

# MATTHEW SMITH

Fortify Rights

2014 Global Fellow



## BIG BOLD IDEA

Strengthen the human rights movement by providing technical support to human rights defenders while also documenting human rights abuses.

## ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Fortify Rights prevents and remedies human rights abuses by providing technical support to human rights defenders while also conducting independent monitoring and strategic advocacy, combining commonly separate areas of the international human rights movement. Fortify Rights partners with human rights defenders to identify realistic and creative ways to promote and protect human rights. By independently documenting and exposing human rights violations while supporting others to advocate for change at local, national, and international levels, we bring effective pressure on human rights abusers and make the world a more rights-respecting place.

## PERSONAL BIO

Matthew Smith is the founder and executive director of Fortify Rights, a human rights organization devoted to strengthening the human rights movement. In 2005, he began working in Southeast Asia as a human rights researcher, trainer, and advocate, developing an intimate understanding of local responses to abuses in the region. He previously worked with Human Rights Watch, EarthRights International, and with Kerry Kennedy of the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights. Matthew's work has exposed wartime abuses, crimes against humanity, multi-billion dollar corruption, and other human rights violations. He authored several publications with Human Rights Watch, including seminal reports on a deadly civil war in Myanmar's Kachin State and on a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims. He has written for the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, CNN, and other outlets. In its first year, the work of Fortify Rights received global press coverage and critical attention from various governments and world leaders. Matthew has an M.A. from Columbia University and a B.A. from Le Moyne College.

### Organization/Fellow Location

Bangkok, Thailand

### Impact Location

Asia

Bangladesh

Myanmar

Malaysia

Thailand

### Organization Structure

Nonprofit

[VISIT WEBSITE](#)

