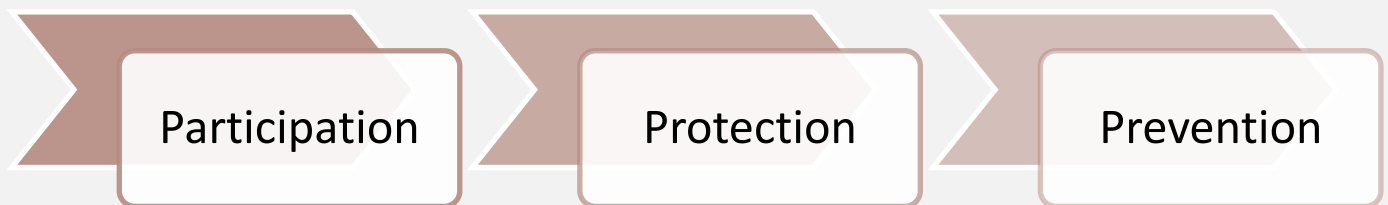
## NEWS UPDATES & STATEMENTS

1. Mass Killing in Darfur and across Sudan - Dec. January update
2. A Cautious First Step – Sudan’s Agreement to Hand Bashir to the ICC
3. International Women’s Day 2020
4. Solidarity Against Coronavirus
5. Seeking Justice and Accountability for Darfur – The Arrest of Ali Kushayb
6. World Refugee Day – The Fight Is Not Over
7. Attacks Against Civilians in Darfur Must End
8. Justice for Darfur Campaign
9. Justice Hangs in the Balance in Sudan – International Justice Day
10. Another Deadly Attack in West Darfur
11. Accountability for Sexual Violence Crimes
12. Another Fatal Attack in West Darfur - A Call for Civilian Protection
13. Escalated Violence Leads to More Protests and Attacks
14. Devastating Floods in Darfur: A Call for International Assistance
15. Keep the spotlight on Sudan: Death toll rises in Port Sudan as fighting continues
16. One year since constitutional declaration: Mass demonstrations leave many injured and detained
17. Escalation of Violence in Kassala - Eastern Sudan
18. The Sudanese People Call for Immediate Action
19. Civilian Protection in Sudan Now
20. More than 100 Dead After Five Weeks of Sudanese Floods
21. Sudanese Government and Rebel Alliances Sign Peace Agreement
22. Recent Violent and Mass Displacement in Darfur
23. An Important Breakthrough in the Long-Awaited Justice for Darfur Genocide Victims
24. Ongoing Floods Expose Women to Further Risk of Gender-Based Violence
25. Recent Deadly Attacks on Darfuri Villages and Displaced Persons Camps
26. A Disaster in the Making: Darfur Will Lose UN Civilian Protection by End of Year
27. Growing Food Insecurity Crisis Demands Immediate Action and Funding
28. International Day of Tolerance Statement
29. Covid-19 Crisis In Sudan Takes A Turn For The Worse
30. Speak Up For Darfuri Victims Of Chemical Weapons Attacks

# POLICY & STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

## Strategic Framework for Women's Participation and Empowerment in the Republic of Sudan

The Strategy for the Implementation of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in the Republic of Sudan aims at putting forth a framework for a National Action Plan of substantive change in the period of Sudanese transitional government to ensure equal participation and secure protection of women and girls' human rights. This Strategy also aims at attending to the needs distinct to women in the context of Sudan, addressing the continued use of systematic, weaponized rape in the Darfur genocide, impunity enjoyed by perpetrators, the exclusion of women in the current transitional government, and the effect of Bashir regime's campaign of fundamentalist Islam on the culture, norms, and beliefs surrounding women.



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# FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## FUNDING

About 90% of DWAG funding is spent on programs. Only 10% goes to Overhead and other expenses.

## DONORS

Thank you to our donors:

1. Humanity United
2. PRBB Foundation
3. Diverse City Fund
4. 8th Day Interfaith Group
5. Darfur Interfaith Network
6. And our individual donors who have generously contribute

# COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

## COVID-19 Emergency Response:

In light of unprecedented and difficult times, the DWAG Emergency Response team operated in neighbourhoods of the Greater Washington, D.C. area to provide assistance to those in need. A network of volunteers organized services such as routine check-up calls, safe transportation, errand and grocery delivery, and temporary financial assistance. Focal points in DWAG's network also guided those who requested medical services or any other information on COVID-19 measures to the appropriate resources. The Emergency Response Team especially helped those who are most vulnerable — including but not limited to the women and children of affected communities.

## Advocacy and Outreach teams:

The Advocacy and Outreach team liaised with the DWAG network, partners and supporters, and allies within local DC government to bring attention to the unique challenges faced by its constituency. This included establishing a number of focal points to engage network members to reach out to communities, as well as hosting online events and discussions to share experiences on relevant issues. We also engaged with local DC government leaders — these include council members, the Office of African Affairs and the Mayor of DC's COPVID response task force — and partner organizations in the DC areas to set a foothold for change both during and after the pandemic.



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# CONCLUSION



## **DARFUR WOMEN ACTION GROUP**

### **Darfur Still Needs Our Help**

Despite our countless efforts, victims of genocide and their families have yet to achieve justice and lasting peace. Since former Sudanese president, Omar al-Bashir's removal from power in 2019, attacks against civilians have not ceased, and millions are displaced as lack of civilian protection leaves families vulnerable to the violence. Al-Bashir, Ahmed Harun, and Hussein have yet to face trial in the ICC despite arrest warrants dating back to 2009 and a long history of involvement in the Darfuri genocide that resulted in hundreds of thousands of victims. The current interim government in Sudan continuously fails to provide adequate civilian protection, and the upcoming removal of UNAMID peacekeeping troops prompts many to worry for the unprecedented future.

### **Goals for the Future**

Despite the challenges, DWAG is adamant about our goals towards progress and growth as we remain relentless in our efforts for change. In the days to come, we look forward to a new year of opportunities and change for the better. Our goals include aspirations for a larger social media presence, increase in follower base to boost public awareness of current issues, development of women empowerment strategies, and long-term growth for new projects.