OUR RESEARCH FOUND THAT IN 2020:

604 ATTACKS

were recorded on defenders working on business-related human rights issues in 2020, up from 572 attacks in 2019.

MORE THAN A THIRD

(210 cases) stemmed from lack of consultation or the failure to secure free, prior and informed consent of affected communities.

ALMOST HALF

(270 cases) of the attacks were related to peaceful protests against business activities.

As in 2019, agribusiness and mining are the sectors most related to attacks, with 140 cases related to mining and 137 cases related to agribusiness in 2020. Other sectors are construction (80 cases), logging & lumber (51 cases), oil, gas & coal (38 cases) and renewable energy (30 cases).

In at least 80 cases, COVID-19 was a key factor

41 cases involved attacks which had a digital element or took place online

1 in 5 attacks were recorded against women HRDs

Latin America 194
Asia-Pacific 173
Eastern Europe & Russia 129
Africa 79
North America 14
Middle East 12
Western Europe 3

The most common type of attack continued to be judicial harassment (334 cases), such as arbitrary detentions and lawsuits, including criminal lawsuits allegedly based on trumped up charges, which shows the prominent use of this tactic to intimidate and silence HRDs. This was followed by intimidation & death threats (143 cases), killings (71 cases), beatings & violence (34 cases) and disappearances & abductions (9 cases).

316 cases
attacks were allegedly perpetrated by state agents

85 cases
organised crime

95 cases
alleged cases direct links to companies

108 cases
illegal economy or other drivers