

THE GRASSROOTS REPORT

2018 QUARTER 4 (OCT - DEC)



This quarterly report is an overview of Amnesty's national Organising program which is sent to activist leaders and staff. It shows how we're tracking against key goals in the 2020 vision, but it is also a snapshot of some of the most exciting activities and innovations activists have done over the last few months. We want to show key examples of how our grassroots movement has had impact for human rights as a result of their commitment, strategic thinking and hard work.

The purpose of this report is to:

- enable activists to see their individual contribution and understand their collective impact
- show transparency
- share activist led innovation
- identify our areas of strength and where we need to improve

If you have any questions or comments please contact the Organising Team at communityorganising@amnesty.org.au.

Image: Western Australian activists

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What we are trying to achieve:

Amnesty organises a broad range of individuals across the country to be human rights activists in their community. These activists grow our movement and influence decision makers by taking our campaigns to the streets. They ensure that more Australians know about the human rights abuses going on through community events, engaging with the media and meeting with MPs. But the more unstoppable our movement is the more impact we have, which is why we have the following goals from the 2020 Vision.

2020 Goal	2018 Goal	2018 Q4
250 Action Groups covering 90% of electorates with a local plan of action	205 Action Groups covering 70% of electorates, 30% with a local plan of action	177 Action Groups covering 62% of electorates, 33% with a local plan of action
1,000 Leaders	600 Leaders and 5000 activists on Nationbuilder	293 Leaders and 2,070 activists on Nationbuilder
At least 20% of actions not centrally generated	At least 13% of actions not centrally generated (130,000 actions). For the Organising program this means 19,500 actions per quarter	21,074 offline actions collected in Q4

What are all these things?

In very basic terms, an activist is someone that calls on others to take action, an activist leader is someone that coordinates activists. Nationbuilder is the database we are using to track our current activist movement.

An action group is the collective noun for 3 or more activists that work together to campaign for human rights. They could include local action groups (location based), a university groups, thematic networks (not location based & campaign on specific issues) or project based teams.

Non centrally generated actions are offline actions, mainly through paper petitions.

Now, let's see it broken down even further with all the data from our Community Engagement Dashboard! (see next two pages)



Q4 data	QLD / NNSW	NSW	ACT / SNSW	VIC	TAS	SA / NT	WA	National	2018 Q3
No. of groups (total)	27	43	16	43	8	23	17	177	188
- Action groups*	19	33	13	29	6	18	12	130	137
- University groups	6	6	2	6	1	2	3	27	26
- Other action groups	2	4	1	8	1	3	2	21	23
- Temporary action groups	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
New groups	1	2	1	5	0	4	1	14	19
Groups becoming inactive	3	8	5	1	2	1	5	25	18
Electorate coverage (%)	56%	68%	100%	58%	80%	58%	44%	62%	62%
No. of groups with plans	7	15	6	25	1	0	5	59	58
No. of events	39	43	20	28	8	28	17	183	214
No. of media engagements	13	26	7	6	2	2	2	58	68
No. of MPs engaged	3	5	0	2	0	2	4	16	11
No. of offline actions (total)	2,596	5,443	1,892	5,445	1,332	2,759	1,607	21,074	12,246
- With contact details	2,377	3,998	1,356	3,724	474	2,397	1,358	15,684	7,727
- Without contact details	219	1,432	536	1,721	56	362	249	4,575	3,688

* In Q4 we have started combining Local Action Groups & Thematic groups into one category (Action groups) for reporting purposes.

Q4 data	QLD / NNSW	NSW	ACT / SNSW	VIC	TAS	SA / NT	WA	National	2018 Q3
No. of activists trained	55	45	25	88	0	16	17	246	188
No. of activists (total)	250	1,127	228	244	107	286	170	2,363	2,340
- <i>Core & committed (leaders)</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>293</i>	<i>359</i>
- <i>Engaged</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>1,062</i>	<i>204</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>254</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>2,070</i>	<i>1,618</i>
School groups / active schools	15	21	9	20	8	7	6	82	74
No. of school visits	4	7	6	0	0	6	3	31	28
No. of youth leaders	18	14	5	37	4	9	2	89	57
No. of action centre volunteers	30	37	20	30	6	13	26	162	126
No. of volunteer EOI forms	34	117	30	92	4	18	29	324	396
No. of EOIs to volunteers	10	12	20	13	1	6	5	67	90
Volunteers hours (action centre)	655	468	205	400	270	560	452	3,010	3,837
No. of action centre meetings	29	25	25	80	51	27	60	258	254

Key takeaways:

GOING WELL / ON TRACK	AREAS TO IMPROVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our increased focus on offline actions in Q4 proved very successful as we achieved our target of 16,000 offline actions, we ended up with a total of 21,074, it was close to double the amount of actions we collected in Q3. About 75% of these were complete with contact details. We will analyse what worked well under this approach so that we can continue to achieve higher action numbers while growing in other areas simultaneously.• Our numbers for groups and activists saw a decrease which wasn't a reflection of people leaving during that time but because we have cleaned up our data a lot. Our groups and leaders are now completely accurate. Work is still underway to clean up the data of activists at the Engaged level so we have a clearer idea of our total activist base.• Now that we have the Activism Strategy we have done a lot of work to map out the activities and rough timeline in order to achieve the goals set out. There is still work needed to be done to complete an action plan, but we are on track to begin rolling out this strategy in 2019 in some form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Because of the major changes happening in our organisation at the moment we won't list our learnings from Q4 and how they might improve the current way we're working as we'll be introducing significant changes soon to our approach to grassroots. (For more information on this see below in 'how we will improve in 2019')

How we will improve in 2019:

2019 will be a year of significant change for our grassroots activism work. The whole of AIA will be moving to a new operating model in March which has been rolled out simultaneously with a restructure of staff. This will mean less staff focused on our mobilising and organising work and the Organising roles have been nationalised so there will be a reduced capacity to provide the same level of direct support regionally as we have been.

This will take some time to adjust to and it is not currently known exactly what it will look like. But it is an opportunity to reevaluate our organising approach of the last several years and implement changes that lead to more impact on the ground and a more consistent experience for activists around the country. Staff in this area will need to have more of a focus on developing the resources, structures and development opportunities for the movement to be more activist led and is impact driven rather than growth.

This ties into the changes happening to our regional leadership structures which are currently transitioning from having a primary focus on governance to coordinating activists and strategy at the regional level. The 2020 vision goals have also been adjusted to better reflect the new operating model and what we track for reporting purposes will change as well. This will be the final grassroots report in the current format before we work out an improved way to use grassroots data to better inform our plans and strategies. Ultimately this report should not only be used as a way to track how we're going, but to inspire ways to improve our approach to lead to more human rights impact. There will be many challenges ahead as we adjust to the new model, staff and activists will need to work closely together to ensure we continue to be a powerful grassroots movement.

Innovation & Impact (just some of the many examples):

- We actually had a hugely successful and focused Q4. Every region reached and smashed their write for rights target. We collected a staggering 21,074 actions with 75% of them having contact details which means we didn't just have impact for the campaign but also developed lots of new leads to talk to. We increased the number of trainings to make sure our leadership is effective. We supported and developed strong national networks for our refugee, LGBTQI, women's rights and CIE work. Q4 saw these networks score wins, develop plans and pitch new ideas for how to work in these spaces in 2019.
- To mark the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Amnesty SA & NT brought together friends from the community to take action as part of Write for Rights. Activists and supporters were joined by representatives from the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement, Pilgrim Uniting Church, Don Dunston Foundation and many more to celebrate a great year of activism and partnership, and to stand in solidarity with incredible human rights defenders from around the world.
- In partnership with Carriageworks, Amnesty International had the amazing opportunity to weave Write for Rights into Chicago artist Nick Cave's exhibition, "Until". At the event people were invited to take action for Write for Rights inside the exhibition – and those letters went on to be incorporated into the art and become part of the exhibition itself. Letters to the Brave was a unique and inspiring opportunity, and a beautiful way to showcase the power of letter writing.
- SA activists dressed in military uniforms handed over 30,000 blood money actions to Minister Christopher Pyne for our Rohingya campaign. The stunt got lots of media coverage with SA community organiser Nicole Donnelly interviewed and played on ABC radio news bulletins around the country, including News Radio and Triple J Hack



Innovation & Impact (just some of the many examples):

- In WA, activist leader Rachel Cowcher used the skills she developed at the Activist Leadership Weekend to put on a major music and arts festival “Beats for Bravery” in December. Through this event she was able to work with a team of fellow activists, helping them to develop their skills, while bringing in big action numbers for the Write for Rights campaign and raising several thousands of dollars through the art auction.
- The My New Neighbour Campaign went from strength to strength in 2018. In large part due to the dedication and passion of the activist leads on this campaign. The results speak for themselves we wrapped up Q4 with 24 councils standing with refugees through formal motions and the ALP formally endorsing an expanded Community Sponsorship Program at the National Labor Conference. It’s hard to quantify the greater impact of this grassroots driven work but what we do know is that communities are being changed everywhere as the campaign leads continue to spread the spirit of welcome.
- We had schools conferences in NSW, ACT, SA and QLD which covered a range of campaigns including CIE, Refugees and Brave. These conferences invested in and developed the leadership of our schools groups making sure we continue to build youth leaders. The conferences included topics such as how to meet with MPs, how to handle difficult conversations and how to map your school community.
- The team in Victoria opened up the Action Centre for a super Saturday of taking action. Throughout the day, action groups, activists, supporters new and old headed into Collingwood to learn more about Write for Rights incredible human rights defenders, and add their voice to the campaign. Letters, solidarity cards, petitions, conversations, food and friends made for an inspiring and impactful day with a final action tally of 765 actions.

If you are an activist that has does something that you think should be highlighted in the next report make sure to get in touch with us at communityorganising@amnesty.org.au.

Thanks for reading! We’ll be back again after Q1 in 2019 to talk about how our grassroots program is progressing. Thank you to everyone for their contributions to human rights impact. If you have any thoughts, comments or questions please feel free to get in touch.