

REPORT

Core Report Fiscal Year 2022

April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022

June 2022



Cover Image: “Balconies of Vigilance,” Photograph by Rola Jawad, Entry in the ICTJ Wide Awake Contest. Days after a massive explosion at facility in the port of Beirut on August 4, 2020, demonstrators took to the streets in Beirut to protest against a political class who allowed it happen but disavowed any responsibility. This picture tells the story of the broader civil opposition movement, from its first manifestations in 2013, 2015 and 2017, through the October 2019 revolution and beyond.(Rola Jawad/ICTJ)

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About ICTJ

The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) works across society and borders to challenge the causes and address the consequences of massive human rights violations. We affirm victims' dignity, fight impunity, and promote responsive institutions in societies emerging from repressive rule or armed conflict as well as in established democracies where historical injustices or systemic abuse remain unresolved. ICTJ envisions a world where societies break the cycle of massive human rights violations and lay the foundations for peace, justice, and inclusion. For more information, visit www.ictj.org

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Introduction

Fiscal Year 2022 (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022) demonstrated that the global crisis brought by the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over, and its effects have exacerbated long-term trends that redefine the pursuit for justice, sustainable peace and inclusion in societies dealing with massive human rights violations. Urgent humanitarian and healthcare needs and other issues such as rising inequality, increased volatility and violence, a resurgence of authoritarian trends, and erosion of multilateralism bring additional challenges and compound and jeopardize our mission. The pandemic has affected everyone, but those most vulnerable, the poor, victims of human rights violations, refugees and marginalized have suffered the worst.

In several contexts where ICTJ has worked over many years, the resurgence of conflict and authoritarianism have stalled once promising efforts to address past human rights violations, engage in meaningful democratic reforms, and build towards sustainable peace. In Afghanistan, peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government fell apart when the Taliban took Kabul by force in August 2021. In Tunisia, the country's democratic transition came to a halt when President Kais Saied suspended parliament in July 2021. In Ukraine, Russia's invasion in February 2022 has eliminated hopes for peaceful coexistence and focused the country and the international community on military operations and their consequences, including the immediate humanitarian crisis and the rising price of necessities like food and energy around the world.

It is difficult to say what effect these events will ultimately have on the global geopolitical order, especially while the war in Ukraine remains ongoing. The renaissance of NATO in the face of belligerent Russia and the commitment of numerous members to increase investment in their militaries might signify a concerning trend to increase national defense budgets at the expense of development cooperation, including support to peacebuilding initiatives and diplomacy. However, in the face of the UN Security Council's notorious paralysis, the UN General Assembly stepped up and [took action](#) to hold the permanent members accountable for the use of their veto power. Other multilateral institutions such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the Council of Europe (CoE) also have leveraged their mandates to hold Russia to account to the extent that they can.

In addition, on a more grassroots level, we are continuing to witness renewed energy and ambition for change, often manifested in massive social protests and growing demands for justice and equality, especially among the young. In some societies in the developed world, new opportunities are opening to address and acknowledge the legacies of human rights violations pertaining to a colonial past and the legacy and consequences of systemic racism that these

left behind. On the other hand, the digital transformation that was already taking place has been dramatically accelerated by the demands introduced by the pandemic, and now presents challenges, opportunities, and the urgent need to adapt and modernize transitional justice experiences that were born and implemented in an analog world.

This year, through considerable internal reflections and extensive dialogue with our partners and supporters, ICTJ has defined new strategic priorities to address the challenges above over the next five years (2022-2027). The implementation of our previous strategic plan (2018-2022) taught us that global problems are felt mostly at the local level, but solutions must be designed at the local, national, and international levels, especially when external actors threaten to undermine national and local efforts for peace and justice. We also know that the complex problems we face often escape narrow conceptual, theoretical, and policy boxes, so we renew our efforts to break silos, understand overlapping fields and sectors, build bridges, establish strong partnerships, and collaborate to provide effective solutions.

This core report provides a more detailed overview of ICTJ's work at the global, country, and institutional level during its 2022 fiscal year; a year in which the world dealt with the continued political, social, and economic fallout of the pandemic. We at ICTJ welcome your inquiries about any aspect of our work and are happy to share additional information about any of the rich, multifaceted, and complex contexts where we work beyond what this brief report provides. To offer more insight on specific areas of our work, each section includes links to relevant resources and ICTJ products.

Global Level

Innovative Research and Impact on Policy

Over the past four years of our Strategic Plan 2018-2022, ICTJ has aimed our research and policy work towards establishing a more nuanced and sophisticated vision of how transitional justice is understood and fostering innovation in how its processes are defined and developed. Based on 20+ years of lessons learned in over 50 countries where ICTJ has worked, we have promoted an understanding of transitional justice that is less focused on individual mechanisms or specific institutions, more sensitive to context, more realistic, and based on engagement with related interventions such as anti-corruption initiatives and constitutional reforms. We have urged policymakers, funders, and the public to consider the value of transitional justice in advancing sustainable peace and development in contexts where massive human rights violations have occurred. And we have helped build a greater understanding of the ways in which transitional justice processes can contribute to addressing violent conflict and human rights violations and preventing their recurrences.



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To advance the global justice agenda, we leverage not only our own comparative experience and expertise but also our partnerships with key organizations and our membership in various networks and alliances, including the [Justice Action Coalition](#),¹ the Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN),² the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO),³ the Coalition for the

¹The Justice Action Coalition is a policy initiative that brings together 15 member states and 12 organizations to mobilize action towards closing the global justice gap. Member states include Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sweden, and Switzerland. In addition to ICTJ, partner organizations include Conferencia de Ministros de Justicia de los Paises Iberoamericanos (COMJIB), The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiIL), International Law Development Organization (IDLO), Justice Leaders, Open Government Partnership (OGP), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), UN Women, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, and World Justice Project.

²HRDN is an informal alliance of 57 nongovernmental organizations operating at the EU level in the broad areas of human rights, democracy, and peace. ICTJ is a coordinator of the HRDN's Working Group on Funding for Democracy and Human Rights.

³EPLO is a civil society platform that brings together 41 European nongovernmental organizations and thinktanks committed to peacebuilding and the prevention of violent conflict. ICTJ is a member of EPLO's Steering Committee.

International Criminal Court (CICC), and the International Gender Champions (IGC),⁴ among others. In keeping with our conviction that solutions to global problems must be advanced at all levels, ICTJ complements our collaborations and alliances at the global level with partnerships at the national and local levels, including with civil society organizations, victims associations, and grassroots organizations. These partners play critical roles in translating and implementing global policy at the national and local levels.

In the past year alone, we made several innovative contributions to the transitional justice field. For example, we advanced the dialogue related to data essential for evaluating justice interventions and the collection and use of data for transitional justice processes, including at the ICC and at a conference held in partnership with Leuven University at EPL0 in July 2021. Our 2021 report on [measuring results](#) of transitional justice processes has been cited by government and multilateral reports and used by practitioners of other organizations evaluating such processes.⁵ Another example is our submission of inputs to the [report](#) on transitional justice measures and the legacy of human rights violations in colonial contexts.

Other contributions, explained below in more detail, include research and policy work on closing the justice gap, preventing violence and human rights violations, approaching the foreign fighters dilemma, advancing accountability for gender discrimination, the role of specialized prosecution units in fighting impunity, addressing gender-based persecution, empowering survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), and ensuring that children and young people are able to participate in transitional justice processes.

Sustainable Development

The 2022 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) report to the Human Rights Council (HRC) in January, created with consultations from ICTJ, focuses on transitional justice's contributions to sustainable peace and development. The report suggests that transitional justice's preventive impact stems from its potential to "foster trust, empower people, enhance inclusion, increase gender equality, and address root causes of serious human rights violations." It promotes transitional justice as a policy tool and problem-solving approach for states, calls for its integration into broader policy agendas, and recommends the development of innovative methodologies for data collection to measure, monitor, and evaluate progress. The report shows the policy influence of ICTJ's approach, messaging, and work in different areas. It specifically references the conclusions of the Working Group on Transitional Justice and SDG16+'s report [On Solid Ground](#) as well as recent ICTJ publications on [gender in The Gambia](#), [measuring results](#), and [prevention](#). ICTJ contributions included a presentation at the Expert Consultation meeting in October 2021. We will continue to engage OHCHR and the HRC, leveraging our relationships with HRC member states (e.g., Finland and Luxembourg) to inform its forthcoming resolution expected in September 2022.

ICTJ is a member of the Justice Action Coalition (JAC), which aims to achieve measurable progress in justice outcomes by the second SDG Summit in 2023. During the past year, responding to continued demand for its advice and advocacy, ICTJ agreed to reconvene and lead the Working Group on Transitional Justice and SDG16+, a workstream under the JAC that promotes transitional justice as an integral element of the 2030 Agenda. As the leader of the Working

⁴ ICG is a leadership network that brings together female and male decision-makers determined to break down gender barriers and make gender equality a working reality in their spheres of influence.

⁵ E.g., USAID, Challenges of Reconciliation and Reparation for Victims in Colombia: Final Report (December 2021), https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00Z4G1.pdf; UN Women and UNDP, Women's Meaningful Participation in Transitional Justice: Advancing Gender Equality and Building Sustainable Peace (March 2022), <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-03/UNDP-UNWomen-Womens-Meaningful-Participation-in-Transitional-Justice.pdf>.

Group, ICTJ continued to push for On Solid Ground's recommendations in our advocacy and policy work. We also joined the international Working Group on Customary and Informal Justice and SDG16+, another workstream under the JAC that promotes effective engagement with customary, indigenous, and informal justice to increase access to justice. In November 2021, the JAC agreed on a [Joint Action Plan](#) for 2022-2023 that established deliverables for all the Coalition's workstreams.

In 2021, ICTJ began a 2-year comparative research project on advancing the reparations agenda in Colombia, The Gambia, Tunisia, and Uganda. This project integrates our program, research, and policy work and examines synergies between reparations and domestic and global development agendas, including collective reparations for marginalized regions; redress for violations of economic, social, and cultural rights; the promotion of inclusion through the participation of marginalized and minority groups; and links between reparations, judicial accountability, and institutional reform. This research will inform our policy work on sustainable development during the lead up to the 2023 SDG Summit and High-Level Political Forum.

Prevention

In June 2021, ICTJ published [Transitional Justice and Prevention](#), a report that summarizes the main findings of a two-year research project drawn from five country case studies—[Colombia](#), [Morocco](#), [Peru](#), [the Philippines](#), and [Sierra Leone](#). The study shows that transitional justice can contribute to sustainable peace and development by preventing human rights violations,⁶ as well as different forms of violence, systemic crime, violent conflict, and authoritarianism in various ways, including by addressing common drivers of violence such as exclusion and related grievances at the individual, group, and structural levels, and by catalyzing the long-term reform of institutions, laws, and ideologies. It also highlights the importance of inclusive processes, implementation, and political and security contexts. ICTJ launched the study at an event cohosted with Luxembourg, featuring a panel discussion with experts that provided an opportunity to encourage actors from different sectors and regions to consider transitional justice's role in preventing human rights violations, violence, conflict, and authoritarianism. Dissemination included bilateral conversations with key stakeholders and presentations to the FriEnt Peacebuilding Forum and the German Corporation for International Cooperation and interventions in expert meetings on the UN's rule of law work and OHCHR's report to the HRC, which explicitly references the study. ICTJ has also contributed as a member of the Guidance Group to a multiyear initiative led by NYU's Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ) to propose a new general framework for the United Nations on prevention, following recommendations to create such a framework by the HRC as well as the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation, and guarantees of non-recurrence.

In December 2021, ICTJ published [A Transitional Justice Approach to Foreign Fighters](#), a research report examining the value of a transitional justice approach to the dilemma of foreign fighters in violent conflict. Such an approach addresses the legacies of massive and serious human rights violations in contexts where many people travel to another state to engage in violent conflict. The study argues that transitional justice can contribute to prevention and sustainable peace by being more comprehensive, victim centered, and anchored in human rights and the rule of law than the counterterrorism and countering violent extremism agendas. Drawing on the contexts of Syria and Iraq, we presented our recommendations at a closed meeting of the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Working Group on Criminal Justice and Rule of Law and at a public event hosted by ICTJ and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). ICTJ

⁶ This includes violations of civil and political rights as well as economic, social, and cultural rights.

has since continued to disseminate the report and its findings to relevant stakeholders in policy discussions at different fora.

ICTJ held a second online version of our course on Prevention and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence in March 2022. Building on prior iterations of the course and adapting to trends in the field, the course focused on themes such as economic and social justice, reparations, gender, the evolution of guarantees of nonrecurrence, constitutional reform, and case studies on Kenya, Syria, and the Central African Republic. The 28 participants came from 18 different countries and included representatives from academia, civil society, government, legal practice, multilateral organizations, and philanthropy. In the post-course survey, 89% of respondents said that the course met their expectations and that what they learned would be useful and appropriate for their work.

Supporting Complementarity

ICTJ continued to promote accountability for serious crimes by advancing efforts to implement complementarity in the fight against impunity and the promotion of the rule of law.⁷ ICTJ experts worked to strengthen national judicial systems and institutions with a view to investigating and prosecuting serious crimes of international concern, while contributing to critical processes at the ICC, including as members of the CICC, the Hague and New York Working Groups of the Bureau, and at the regional level.

Through our participation in the Assembly of States Parties (ASP) of the ICC, ICTJ convenes international experts and national authorities to facilitate technical discussions on practical ways to implement the Rome Statute’s complementarity principle. In December 2021, ICTJ held a side event at the ASP entitled “[Specialized Units for Investigating and Prosecuting International Crimes and Crimes of the Past: Efforts for Addressing Impunity for Crimes in Syria](#).” Organized in partnership with Australia, France, Germany, and The Netherlands, the event focused on the technical advantages of gathering specialized resources to bring perpetrators to justice. The event highlighted the preliminary findings of ICTJ’s new report, “[Gearing up the Fight against Impunity: Dedicated Investigative and Prosecutorial Capacities](#),” a joint publication with the Foundation for Human Rights that looks at specialized prosecution units in ensuring accountability for crimes committed in Syria.

“The course brought together a great diversity of participants from different professional and personal backgrounds and walks of life, which made the course all the more interesting and engaging.”

— Prevention course participant



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⁷The concept of complementarity appears in the Rome Statute and asserts that accountability for mass atrocities can only be achieved if national judicial systems are fully involved and cooperate with other justice mechanisms such as reparations programs, institutional reforms, and truth-seeking processes. Accordingly, the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigates and prosecutes serious crimes only where states are unwilling or genuinely unable to do so.

As with other issues, our research and policy work on complementarity and accountability at the global level remains closely tied to our work at the country level. In Colombia, ICTJ worked to ensure the effective realization of victims' rights when participating during hearings and documenting violations and built the capacities of key stakeholders in proceedings of the transitional justice mechanisms established by the 2016 peace agreement especially the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP). We provided a wide range of technical assistance to judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the parties to the proceedings. In Ukraine, prior to the Russian invasion, ICTJ provided essential assistance to government and civil society for pursuing criminal prosecution of gross violations of human rights in the Russian occupied territories in a way that is balanced, addresses the concerns of minorities, and helps set conditions for sustainable peace. In Uganda, ICTJ continued an effort that began last year with *Avocats Sans Frontières* (ASF) to finalize the *Judicial Bench Book* (JBB) on International Criminal Law for the Uganda's International Crimes Division (ICD). ICTJ also continued to hold outreach sessions in the Dominic Ongwen and Thomas Kwoyelo cases and provided expert analysis and commentary on television and radio following Ongwen's conviction and sentencing. As explained in further detail in the Uganda country section below, ICTJ submitted amicus observations to the ICC to inform reparations proceedings of the Ongwen case.



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Promoting Victim-Centered Peace Processes

Although they are among the most complex and controversial elements in peace negotiations, addressing justice demands is critical to the credibility and legitimacy of peace processes and agreements. Over the past year, ICTJ worked towards incorporating victims' perspectives in the (since collapsed) US-Afghan negotiations, mainly through technical support we provided to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) on amnesties and reparations, among other topics. The Syrian Negotiation Commission (SNC), the party representing the formal opposition during the peace negotiations, approached ICTJ for guidance and support during the peace negotiations as well as the constitutional reform process. Over the past year, ICTJ has assisted the SNC to consider what a victim-centered approach could look like, how to involve civil society in the negotiations, and how to have a more comprehensive vision for the future of Syria. In Venezuela, with Norway facilitating (now stalled) political negotiations in Mexico between the government and opposition, ICTJ assisted a group of civil society organizations to develop guiding principles regarding the role of transitional justice in these negotiations.



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Even after negotiations have ended, ICTJ continues to play an important role in helping to ensure that the implementation of peace agreements is victim centered. Over the past year, ICTJ continued to support the SJP and Truth Commission in Colombia, and we provided interventions at the UN Security Council's closed meeting on the Colombia peace process in July 2021. We remain hopeful for the possibility of renewed peace talks between the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army (ELN). Additionally, we continued to monitor developments in the implementation of the peace agreement in South Sudan.

Advancing Gender Justice and Gender Equality

ICTJ continued to push boundaries in terms of how gender and gender justice are conceptualized. Complementing the programmatic work at the country level, in March 2022, we submitted comments to the ICC in response to the OTP's launch of a public consultation to inform their new policy initiative to advance accountability for the crime against humanity of persecution on the grounds of gender under the Rome Statute. The initiative, culminating in a comprehensive policy paper, aims to describe and guide the OTP in ensuring a systematic approach to dealing with these crimes. There will be a second round to solicit more specific and focused feedback once the OTP produces an initial draft of the policy. ICTJ's submission in this first round highlighted that gender-based persecution has been widely underutilized in the ICC's prosecutorial strategies. We argued that adopting a gendered approach at each stage of the proceedings is critical, in relation to modes of liability, and for making prosecutorial strategies based on persecution more compatible with African Human Rights standards on the holistic protection of women, girls, and gender-diverse people against violence and discrimination. Building on our previous work, we posited that the crime of gender-based persecution unveils the discriminatory nature of the different forms of violence committed against certain groups of people, like women, girls, and LGBTQ+ people, but also against men when the purpose of the specific selection of the victim relies solely on gender stereotypes and with the intention of discriminating against them. ICTJ offered to provide additional input, as the drafting process continues.



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Our work to influence global policy discussions on gender and transitional justice also included a project to inform the Global Survivors Fund's (GSF) global reparations study on survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). GSF, founded by Nobel Peace Prize laureates Dr. Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad to enhance access to reparations for CRSV survivors, requested ICTJ's assistance in conducting three country studies to contribute to their global research. We conducted our country studies on The Gambia, Nepal, and Uganda, utilizing in-person meetings, online interviews, and validation sessions with survivors to inform our findings. The country studies offer insights into recent context developments and their impact on the project as well as concrete steps on how to build on the project's findings. We contributed to the GSF's understanding of victims' needs, perceptions, and expectations of reparations. The studies were designed to not only provide recommendations based upon these findings but also to empower survivors.

In their recently published [report](#) examining women's meaningful participation in transitional justice, UNDP and UN Women cited multiple ICTJ studies on subjects ranging from gender-sensitive approaches to transitional justice to preventing conflict and violence to measuring results and monitoring progress.⁸ The report addresses what defines meaningful participation of women, how this contributes to gender transformative outcomes, and how these outcomes contribute to sustained impacts on society.

⁸ Roger Duthie and Paul Seils (Eds.), *Justice Mosaics: How Context Shapes Transitional Justice in Fractured Societies*, (New York, NY: International Center for Transitional Justice, 2017); Sibley Hawkins, "You can change the course of a country": Report on the International Gender Symposium (ICTJ briefings)," (New York, NY: International Center for Transitional Justice, Jun 2019); Mateo Porciuncula, "Measuring Results and Monitoring Progress of Transitional Justice Processes," (New York, NY: International Center for Transitional Justice, 2021); "Transitional Justice and Prevention: Summary Findings from Five Country Case Studies," (June 2021).



Gambian women in the district of Basse participate in an ICTJ-organized consultation. (ICTJ)

In addition to gender mainstreaming in ICTJ's country programs, our gender program provided technical assistance to stakeholders on incorporating a gender lens into how they operationalize transitional justice measures in contexts beyond our ongoing program engagements. In response to a request from a local gender justice group in Northern Ireland, Legacy Gender and Integration Group (LGIG), ICTJ helped them to design and conduct two trainings for the Victims' Payment Board (VPB) and selected staff of the Troubles Permanent Disability Payment Scheme on how to integrate a gender lens into their work. Our contributions to the two-day workshop focused on an introduction to transitional justice, how their work of providing acknowledgement was a form of reparation, and strategies to adequately address the harms suffered by

women and the obstacles they may face in accessing the Scheme. According to the post-training survey, the workshops were well-received and pushed the VPB to think about a range of issues they had not considered previously.

Increasing Engagement of Youth in Transitional Justice Processes

ICTJ continued to engage with young people as political actors, empowering them to shape the futures of their communities by opening spaces for them to actively participate in transitional justice processes initiatives to address the legacy of massive human rights violations. Since examining and addressing the consequences of the past is often a long-term and multigenerational process, we have prioritized increasing young people's awareness and encouraging their engagement. Young leaders can play an important role in shaking up the status quo and shining a light on pressing issues that must be addressed to build sustainable peace.



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Over the past year, ICTJ continued to advance the inclusion of young people in The Gambia's transitional justice process. We mobilized 128 young people, half of whom were women, to participate in politics and develop strategies to engage their local authorities and present their demands. They implemented awareness-raising initiatives in their communities, including radio programs and bilateral meetings with local governors and traditional chiefs. One important achievement was the participation of Cherno Gaye, the coordinator of youth-led artist collective Our Nation, Our Voice (ONOV), in the parliamentary elections. While he did not win the seat, he came third out of seven candidates. His candidacy will inspire other young Gambians to get involved in shaping the future of their country. ICTJ also extended ONOV's reach to five rural regions. Before joining ONOV, most of these young people had never been engaged in discussions about transitional justice, human rights, or governance. They became aware of

the importance of transitional justice processes as tools and channels to advance their rights and address the issues they face in a peaceful and constructive way. With the strategies they developed they now know different avenues and actions to take to voice their concerns. Most of them did not anticipate any follow-up process after the TRRC's mandated ended, and they are now aware of the next steps of the process and more committed and attentive to the government's plans for the implementation of the TRRC's recommendations.

ICTJ trained young volunteers in Lebanon who are helping to build a digital archive for the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared in Lebanon on the role that young people can play in helping victims' families to exercise their right to know what happened to their loved ones, how to develop an effective strategy for communications with the public, and how to incorporate oral history in their archival work. The training on oral history, conducted in partnership with German organization Forum ZfD, introduced participants to a toolkit with 16 practical exercises. Participants reported that the training helped enrich their interviewing skills and their understanding of the importance of multi-perspectivity.

In Mali, as the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (CVJR) concludes its work, UNICEF requested that ICTJ help review the children's chapter of the CVJR's final report and develop a methodology to produce a child and youth friendly version. ICTJ experts provided feedback on the children's chapter and traveled to Mali to meet with the commissioners and young people to reflect on the key points to include in an accessible version of the final report as well as how to involve young people in the development of the report.

Addressing Corruption and Other Economic Crimes

In several countries where ICTJ works, we have seen a growing concern about economic crimes, and many states are taking on large-scale corruption in their transitional justice processes. This year, ICTJ conducted work focused on combatting corruption in two contexts. In Tunisia, where a focus on dictatorship-era corruption has been a unique feature of its transitional justice process, we monitored the corruption cases dealt with by the Specialized Chambers. We were also planning to hold a workshop on the importance of investigative journalism in anti-corruption and asset recovery work, but after President Saied dissolved the parliament in July 2021, we decided to shift the focus of the event to analysis and discussion of the exceptional measures the President took in the name of pursuing accountability for corruption. In Armenia, where the post-2018 revolution government adopted anti-corruption as a priority, ICTJ has advocated for addressing corruption as part of a comprehensive transitional justice strategy. In an online roundtable discussion ICTJ held with media professionals from the region in June 2021, we discussed the role of the media in addressing the interrelationship between corruption, conflict, and democratization. In December 2021, we organized an online panel discussion with youth, victims, civil society, and policymakers to address corruption, human rights abuses, and institutional reforms.

Country Level

Over the past year, with victims facing the continued impact of the pandemic, rising authoritarianism, and the fallout of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, ICTJ continued to advance justice and accountability in an increasing range of countries around the world. We worked in countries experiencing transition, conflict, and authoritarianism, including where we have a long-established presence as well as in emerging contexts where specific developments required our analysis and expertise. Everywhere we work, we continuously assessed and adapted our programming to respond to emerging and alternative opportunities to seek truth, accountability, and redress using gender- and conflict-sensitive approaches tailored to each country's unique circumstances.

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We carried out our work in partnership with victims and civil society—both grassroots activists and more established organizations—to provide them with the knowledge, capacity, and support they needed to advance their demands for justice. We also worked closely with duty bearers responsible for protecting and promoting human rights, developing their capacity to do so by providing them with technical advice and inputs on policy based on our global experience. In addition, we engaged with other actors who have leverage and influence in the countries where we work, such as artists, journalists, religious and traditional leaders, representatives of trade unions, and others. And we built bridges between all three sets of actors, both within each country and across the countries where we work, helping them hear each other, learn from each other, and advance innovative solutions for justice and accountability.

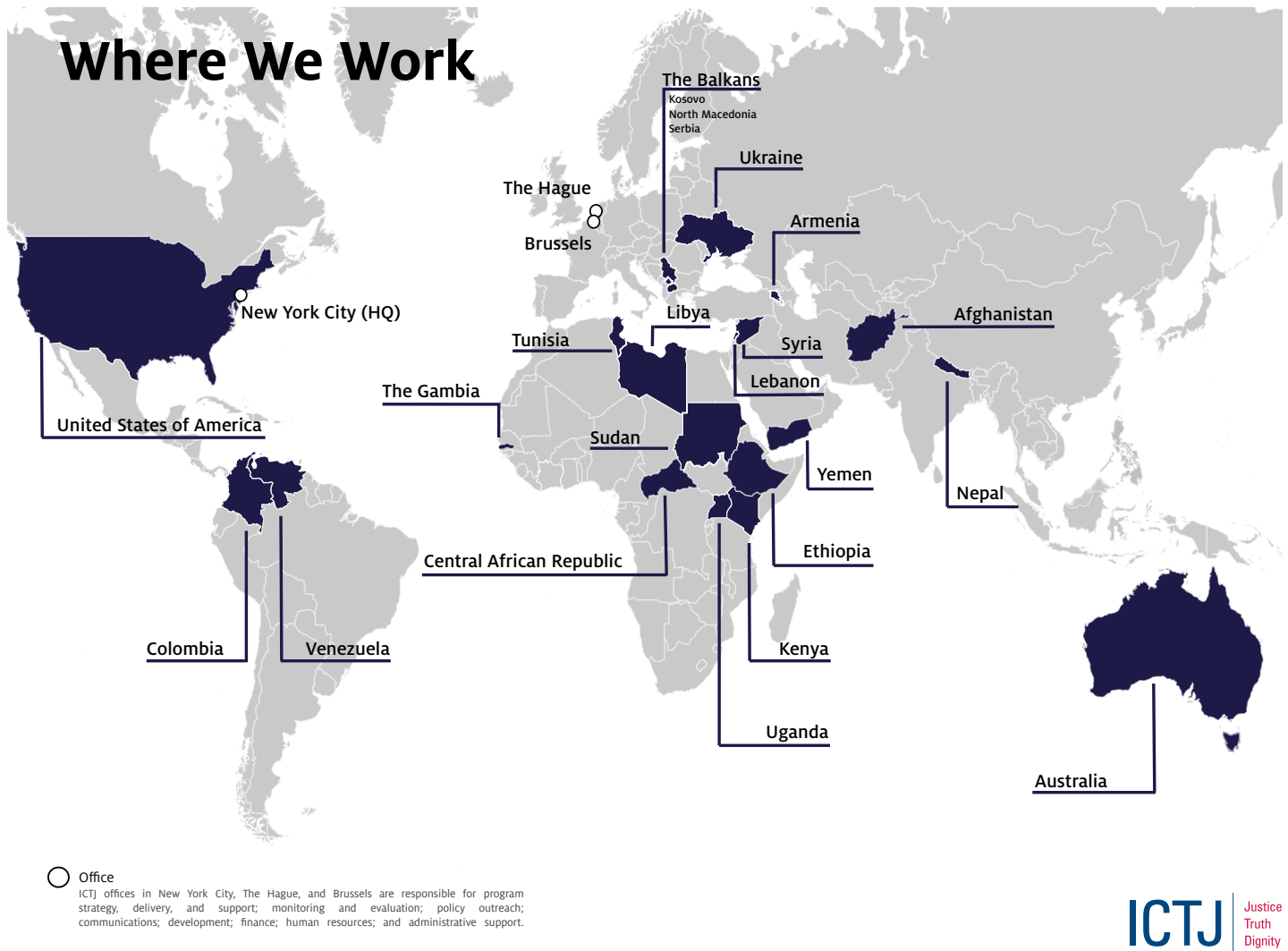
A full list of the domestic and international stakeholders with whom we partnered during FY22 can be found in [Annex B](#).

Country Programs

The Taliban's seizure of Kabul in August 2021 and the subsequent collapse of the **Afghanistan** state dealt a tremendous blow to hopes for peace and justice in the country. In response, over a million Afghans fled, mostly to Iran and Pakistan, and over 600,000 more became internally displaced. Those who remain in the country face a dire humanitarian crisis, with more than half of the population risking acute hunger as of March 2022 and only 5% of Afghans having enough to eat daily, a percentage closer to 0% in households headed by women. International sanctions have crippled the economy, and the



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NOTE: The map represents ICTJ's countries of operation at the end of fiscal year 2022 (March 2022).

health and education sectors have broken down. The Taliban have made it impossible for the media, civil society, and human rights activists to operate freely and safely. Religious minorities and women and girls face a disproportionate burden. Thousands of Islamic State in Khorasan Province (IS-KP) prisoners were released after the fall of Kabul, and the IS-KP has since carried out deadly attacks, primarily targeting Shia Hazaras and a Sunni Sufi. Women protestors have been abducted, and the Taliban has ordered all women to cover their faces in public and indefinitely suspended instruction to girls in secondary schools.

As the crisis unfolded, ICTJ's first focus was getting our partners to safety. Our longtime partners, Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization (AHRDO), fled to Pakistan without legal documentation and any guarantee of a longer-term relocation. ICTJ worked day and night with the international community to secure an agreement from a third country to resettle them, and in December 2021 the Canadian government agreed to welcome AHRDO and their families, 170 people in total, as government assisted refugees. In January 2022, they [arrived](#) in Edmonton, Alberta, where they have since set up a small office and established AHRDO as a Canadian organization. Throughout this process, ICTJ supported AHRDO's development of a plan for its activities going forward, including creating a virtual war memorial museum, researching prison conditions for conflict detainees, producing a documentary on AHRDO's flight from Afghanistan, and working with international community towards accountability. ICTJ also aided in the evacuation and resettlement of over 50 staff members of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) staff, helping them to secure visas and travel documents as well as recover and securely archive their digital records. ICTJ further assisted the AIHRC to set up a Human Rights Institute, a non-governmental organization to continue the AIHRC's human rights monitoring work. In the first quarter of 2022, we held several capacity-building workshops for the staff of the forthcoming Institute to help them to carry out their work remotely.

In **Armenia**, when Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's government was reelected in snap elections in June 2021, the government announced judicial and constitutional reforms as priorities and formed a Constitutional Reforms Commission. While this decision offered a new possibility for Armenians to pursue reforms and fulfill the democratic aspirations of the 2018 revolution, the country's postwar priorities have created a risk that reforms could be designed and implemented in the absence of an explicit goal of consolidating democracy and protecting human rights. Since a ceasefire ended the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War, Armenia's political and social agenda has been focused on

conflict-related priorities like border security, ongoing violence, and humanitarian issues. The war created a backlash against discussing peace and seeking truth about Armenia's past, impeding efforts to pursue reforms informed by lessons from the past. The Russian invasion of Ukraine further focused the country's political agenda on security concerns. Since the end of the conflict, ICTJ's work in Armenia has focused on protecting the gains of the revolution. To increase understanding and support among broader civil society for a comprehensive transitional justice strategy for Armenia, ICTJ held an online roundtable in June 2021 with editors, columnists, and other journalists on the roles of journalists covering conflict, accountability, and political transition in Armenia. The 27 participants came from across Armenia, the Armenian Diaspora, Nagorno-Karabakh, Russia, and Georgia. Throughout the year, ICTJ also expanded our work to



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engage young people on democratization processes in Armenia. We held two courses introducing transitional justice concepts to 15 young journalists and civil society representatives at a Conflict Reporting School organized by the Media Initiatives Centre. We later gathered young activists together with victim families to discuss the state of human rights and transitional justice in Armenia for the first time, and they found common ground on the need to address corruption. ICTJ also engaged the Ministry of Justice on constitutional reforms in a roundtable conference organized by the Ministry and Open Society Foundations as well as during an online discussion organized by ICTJ to discuss the draft decree to create the Constitutional Reforms Commission.

The First People's Assembly of Victoria, **Australia**, the elected voice for Aboriginal people in treaty discussions with the Victorian government, proposed a truth-telling process in 2020, which the government approved in the wake of growing public awareness about systemic racism through the Black Lives Matter movement. From July 2020 to February 2021, they worked together to design the form and mandate of a truth and justice process for Victoria. During this process, they contacted ICTJ seeking our inputs on best practices in truth-telling exercises. We provided strategic advice, technical support, and accompaniment to both parties on a variety of topics, including on the drafting of the Act establishing the Commission and the selection of process for commissioners, through brainstorming sessions, workshops, and advice memos. Following our advice, the Commission made its selection process open to garner public legitimacy. Demonstrating the trust we built with both parties, ICTJ was invited to serve as a member of the selection panel for the commissioners. In May 2021, the Yoo-rook Justice Commission was established as the first formal truth-telling process into historical and ongoing injustice experienced by First Peoples in Victoria. Based on our advice, the Commission integrated a focus on education and on mental health and psychosocial support from the beginning of their work. They created senior level staff positions focused on each topic. The Commission's interim report is expected in June 2022.

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Over the past year, tensions between the **Central African Republic (CAR)** and France escalated, peaking when four French military personnel assigned to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA) were arrested and accused of plotting to assassinate the President of CAR. In response the government of France froze all aid and military support to CAR, accusing the country of complicity in a Russian disinformation campaign against France. Despite having its direct aid from France pulled as part of this funding freeze, the Truth, Justice, Reconciliation, and Reparation Commission (CJVRR) began operations in July 2021. In addition, after several postponements, the Special Criminal Court (SCC) established in 2016 prepared to hold its first trial in April 2022. Through a special agreement between ICTJ and UNDP, we provided ongoing technical assistance to build the capacity of the CJVRR throughout the year. Through nearly 40 technical working sessions with ICTJ experts, we helped the CJVRR develop a strategic plan, annual work plan, communications strategy, rules of procedure, a unique visual identity, and make progress towards developing statement-taking tools, an investigation plan, and a gender manual. In addition, we trained victims, civil society, media outlets, and women leaders to enable them to participate effectively in the truth-seeking process.

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In **Colombia**, illegal armed groups progressively took control of several former FARC-controlled territories, leading 2021 to become the most violent year in the country since the 2016 Peace Accord. Economic and social crisis and government mismanagement resulted in a wave of social protests in April 2021 that was violently suppressed by the police. Despite continued political opposition, the transitional justice mechanisms established by the Peace Accord carried out their fifth year of operation. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP) made significant progress with seven open cases by the end of 2021. In Macro Case 01 on kidnappings by FARC, the SJP accredited over 6,500 victims and heard 38 individual testimonies and 8 collective voluntary accounts from 257 perpetrators. In Macro Case 03, the SJP issued two writs of determination of facts, which led 21 perpetrators to acknowledge responsibility for assassinations and forced disappearances in two regions. The SJP President announced three new cases for 2022 focusing on 1) FARC's illicit means and methods of war; 2) crimes committed by security forces, other state agents or in association with paramilitary groups and civilian third parties; and 3) harm to the physical and cultural survival of ethnic peoples. Victims' organizations participated in a series of regional hearings to present



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reports and comments on these cases. The Truth Commission (TC) began to draft its final report and recommendations, which it will present in June 2022. The TC also developed outreach strategies to help it achieve social ownership of its legacy. The Unit for the Search of Missing Persons (Search Unit) developed and began to implement its National Search Plan and 22 regional search plans. The Search Unit also created a national registry of cemeteries and burial sites.

Throughout the year, ICTJ continued to build the capacity and increase awareness of the work of the transitional justice mechanisms established by the Peace Accord. We increased the SJP's capacity on restorative justice by conducting a 160-hour victims-perpetrators mediation course with SJP magistrates, staff members, and civil society representatives. Following the course, nine staff members qualified to mediate dialogues between victims and perpetrators,

and some have begun to do so. ICTJ also assisted former FARC members who signed the Peace Accord and their defense teams to increase their understanding of and willingness to participate in the SJP's macro cases to which they are identified as responsible. We held workshops with them to promote reflection on the harm caused to victims and prepare them for an acknowledgement hearing held as part of Macro Case 01. Through a psychosocial assistance project, ICTJ helped beneficiaries to gain greater empathy for the harm caused to the victims and understanding of the need to avoid justificatory discourses that can lead to the revictimization of the victims. We also supported former FARC members' presentation of writs for protection of fundamental rights to demand protection of their personal integrity, including via *amicus curiae* before the Constitutional Court. With respect to the TC, ICTJ increased public access and awareness of its

“Empathetic listening truly opens the door to understanding the other person’s situation without judgement, and enables us to approach more sincerely those who are entrusting us with their problem.”

— Restorative justice and mediation course participant

Ex-Combatants in Colombia Acknowledge Their Crimes

Alonso Ojeda Awad and Medardo Correa joined Colombia's notorious leftist guerrilla group the National Liberation Army (ELN) in their youth. After fighting with the group for several years, they and a handful of other ELN members voluntarily demobilized in the 1980s.

"Life could not go on like this, burying colleagues, friends, compatriots. We buried people on our side; and on their side, just as Colombian as ours, they buried police officers and soldiers. We caused that. That is when we knew it was time to demobilize," Ojeda Awad explained at the 2019 Ex-combatant Narratives Roundtable in Bogotá. Co-organized by ICTJ, the civil society organization ABCPaz, and the Colombian Truth Commission, the roundtable brought together ex-combatants of demobilized guerrilla and paramilitary groups over an eight-month period for earnest discussions about their past wartime actions.

Even after laying down their weapons over 30 years ago, the two aging men were reluctant to meet with and speak to former members of paramilitary groups. To their surprise, after months of intense conversations, they found themselves sitting among former enemies—previously paramilitary leaders—at times laughing, seemingly as comfortable as if they had been with old friends.

Over the last year, ex-combatants officially acknowledged responsibility for past crimes in private and public hearings and events held by the Truth Commission, but the process leading up to this moment was not easy. Alongside the Truth Commission, ICTJ had been encouraging ex-combatants for years to have such heartfelt conversations and meaningful acknowledgment of their responsibility for past crimes.



The road to forgiveness, however, is neither linear nor smooth. Some victims have met the statements of acknowledgment with doubt and even disbelief. Even so, the victims who participated in the commission have opened the possibility for reparations with incredible bravery and fortitude.

Roberto Lacouture, a kidnapping victim skeptical of the transitional justice process in Colombia was moved to tears as he spoke at the event where former members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) acknowledged their responsibility in kidnappings. In his words, "I am here, even though I don't believe or agree with this [process] because I want to say that this process should continue and that these ex-combatants must not rearm themselves no matter what."

The participants in the roundtable, Correa and Ojeda Awad among them, agree and believe ex-combatants should never again engage in conflict. In a joint statement closing the roundtable, they concluded, "We must surround and support the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice and Non-Recurrence in Colombia to make our peace a reality."

PHOTO: Alonso Ojeda Awad (center right) speaks with Freddy Rendón (ex-paramilitary), Nodier Giraldo (ex-paramilitary), and Luis Eduardo Celis (ex-M19 guerrilla). (María Margarita Rivera/ICTJ).

work by creating and disseminating “Patterns of War”, a series of 9 videos explaining the origins of the armed conflict and positioning TC’s preliminary findings in public opinion.

Colombia’s presidential elections, held after this reporting period in May and June 2022, yielded a significant shift in the country’s leadership that heralds a new, potentially much more supportive relationship between the government and the mechanisms established by the Peace Accord. The election resulted in a victory for Rodolfo Hernández Suárez, the former Mayor of Bucaramanga and the first left-wing candidate to be elected to the position. Suárez’s running mate, Francia Márquez, who will become the country’s first Black vice president, is a human rights and environmental activist and lawyer. Suárez’s platform explicitly included fully implementing the country’s peace agreement in addition to supporting land reforms, moving to a publicly controlled health care system, expanding access to higher education, and other socioeconomic reforms. In addition to renewed support for the implementation of the Peace Accord, the election has already led ELN to convey openness to peace talks with the incoming government.

Ethiopia has continued to experience conflict in the Tigray region since November 2020. In December 2021, the Federal Parliament established a National Dialogue Commission to pave the way for consensus after the civil war in Tigray. In February 2022 the House of the People’s Representatives appointed Commissioners to facilitate broad-based consultations to identify root causes of conflict and prepare for a nation-building process. Unfortunately, the appointment process was not transparent. In January 2022, ICTJ began our work to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations in Ethiopia to contribute meaningfully to the debate on transitional justice in the country. Early implementation has included work with local partners to map civil society organizations in target regions, develop a stakeholder analysis, and make introductions to key policymakers in the country.



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In **The Gambia**, after a year of delays and multiple extensions of its mandate, the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) submitted its final report in December 2021. The report contains a holistic set of reparations aimed at setting the ground for the transformation of Gambian society, including prosecutions, institutional reforms, reparations, memorials, and broad measures to address sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The report was informed by ICTJ’s advice and technical support provided to the TRRC. We assisted rural women and women-led organizations to join an ad-hoc coalition and prepare and submit a position paper to the TRRC on socioeconomic and cultural dimensions of SGBV. The report’s volumes on SGBV, reparations, and reconciliation cite ICTJ’s research on women’s experiences of dictatorship in The Gambia. Moreover, the TRRC acknowledged our work with an [Award of Appreciation](#), stating that the commission would not have been successful without our support.



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In December 2021, The Gambia also held its first peaceful, transparent, and democratic Presidential election in over two decades. President Adama Barrow was re-elected to a second five-year term. During the campaign season, President Barrow allied with former dictator Yahya Jammeh’s political party, Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC), causing

great distress among victims who consider the alliance a betrayal to the transitional justice process and a potential threat to the implementation of the TRRC report's recommendations. ICTJ worked to keep the transitional justice process on the political agenda during the contentious electoral season, holding consultations with rural women and young people in the regions to help them shape their demands for justice and communicate them to local authorities and government agencies. We partnered with journalists to write articles on transitional justice, truth-seeking, and the TRRC's final report, which were published online and received over 18,500 views. ICTJ also organized six audiovisual programs, which offered civil society representatives, local activists, media practitioners, TRRC representatives, and representatives of government agencies a space to engage in a discussion linking elections and transitional justice. Following the elections, the Ministry of Justice announced that a series of consultations with all stakeholders in the transitional justice process would take place in the spring. The aim of these consultations was to inform the government's White Paper on the implementation of the TRRC's recommendations, published in May 2022, and a reparations bill expected later in the year.

Throughout the past year in **Lebanon**, political and sectarian tensions grew over the investigation into the 2020 Beirut Port Explosion. The country continued to face dire economic and political crises. Over 75% of Lebanon's population now live in poverty, and the Lebanese pound has lost 90% of its value since 2019. The country finally formed a new government in September 2021, bringing an end to a 13-month impasse that only worsened the economic situation. Since then, the government has been unable to fulfill its promise of securing financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund. Nevertheless, the Beirut Port Explosion shed new light on many unresolved issues from the past, and many Lebanese are finally convinced that the corrupt sectarian system should be abolished and are voicing demands such as the right to truth, right to reparations, accountability, institutional reform, and non-recurrence of past violence. With respect to dealing with the past, despite the resignation of four members in July 2021, the country made progress towards the operationalization of the Independent National Commission for the Missing and Forcibly Disappeared in Lebanon. ICTJ has built a strong partnership with the Commission over the past year. In the absence of a government created budget for the Commission, ICTJ hired a financial expert to draft a budget and submit it to the Ministry of Finance. We also hired a designer to develop the Commission's visual identity. In addition, ICTJ continued to strengthen our longtime partnership with the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared and supported the development of the Committee's archive. In partnership with German organization Forum ZfD, we held a 4-day training on oral history for the young volunteers who are helping to build the archive.

In **Libya**, 2021 was a year of missed opportunities for the promotion of human rights and peace. General Khalifa Haftar continued to exercise control over eastern Libya, and efforts to remove foreign fighters were unsuccessful. In the transitional government, Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh failed to appoint key ministers, and elections expected in December 2021 per the Roadmap of the UN-supported Libyan Political Dialogue Forum were indefinitely postponed. In the wake of this new political crisis, the eastern-based House of Representatives granted confidence to Fathi Bashagha to form a new government in February 2022, giving Libya two prime ministers competing for legitimacy. In response to these developments, ICTJ held a roundtable in Tunis with Libyan victims, activists, academics, and representatives of the international community



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Engaging Youth in Truth-Seeking Efforts in Lebanon

In Lebanon, in the absence of an overarching curriculum, young people are growing up with scant knowledge of the country's history. Young people want to understand the war so that they can address its legacy of violence and divisions and face the continuing violence and ever-present danger of renewed sectarian fighting. To help build their awareness, innovative approaches to addressing history and promoting multiple perspectives are essential.

ICTJ often collaborates with young people to increase their civic engagement and participation in transitional justice processes. In Lebanon, we were able to engage with young people to ensure they know the truth about their country's past and the role they can play in actively shaping the national narrative by opening spaces and providing the tools for youth to pursue truth, reform, redress, and justice. Over the last year, ICTJ worked with university students in digitalizing the archive of the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared to build their technical skills and knowledge of the missing and forcibly disappeared. The activity included workshops on transitional justice and oral history and their importance in contributing to peace and national reconciliation. According to Aline Nasr, one of the participants, "Following the workshop, I learned to tolerate diversity without passing judgments or making assumptions. I learned more about the necessity of understanding and discussing our history so that we can understand the implications of violence and conflicts in the future and avoid them."



Young people involved in these workshops not only took away important lessons about transitional justice, but also gained new skills to support their professional development. Several young volunteers, inspired by their experience, have started working with organizations addressing related issues, such as Act for the Disappeared and Legal Action Worldwide. Elena Bou Dehen, one of the volunteers, now supports a project led by Act for the Disappeared and UNDP aiming to raise awareness around Law 105, the Law on Missing and Forcibly Disappeared Persons. According to Elena, "Through my work on the archive and my participation in the ICTJ workshops I became more aware of the injustices that took place during the civil war. The plight of the families of the missing and forcibly disappeared became part of my job as a lawyer and a human rights activist and I feel the obligation as a Lebanese citizen to reach the truth and deal with our dark past."

PHOTO: Aline Nasr participates in a training organized by ICTJ and forumZFD on oral history in March 2022 in Beirut. (ICTJ)

to discuss the prospects for transitional justice and national reconciliation amid the political crisis. The roundtable provided an important opportunity to establish contacts with the Fact-Finding Mission to Libya (FFM), whose mandate was renewed until June 2022 and remains one of the few tools available to provide justice to victims in the country. The roundtable also led the International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Working Group, headed by the Netherlands and Switzerland, to approach ICTJ for insights on transitional justice and national reconciliation.

ICTJ's other activities over the past year focused on building the capacity of local civil society organizations, including members of the Libyan Transitional Justice Support Network, through a series of webinars that helped to identify the issues they want to address.

Despite ceasefires in **South Sudan** in 2017 and 2020, fighting continued in parts of the country throughout the year. Ongoing tensions between the government and the opposition further threatened sustainable peace in the country. Although a unified armed force command was created, other provisions and deadlines of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) continued to be missed. Most notably, elections scheduled to take place in 2022 were delayed by the government until 2023 at the earliest. The UN Security Council consequently extended its sanctions regime to July 2022, pushing President Salva Kiir Mayardit to kickstart the constitution-making consultations process.



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The Government of South Sudan created a Technical Committee to launch public consultations that will inform the law to establish the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH). To maximize the potential impact of these consultations, ICTJ trained the Technical Committee on transitional justice concepts and best practices, the transitional justice requirements of the R-ARCSS, methodologies for effectively leading consultations with a national scope, principles for establishing an effective truth commission, stakeholder mapping techniques, internal management and accountability tools, and ways to conduct outreach.

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In **Sudan**, the military coup in October 2021 upended the democratic transition in the country and the power sharing agreement between civilians and military. General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan arrested Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, declared a state of emergency, and suspended key articles of the 2019 Constitutional Document, becoming the de facto head of state of Sudan as the Commander-in-Chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces. Since then, Sudanese civilians have taken to the streets to protest and engage in acts of civil disobedience against the coup, despite brutal crackdowns killing nearly 100 people. Protestors are demanding accountability for these killings and rejecting any role for the military in Sudan's transition. The leaders of the coup have expressed hostility to any transitional justice initiatives that could threaten their interests.

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However, after the coup, we presented our work to the new authorities, which led to requests for training the security sector, though this is yet unfunded. Since civil society actors have limited knowledge of transitional justice and are unable to translate their strong opinions into well-informed demands, we held our first regional workshop in Port Sudan in March 2022 to bridge this gap. At the workshop, ICTJ built the capacity and knowledge of civil society regarding transitional justice, the national process, and issues facing victims. The success of the workshop led activists in Kassala and Gedaref to plan their own workshops in the following months.

In an illegitimate election held in **Syria** in May 2021, Bashar al-Assad claimed a fourth term as President. While violence in the country has ebbed since the peak of the conflict, it is an ongoing threat to Syrians in frontline areas. Tens of thousands of people remain in incommunicado detention in Syria's many prisons and in makeshift facilities operated by regime allies or non-state

armed groups. Syrians also face a dire economic situation that has exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in the country. Over 60% of Syrians do not have enough to eat, and 14 million people in the country need humanitarian aid. Given these conditions, as well as the unlawful seizure of land and property by the Syrian government, very few of the 6.9 million Syrian refugees and asylum seekers have returned, despite most reporting a desire to do so. In addition, the most recent session of the Syrian Constitutional Committee in March 2022 failed to make progress on a draft text. However, during the year momentum grew for creating an independent international mechanism on the disappeared, and multiple successful universal jurisdiction prosecutions have boosted interest in civil society's role in these cases. Bridges of Truth, a collaborative of eight Syrian civil society organizations and ICTJ, has been raising awareness of the plight of Syrian victims for the past four years. This year, the collaborative launched a new publication, "[A Guide to the Untold Darkness: The Realities of Syria's Disappeared, Arbitrarily Detained, and Their Families](#)." The Guide offers comprehensive recommendations directed at the Syrian regime for upholding human rights, respecting its obligations under international law, and addressing the needs of families of the disappeared and arbitrarily detained. It also provides recommendations to international actors for assisting victims and their families in the search for truth, justice, and repair. Through a launch event in The Hague in November 2021, ICTJ brought together our Bridges of Truth partners with key stakeholders in the international community to discuss the Guide's recommendations. Additionally, following the January 2022 sentencing of Anwar Raslan, a former colonel in the Syrian intelligence service, and the opening of the trial of Alaa M., a former doctor in Syrian military hospitals accused of crimes against humanity, the Bridges of Truth collaborative issued a joint statement welcoming these steps taken to hold war criminals accountable. ICTJ also continued to build our long-term partnership with the Syrian Negotiations Committee (SNC). In October 2021, ICTJ experts met with the SNC to discuss the participation of victims in the negotiations, bringing their attention to examples of other countries where this has been done, such as in Colombia.

Tunisia's democratic transition was dealt a major blow in July 2021, when President Saied used Article 80 of the Constitution to gain emergency powers and suspend parliament. President Saied further consolidated his power by de facto suspending the Constitution, sparking fears of a return to authoritarianism. In February 2022, he announced that he would dissolve Tunisia's Supreme Judicial Council (CSM), replacing it with a provisional High Judicial Council appointed by the President and ensuring executive authority over the judicial branch, as it was under the Bourguiba and Ben Ali dictatorships. President Saied organized an online national consultation for January to March 2022 to inform an amended constitution and shift the political regime from parliamentary to presidential. He then announced that a referendum on the draft constitution will take place in July 2022 and legislative elections will take place in December 2022. While Saied has not mentioned transitional justice explicitly during his consolidation of power, he dismissed the head of the Dignity Fund, and the Specialized Chambers have continued to limp along with no certainty about their fate. Meanwhile, victims continued to suffer from the legacies of the past dictatorships, exacerbated by the current economic crisis. Given the ongoing and evolving threats to Tunisia's democratic transition, ICTJ continued to focus on



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working with civil society and victims, especially women and youth, to develop alternative paths to justice and foster a more inclusive societal narrative. As part of this strategy, ICTJ launched its [Wide Awake Art Contest](#), exploring the theme “the Sound of Dissent.” We received entries from over 220 artists in a wide range of mediums, including sculpture, short film, animation, graffiti, audio composition, and photography. A jury of world-renowned experts selected [six winners and three special prize recipients](#) who received cash prizes and were invited to an award ceremony and side events in Tunis and Gaâfour focused on the intersection of socially conscious art and grassroots projects and activism. Raoul Mallat won the first prize for his [animated short film](#), which follows the journey of Amal, a young Syrian refugee who must struggle to survive on her own in Beirut after her father is kidnapped at border. While transitional justice processes are stalled at the national level, ICTJ also prioritized work at the local and regional levels. We convened workshops in Tunisia’s southern regions with activists, local and national officials, and international policymakers to discuss transformative solutions to marginalization and how transitional justice processes can remedy its continued impacts.

In **Uganda**, human rights violations continued to rise, and the security situation deteriorated. The 2021 election saw the re-election of President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power since 1986. The electoral season was marred by unprecedented levels of state violence and suppression of dissenting voices, including numerous reports of torture, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance. The government constricted civic space through the suspension of 54 civil society organizations and the closure of Democratic Governance Facility, a key civil society funder. The government made little progress towards implementing the National Transitional Justice Policy, with a transitional justice bill to operationalize the Policy not yet tabled before Parliament. While the Constitutional Court found the trial of civilians by General Court Martial to be unconstitutional, the Attorney General appealed the latter decision to the Supreme Court.

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With respect to criminal justice, the ICC found former warlord and child soldier Dominic Ongwen guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes, sentencing him to 25 years imprisonment in May 2021. Together with Uganda Victims Foundation, ICTJ submitted amicus observations to ICC to inform reparations proceedings of Ongwen case, focusing on four issues basen on our extensive research and experience working with victim communities in northern Uganda: type of victims and prioritization, types of harm suffered, modalities of reparations, and concrete estimates for cost to repair harms; victims’ legal representatives referred to ICTJ’s recommendations on which victims should be prioritized and the modalities for delivering reparations. In collaboration with ICC’s Victim Participation and Reparations Section, ICTJ convened information session to guide local civil society on how to request leave to file amicus observations, leading 20 organizations to do so, the highest number ever to have filed briefs in an ICC case. At the national level, the International Crimes Division of the High Court in Kampala began Thomas Kwoyelo’s trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity in March 2022.

In connection with the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, ICTJ, the International Refugee Rights Initiative, Minority Rights Group, Uganda Child Rights NGO Network, and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion submitted a shadow report focused on four areas requiring urgent action: (1) ensuring victims of human rights violations receive an effective remedy, (2) guaranteeing the rights of children born of war to nationality and birth registration, (3) dealing with past and present enforced disappearances, and (4) addressing conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. During its review, HRC urged Uganda to enact and implement transitional justice legislation, establish a mechanism to provide redress

Inclusion and Participation in Practice: Rethinking Data Collection Methodologies

Sylvia Acan is the Executive Director of Golden Women Vision in Uganda (GWVU), a community-based organization she founded in 2011 with four other female survivors of conflict. The group was formed to provide a space for survivors to share their stories, find healing, and support each other in reintegration. ICTJ partnered with GWVU to undertake research funded by the Global Survivors Fund to understand better the experiences, perspectives, and reparative needs of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. As

centering rights holders is central to ICTJ's work, we collaborated closely with GWVU to ensure that we delivered a study that not only accurately identified the needs of survivors, but also involved them directly in the design and implementation of every aspect of our research.

Sylvia was among ten survivors identified as data collectors to undertake key informant interviews. ICTJ trained data collectors on relevant skills including interviewing techniques, documentation, how to get informed consent, as well as data management and protection. We collaborated with them to ensure accessibility and clarity of questionnaires based on their lived

experience and understanding of local cultural norms. Data collectors also facilitated focus group discussions and undertook verification processes to share the results of the study and receive feedback on recommendations. All the data collectors received financial remuneration in recognition of their skills and labor.

Engaging survivors like Sylvia as data collectors and involving them directly in the research process is a critical aspect of empowerment. As Sylvia explained, "being a data collector was a big achievement because I felt like a problem solver. I was able to express the stories of the survivors and give them a voice."

Ensuring inclusion in the study benefited GWVU too. In Sylvia's words, "the people who were involved from my organization—that was their first time doing something like that and the results have been good. One of the important things they learned was how to approach survivors. If you are harsh, someone will not tell you their story. You have to make them comfortable. And that relates to our work."

PHOTO: Sylvia Acan participates in an ICTJ-led data collection training. (ICTJ)



to victims and families of disappeared, and prevent CSRV and provide remedies to survivors, all recommendations highlighted in our shadow report. ICTJ also completed a study on reparations for CRSV that contains practical, concrete, and context specific recommendations. We built transferrable skills and capacities of victims by involving them in all stages of the process from design to data collection and validation.

In the **United States**,⁹ the recent wave of truth-seeking efforts aimed at reckoning with legacies of injustice has encountered significant backlash over the past year, reducing the momentum created after the 2020 protests against George Floyd’s murder. In several states across the country, there have been protests over “Critical Race Theory” and book bans have proliferated. While advocates continued to push for passage of HR40 at the national level, parallel efforts to pass versions of HR40 at the state and city levels have advanced. This year, ICTJ supported several of these efforts, building a network of key partners who are active in reparations and truth-seeking work across the country and helping to set a precedent for other states to undertake this work effectively. For example, we advised civil society representatives and Vermont state legislators in understanding truth-seeking processes and drafting a bill for a truth commission that passed the Vermont state house and senate. In Maryland, we helped the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission (MLTRC) to hold public hearings and acted as a facilitator to bridge the gap between the Commission and its community. We also partnered with the African American Redress Network (AARN) to organize a two-day community retreat in Brown Grove, Virginia, a predominantly Black community settled by freed slaves whose land is being threatened by private industrial development. The retreat helped the community to see its struggle in the larger context of systemic injustice in the United States and how their work can link to calls for acknowledgement of historical harm and reparative justice. In addition, at the national level, ICTJ broadened and informed the discussion around transitional justice through a series of panel events, including the launch event of [The Color of Justice](#) featuring Congresswoman Barbara Lee.

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“This retreat has energized me! To be honest, I was ready to walk away from fighting for my community because I felt tired, discouraged and overwhelmed but I am re-energized, refreshed, renewed as well as re-educated to do more. I am excited to start using skills I never knew I possessed!”

— Civil society activist in Brown Grove, Virginia

In **Venezuela**, negotiations facilitated by Norway created hope for a path forward involving a reparations component, but the process was suspended after only a few meetings. Divisions among the opposition parties increased due to their inability to agree on whether to engage or boycott the negotiations. The vacuum left by political parties forced civil society to deal with the same conundrum. Two opportunities remained unexploited: the ICC’s opening of an investigation that led to a strategy of collaboration with the government to institute judicial reforms, and the Biden Administration’s expedited revision of its approach to Venezuela due to the invasion of Ukraine and the need for alternatives to Russian oil. As coordinator of a discussion group on transitional justice, ICTJ offered a space for civil society to build trust among diverse actors. We expanded the reach of the discussion to include groups that are pressuring opposition parties to engage in negotiations and pressing the government to address humanitarian needs. We also assisted the discussion group to develop guiding principles of a transitional justice process and its role in negotiations, which will be used to develop a communications strategy.

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After the 1990-2011 conflict, countries in **the Western Balkans** have been able to develop stronger institutions and economies, but the legacy of conflict continues to shape social relations and influence politics in the region. Previous efforts to deal with the region’s past have been

⁹ This work is fully funded by dedicated philanthropic support.

focused on criminal prosecution and criminal reforms, and while civil society-led initiatives have been more wide ranging, their transformational impact has been limited due to their small scale. Denial about war crimes remains widespread and ethno-nationalist politics have continued to increase, making it difficult for victims to document and share their experiences and find truth and redress. To address these issues, ICTJ has partnered with PAX, Integra, and grassroots victims' groups in Kosovo (New Social Initiative), North Macedonia (Peace Action), and Serbia (Civic Initiatives) to support impactful and victim-led transitional justice initiatives in the region. As part of this project, ICTJ held a joint workshop with the three local civil society groups to introduce them to principles of transitional justice. Additionally, we designed the monitoring and evaluation for the project's future programming, and we provided inputs on the design of the assessments conducted by Civic Initiatives and Peace Action and the final reports of their findings.

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Over six years of unrelenting war in **Yemen** has created what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with over 80% of Yemenis needing humanitarian aid. The warring parties continued to commit human rights violations and abuses with impunity. Human rights groups in the country have been documenting these violations, efforts needed for any form of accountability or reconciliation to take place. The National Commission for Investigation into Allegations of Human Rights Violations (NCIAVHR), created in 2016, is the only local accountability mechanism that exists in Yemen. The NCIAVHR monitors, documents, and investigates violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed since 2011 by all parties to the conflict. It aims to establish the facts about the crimes and identify those responsible, with a view to holding the perpetrators to account and ensuring victims receive compensation. ICTJ's work on Yemen has focused on building the capacity and knowledge of members of the NCIAVHR on transitional justice. Over the past year, we held a series of webinars with Commission members that provided them with comparative experiences and lessons learned from countries around the world.

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ICTJ also responded to ad hoc requests for analysis and technical assistance to domestic and international stakeholders as well as monitored developments in **Georgia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Ukraine.**

Strategic Communications

ICTJ's communications team plays a key role in achieving and enhancing our impact at all levels. It develops tailored content to advance our programmatic and policy objectives, raise awareness, and strengthen public discourse. When pertinent, the team also supports selected country programs by providing technical assistance and advice on communications with relevant institutions, civil society, and media. At a global level, the communications department plays a crucial role by telling the story of the human impact of our work, offering a platform for the voices of victims to be heard, and translating technical and complicated concepts into accessible and compelling stories of the struggle for justice and acknowledgment, empowerment, and overcoming trauma.

During FY22, ICTJ operated with a hybrid model in line with public health recommendations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ICTJ's communications team was able to quickly adapt and fully leverage the potential of online communication and remote support to amplify the exposure and engagement of activities on the ground. For example, workshops in Tunisia reached over 2,000 accounts on average, far greater than the participation of the in-person event. Likewise, our Wide Awake Art Exhibition and its related campaign reached over 4,500 individuals.

During the past year, ICTJ deployed its institutional communication efforts strategically as part of national and international policy advocacy efforts and around specific policy issues and campaigns to convey critical information and mobilize support around these issues. For example, ICTJ's tweets discussing Afghanistan were widely reproduced and received significant engagement.

In FY22, ICTJ's website averaged about 270,000 unique users. This figure represents about 4% less than previous year, which we attribute to organic variance and a decrease in social media activity around our website during the design and transition to our new website and digital resource library. Additionally, to reach more of our target audience, ICTJ began producing



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alternative forms of content to disseminate our messaging and the perspectives of victims, including YouTube videos, podcasts, blogs, and other media. These products now represent a very significant proportion of the institutional efforts to better reach and influence audiences including people on the ground, grassroots activists, and others.

Another key role of communications as part of ICTJ's interventions has been producing and disseminating reliable information about issues of justice, for example, the "Patrones de la Guerra" campaign in Colombia, reaching over 300,000 views individually and about a 1 million people if looking at the whole campaign. During FY22, ICTJ played a similar role in Uganda and The Gambia.

ICTJ's communication efforts contributed to creating and expanding access to key information and capacity building and have played a key role in disseminating knowledge. In the past year, ICTJ continued to develop our capacity to provide courses online for stakeholders remotely across the globe. Additionally, ICTJ's website was transformed into an online repository of our research and policy briefs (more details in the Key Results section below).

As the transition to virtual engagement accelerated throughout the world, ICTJ has able to leverage our networks and to build bridges, connecting activists, grassroots organizations, communities and duty-bearers in activities and discussions across frontiers, in a way that is more effective and efficient than previously possible. We have been mindful of the limitations some of our stakeholders face in accessing the Internet, but we have also seized opportunities that arise to bring our stakeholders together.

Key Results

Transitional justice processes and their results vary greatly from context to context. Factors such as the institutional capacity of the State, political will among government, coalitions' strength for pushing for reform, societal endorsement, pressing financial or humanitarian needs, security constraints, and the role of domestic and international civil society actors all influence progress and results.

Transitional justice processes are cyclical, iterative ones, whose effects should be monitored and followed over the long term, rather than discrete instances when everything happens at once. However, they can often experience rapid developments leading to significant change.

In FY22, ICTJ redoubled efforts to protect the gains of our work and respond to harsh setbacks, while the world still struggles in the wake of the pandemic. At the same time, it is thanks to the persistence of our partners in civil society, the victims, the families of the missing, and the commitment of our staff that we have been able to find spaces to make progress and jointly develop opportunities for change.

Below, we follow the structure of our results framework to interpret the data we collect and present some highlights of the most significant progress in FY22.

Landmark Victories

- *Societies implement responsive and gender-sensitive solutions to address legacies of massive human rights violations and lay the foundations for peace, justice, and inclusion.*

During the fiscal year, ICTJ supported processes that persevered in the face of strong domestic challenges. ICTJ's work helped more than 5,000 men and women participate in various processes, increasing their access to justice as societies finally implemented solutions to address and set right issues of the past. This is a step that is difficult to reach, in a long road that starts in some cases many years ago.

Once these processes reach this critical point, the work is not done. There is a different but equally important role for ICTJ and our partners, both in monitoring the effective implementation of these solutions and ensuring continued support and constructive advice to make these policies,



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mechanisms, and reforms the most effective possible, in light of previous or comparable experiences.

Table 1. Transitional Justice Solutions, Informed by ICTJ, Implemented in FY22 (Results Framework Indicator 5.1)

COUNTRY	TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE SOLUTION
Australia	1. Victoria State Yoo-rook Justice Commission
Central African Republic	2. Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (CJVRR)
Colombia	3. Special Jurisdiction for Peace 4. Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition 5. Special Unit for the Search of Persons Deemed as Missing
Lebanon	6. Commission for the Missing and Forcibly Disappeared
The Gambia	7. Truth, Reparations and Reconciliation Commission (TRRC)
Uganda	8. National Transitional Justice Policy 9. Prosecutions by the International Crimes Division 10. Local Development Plans
United States	11. Allegany County Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission (ACLTRC) 12. Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Yemen	13. National Commission for Investigation into Allegations of Human Rights Violations (NCIAVHR)

In The Gambia, the uncertain post-TRRC period opened with peaceful elections and a commitment by the new government to implement the TRRC’s recommendations. The government [accepted](#) 263 of 265 of the TRRC’s recommendations and is underway to pursue implementation, including a strategy to prosecute the former dictator and his cronies, as well as the establishment of reparations and reforms. ICTJ’s partners on the grounds are already engaging in a discussion to enable practical and feasible approach to reparations that includes elements that are priorities for those impacted, such as access to health care.

In Colombia, ICTJ provided vital support to the implementation of the mechanisms and policies, enabling the work of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the Truth Commission, and to the Unit for the Search of Missing persons. At the end of 2021, an external evaluation of ICTJ’s program in Colombia assessed ICTJ’s work in the country. The evaluation focused on the extent to which ICTJ contributed to the achievement of three specific objectives: the Special Jurisdiction for Peace incorporates international standards and operates with best practices to guarantee the

victims' right to justice; Colombian society owns and accepts the results of the Truth Commission (including its final report); and different stakeholders in Colombian society actively participate in restorative justice and reforms to promote political and social transition in the country.

The evaluation concluded that the expected program results were “clearly achieved”. In addition, this external evaluation found that ICTJ played a crucial role as a facilitator of a politically sensitive dialogue between all the stakeholders of the restorative justice process in Colombia, which allowed the process to move forward and overcome obstacles.

According to the report, ICTJ achieved these results thanks to our profound knowledge of the transitional justice issues addressed by the mentioned entities, our ability to access and make available the foremost national and international experts on the subject, as well as our detailed familiarity with the peace process, the peace accords, and its key actors. The evaluation found that the “relatively small team of ICTJ” was able to achieve “surprising results”, thanks to our efficient approach.

Supporting Those Who Fight for Justice

- *Victims and civil society have the necessary knowledge, capacity, and support to advance their demands for justice.*

During FY22, ICTJ conducted about 140 capacity building activities, strategy discussions, and roundtable convenings with our civil society partners. This output represents a considerable increase in activity compared to the previous year (double) and is also evidence of an effective transition to a hybrid approach to providing support to our partners, as a significant proportion of these activities were conducted for the most part online or remotely. Over 1,000 individuals participated in these activities.

Quantitative data collected by ICTJ's design, monitoring, and evaluation team confirms our reports with over 90% of our civil society partners sharing that they improved their ability to pursue justice and demand their rights. When considering survey data disaggregated by gender, women participants of ICTJ activities tend to provide higher rankings. It is also important to consider that a significant proportion of ICTJ's activities benefit women, focusing on the role of women in building peace, participating in democracy and in establishing priorities for policies and processes, for example (considering data from this period, women make up over 60% of the total beneficiaries of our work).

ICTJ's support to civil society was particularly critical in the past year, as our organization was able to quickly react to changing conditions and help our partners, some of whom were suddenly facing life-threatening events. As mentioned in the country section, ICTJ and other international stakeholders came together in the aftermath of the fall of Kabul to help our local partners in Afghanistan safely evacuate the country. ICTJ was especially in close contact with AHRDO colleagues and ensured the liaison with institutions working on evacuation and relocation of Afghans during this period of turmoil. Once in Canada, ICTJ introduced our partners to key stakeholders there so they could start networking and learn from comparative experiences of organizations working on similar issues from the diaspora (like Syrians). In Sudan, after the October coup, ICTJ responded to demands for support from civil society partners and was able to organize a regional workshop (in very challenging operative conditions), and with ICTJ's support, our partners were able to successfully replicate these workshops across the country.

Our partnership with the Global Survivors' Fund (described in the Gender section) was designed to not only provide recommendations based upon the findings from our studies, but also to empower

survivors. In Uganda, ICTJ's program partnered with survivor groups, identified individuals in those groups that then would receive training and work as data collectors. Engaging the survivors as data collectors empowered them and offered several advantages as the data collectors were able to draw upon their lived experiences and help make the data collection instruments more sensitive to cultural norms and the experience of conflict. They received financial remuneration for their skills and labor. They also developed other skills including interviewing techniques, documentation, how to get informed consent as well as data management and protection.

Qualitative and quantitative evidence collected points to ICTJ's contributions to civil society and our capacity to pursue justice, and the contribution is more clearly established when considering only gender-related work.

In late 2021, an external team of consultants from Agency for Peacebuilding conducted an independent, external evaluation focused on ICTJ policy influence. Their report found ICTJ's work to have succeeded in many areas and noted that "ICTJ's efforts in supporting civil society and communities of practice have been so successful that they have also generated significant

unexpected results. In the case of The Gambia, for example, the multiple opportunities that ICTJ provided for women activists to meet led to wider and unintended positive effects."

"Now women are encouraged by other women to engage community members in talking about and addressing violence against women."

— Key informant, external evaluation, October 2021

Outcome harvesting conducted systematically throughout ICTJ programs identified qualitative evidence of ICTJ's role in bridging gaps and enabling collaboration among civil society organizations in different contexts where we work. ICTJ has been able to leverage its position as an international player to foster South-South Cooperation among geographically dispersed organizations with comparable experiences. Likewise, ICTJ tends to play the role of mediator

and partnership builder among domestic organizations in the contexts where we operate. Some examples in the past year include cooperation and dialogue among organizations from Syria-Libya-Yemen; our enabling role in a coalition of civil society organizations in the Balkans; exchanges between artists and activists in Lebanon and Tunisia; as well as an important role as a dialogue-builder and convener in contexts such as Syria (where ICTJ works with a coalition of partners), Colombia (convening and participating in a roundtable of organizations), Uganda (where ICTJ's role has been considered critical to galvanize CSO actors around Transitional Justice), and Lebanon (where ICTJ participates in and significantly contributes in a coalition called the "Forum for Memory and Justice"). These "bridges" and alliances have enabled the successful production of documentation; established new relationships and exchanges of best practices; increased access to funding for local partners; and augmented voices in international for a, including participation and access of domestic organizations to spaces that would be closed to them without ICTJ's leverage and legitimacy.

With ICTJ's support, our civil society partners were able to produce about 20 different policy proposals, declarations, or reports to engage with processes in their countries and articulate their demands. These included, for example, several reports from Colombian civil society partners to inform the work of the Truth Commission and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as well as Syrian organizations presenting a "Guide to Untold Darkness" about the situation of the missing and their families.

Enhanced Processes, Increasing Participation

- *State and other institutions successfully put forward and implement proposals (laws, reforms, programs, or institutions) to advance transitional justice solutions that are gender sensitive, take account of the context, and respond to the needs of rights-holders and the demands of victims and civil society.*

In FY22, ICTJ provided comparative experience, accompaniment, and technical advice to duty bearers. These efforts resulted in tangible, concrete progress in transitional justice processes in the form of more than 20 policies, norms, practice guides, and other tools created by those stakeholders. ICTJ staff also produced at least 26 technical documents, including advisory memos, background papers and amicus briefs, that informed the decisions of government officials in six different countries

Examples this year included a host of internal procedures, strategy documents, and technical protocols for the CAR Truth Commission (e.g., the statement-taking protocol, their annual strategy and their gender manual), the selection procedures for the Yoo-Rook Commission in Australia, the budget for Lebanon's Commission for the Missing, and the children's section of the report of the Mali Truth Commission.

Significant achievements also included key policies and methods adopted by the Peace Accords mechanisms in Colombia mentioned before, such as the significant contribution to the legacy and communication strategy of the Truth Commission and to the work of the SJP.

ICTJ's contributions were also welcomed by the National Commission for Investigation into Allegations of Human Rights Violations (NCIAVHR) of Yemen, who incorporated ICTJ's advice in their report and subsequent work. ICTJ also contributed to UN and state practitioners in South Sudan, among others.

Data collected through retrospective pretest surveys and feedback forms in the past year consistently pointed to high levels of appreciation for ICTJ's support. Practitioners feedback singled out ICTJ's "practical approach" to technical support as an important added value, bringing relevant comparative experiences, case studies, and practical examples based on prior hands on experience.

ICTJ supports the work of actors with the duty to protect the rights of others by fostering dialogue and creating platforms for them to meet with victims and their constituencies. In the past year, ICTJ convened at least 38 such meetings, including, for example, playing a key role in enabling the engagement of victims and civil society with the ICC reparations process for the Ongwen case in Uganda, helping supporting Syrian civil society to build bridges with international stakeholders in the pursuit for justice in Syria, building the capacity of women to communicate their needs to the government officials in The Gambia, and linking civil society and government officials in Colombia.

Changing the Narrative

- *Public discourse provides a more conducive environment for addressing the causes and consequences of massive human rights violations.*

ICTJ's mission relies on our ability to open space for the right to truth, the truth-telling of victims, a narrative that is rights-based and inclusive (or acknowledges) the violations and preventing re-victimization and denial of violence. Success in the long term in addressing root causes of violence or authoritarianism relies on a public narrative that supports justice. This has become

increasingly more relevant as digital communication becomes the primary form of information sharing and knowledge dissemination. The long-term transition towards digital communication has been dramatically accelerated by the impact of COVID, leading to an information landscape that is increasingly more fragmented, and more easily manipulated and polarized.

In the past year, ICTJ has increased our work to influence public narratives and has been recognized as a reliable reference on transitional justice issues in contexts with ongoing processes. FY22 findings in external evaluations and internal DME data in The Gambia, Uganda and Colombia have indicated that ICTJ is an important and reliable reference for information and analysis about transitional justice processes.

In Colombia, more than 1 million people have watched “Patrones de la Guerra,” a series on the effects of conflict in different communities. Featuring victims and perpetrators, it covers such topics as previous FARC rule, financing of paramilitary groups, dispossession of land, and the current peace agreement.

In Uganda, ICTJ’s experts were featured in TV programs on NTV and NBS, which reached over 500,000 viewers. In The Gambia, ICTJ partnered with the media during the election period to disseminate a victim-centered perspective and help promote the issue of justice in the political agenda, reaching over 20,000 people in the small country.



PHOTO: In Baltimore, Maryland, participants gather at the site where King Johnson was murdered on Christmas Day in 1911 and collect soil in his memory. (André Chung/ICTJ)

In Tunisia, Lebanon, Colombia and the United States, ICTJ has engaged in interventions that incorporate an artistic component, opening spaces for alternative narratives about the present, linking these narratives to unaddressed issues of the past. These activities are leading to strong engagement and very positive feedback from participants. ICTJ is currently developing our methods to measure the outcomes and impact of these types of interventions more accurately as part of our broader program work.

More generally, ICTJ staff has participated or been featured in several publications, including [justiceinfo.net](https://www.justiceinfo.net) and [interviewHer](https://www.interviewher.com), as well as mainstream media like BBC Scotland, the Irish Times and Italian National Broadcast. ICTJ has

also established a partnership with the outlet The Intercept, leading to several collaborations (including, e.g., a feature on the human rights impact of the COVID crisis).

In March 2022, ICTJ completed the redesign of our website and is launching our ICTJ Digital Resource Library, a searchable multilingual database of our publications for practitioners, academia, and the public. This repository is a major achievement that involved considerable resources and effort to better organize ICTJ’s substantial knowledge developed over 20 years of activity. The launch of the redesigned website will be the subject of a dissemination campaign soon.

Better-Informed Policy Decisions

- *Practitioners and policymakers at the international level have better information and expanded capacity to advance responsive, gender-sensitive, and context-specific solutions.*

One of the key elements of ICTJ's strategy is combining our connection to grassroots movements on the ground, our international network and partnerships, and our ability to conduct research, analyze data and produce knowledge. ICTJ shares our insights, disseminates information, collaborates with others at the international level and in this way, helps shape context based international responses to human right violations.

The findings of our external evaluation included that ICTJ effectively leverages partnerships, empowers local efforts, and maintains an agile, global presence at the invitation of people around the world who trust us to put victims first. The report highlights ICTJ's success in including and empowering women in the TRRC in The Gambia, in maintaining a network of civil society organizations documenting abuses in Syria, and in convening the Working Group on Transitional Justice and SDG16+.

One important achievement in the past year has been the relevance of ICTJ work in the global discussion on the missing. In 2020, ICTJ and our Syrian partners correctly predicted that the issues around the missing and detained would remain a priority and required special attention. Since then, Syrian civil society have more closely focused on the issue of detainees and on supporting families of victims. Through the work done by families and civil society, they have managed to push for an international conversation around the creation

of a mechanism for the missing in Syria that could address and facilitate the many challenges that families have been facing and continue to face to this day. Through their persistence and analysis on the myriad challenges that families face, from economic to social to legal ones, they have increased attention to the issue and ensure that it features prominently on the international agenda for Syria.

ICTJ's report regarding the situation of Syrians came out at an opportune time, as discussions around international responses to address the issue of the missing recently got traction at the international level. ICTJ's FY22 work, much like our 2020 report *Gone Without a Trace*, is proving an important resource for those working on the issue. As similar situations rise in prominence, ICTJ's report is providing practitioners a blueprint for all the issues that they need to consider. Since December 2021, ICTJ staff members have received positive feedback from civil society organizations and partner governments who are using the report. After the publication of the report, ICTJ staff members have been called for consultations on the matter, including with OHCHR and the US State Department, among others.

ICTJ also provided contributions and technical advice that were then incorporated into several reports, procedures, declarations, and policies of governments, multilateral organizations (e.g., the ICC and the United Nations), and other international bodies. For example, ICTJ contributed to an OHCHR report on Transitional Justice and to the Universal Periodic Review processes for Kenya, Uganda, and Tunisia. We understand that, as local conditions and political will to support justice stalls or is weakened, international mechanisms and "peer pressure" at the international

"In Colombia, and globally, ICTJ is committed to cultural transformations of societies in transition, prioritizing the new generations and their forms of communication."

— External evaluation report, March 2022

level can play an important role in monitoring progress or the lack of it, keeping justice gaps on the public agenda, and mobilizing domestic and international scrutiny and support.

Table 2 presents a list of these policies, procedures, resolutions, and proposals in 2021-2022 that include, reflect, or acknowledge ICTJ inputs.

Table 2. ICTJ’s Contributions to National and International Policies, Procedures, Resolutions, and Proposals, FY22

1.	ICC, Assembly of State Parties, Report of the Bureau on Complementarity (December 2021)
2.	OHCHR, Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, <i>Human Rights and Transitional Justice</i> (January 2022)
3.	ICCPR, Periodic Review, Concluding Observations on the Fourth Periodic Report of Kenya (May 2021)
4.	UNSC, Final Report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2140 (2014) (January 2021)
5.	USAID, Challenges of Reconciliation and Reparation for Victims in Colombia: Final Report (December 2021)
6.	ICC, Decision to Close the 17-Year Preliminary Examination of the Situation in Colombia, Subject to Possible Later Reconsideration (October 2021)
7.	UN Women, Women’s Meaningful Participation in Transitional Justice (March 2022)
8.	UN, <i>Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence, Transitional Justice Measures and Addressing the Legacy of Gross Violations of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Committed in Colonial Contexts</i> (July 2021)

Lessons Learned

In the face of an unstable global context and more pressing demands for justice from grassroots movements, victims, and domestic communities, ICTJ has leveraged our current agile configuration to provide support to our constituencies, despite limited resources. According to the Agency for Peacebuilding evaluation cited prior in this report, in the past few years ICTJ was able to “expand its engagement both in terms of breadth (i.e. the number of countries and issues on which it engages) and depth (i.e. the number of stakeholders involved in each context or initiative, and the level of expertise acquired)”, however, “what ensured that this expansion would not have a negative impact on the quality of the organization’s work is its focus on learning and reflection.”

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Challenging times for justice require organizations that can learn from their mistakes and adapt flexibly and creatively to develop solutions and overcome obstacles. ICTJ is committed to remaining responsive to ever changing needs of our beneficiaries and sharing our insights with our partners to that the practice of transitional justice better responds to the needs and priorities of victims. Below we share some of the key insights of the past year.

Trend Toward Closing Space for Civil Society Accelerates.

Increasingly, authoritarian or populist illiberal regimes resort to measures to control civil society and close their space for action. The closing of civic space under the guise of “regulations” or “donor coordination”, threatens the work done by domestic organizations, and especially the work of the human rights community. ICTJ’s analysis has found examples this year in Sudan, Uganda (where, for example, even international organizations such as the Democratic Governance Facility is blocked from acting), as well as in Tunisia and Venezuela (where draft legislation is being discussed). This is also the case in other contexts where ICTJ is not working now, such as in El Salvador and Nicaragua. This shows international learning among authoritarian governments that see the actions of organized civil society as a threat to their control of society. ICTJ has experience with such attempts and have instituted mitigation measures such as cultivating good relationships with government officials, developing strict procedures to comply with normal regulations, and maintaining our good standing as an international nongovernmental organization, which has protected our work to an extent. However, our domestic partners who are smaller in size and subjected to more stringent national regulations are far more vulnerable. This is an issue that we will continue to monitor and discuss with our international partners to establish coordinated action.

Failure to Address Corruption and Accountability Undermines Prevention.

The fall of Kabul highlighted the importance of justice and accountability as tools of prevention. For years, the international community, led by the United States, worked in Afghanistan with a corrupt local administration. Ignoring corruption and its impact on public opinion meant that the local administration had little or no community support. According to our partners in Afghanistan and our own analysis, the perception of inequality, rampant corruption, and failure to deliver even basic services provided opportunities for the Taliban, which in turn promised security and accountability. Moreover, one of the key elements that led to failure of interventions with massive resources were that these were centralized and did not reach rural areas. Despite huge interventions, many issues that matter to large proportions of the population were not addressed, mainly prevention of violence, accountability, equity, and corruption. These elements are especially important in fragile, challenging contexts.

Choice of Terms to Define Our Work Is Part of the Strategy.

“This session was well organized and gave us a platform to share our ideas in a language that we understood, and that’s why the issues came across clearly. . . .”

— Male survivor in Gulu, Uganda

Increasingly, our own design, monitoring, and evaluation has helped us gain a better understanding of the importance of proper framing and language in our work, as part of ICTJ’s general conflict sensitivity approach. One important insight that ICTJ has gained and benefitted from in the past few years is that the use of the terminology and concepts of transitional justice in our work is a strategic choice. In several contexts where we operate, the terminology of transitional justice (as referred to by international practitioners and academia) has been misappropriated (e.g., in Armenia) or associated with a failed process (e.g., in Venezuela). In several other contexts, some specific terms trigger polarized discourse and create “fault lines” that divide

the potential support for solutions, or invoke a specific, narrow approach, for example around the term “reparations.” Therefore, the use of terminology is a strategic choice that needs to be adapted to the needs and particular features of a specific context. Increasingly, ICTJ’s staff, our data collection instruments, and our materials tend towards organic, natural language that is used by the communities we work for, and that faithfully represents their priorities and needs.

ICTJ Takes Lessons from Its Role as a Link Between Domestic Organizations And Large Donors.

ICTJ’s experience in sub granting and managing funds over the past three years (including a Fund for civil society support in Colombia and several other experiences) provided a series of lessons learned and best practices:

- While ICTJ believes that the strategy of creating consortia of several civil society organizations has advantages (for example, the different organizations can complement each other’s areas of expertise and regional presence), this experience has shown that the consortia tend to drift apart and/or lose sight of their common objective, as they ultimately pursue different political agendas. Whether or not such consortia are conducive to achieving overall objectives should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Technical assistance provided to domestic organizations can be complemented with periodic political dialogue with them, to exchange experiences and information and/or address topics

of interest to the implementation of the projects. These may include discussions about the current security situation or other political or humanitarian contingencies that may negatively affect project implementation. ICTJ's experience during the pandemic has taught us the value of taking up that role.

- Periodic meetings to follow up with the transitional justice mechanisms that receive technical assistance provide important information on their needs and priorities (which tend to change over time), contribute to strengthening the institutional relationships, and emphasize the political (and not just financial) support being given to the institutions.

Lessons Learned Over the Last Four Years Have Culminated in Our New Strategy.

ICTJ's new strategic plan for 2022-2027 is the institutional response to the changes in context, challenges, and opportunities that we identify. In this document, we provide our analysis of the current context, incorporate several of the recommendations of external evaluations and feedback from our partners, both international and domestic, and lay out the key priorities for our work in the next five years. The 2022-2027 strategy document is included as an annex.

Institutional Progress

During the final year of the Strategic Plan 2018-2022, ICTJ's flexibility and agility was central to our ability to adapt to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We challenged ourselves to find creative approaches to continue functioning at all levels to protect pre-pandemic justice gains, including designing new ways of monitoring evolving needs of our staff and increasing connectivity and inter-functional collaboration of colleagues across our global platform. Establishing new communication channels including regular virtual meetings and systematizing the use of tools available through Microsoft Office, for example, helped increase coordination among our HQ and country staff. As we optimized the use of available technologies, we began developing a vision for modernizing our operations and the practice of transitional justice at large.

While our capacity has been stretched, we have remained financially stable, balancing our budget, and finishing FY22 with nearly 85% of the FY23 operational budget secured. We received clean institutional audits, positive external evaluations, and the GuideStar Platinum Transparency Seal, the highest available third-party accountability and transparency rating for nonprofits.

Our commitment to continue expanding our reach through virtual events and bilateral engagement helped us widen our community of states, multilateral, academic, civil society, and philanthropic institutions the world over. We increased the level of attention and space given to transitional justice by policymakers and practitioners and the level of attention to the circumstances and the needs of our beneficiaries by our donors. As a result, and with support from our leading donors, we had increased our capacity to disseminate knowledge by launching our multilingual digital resource library on our website (while proceeding with the update of our digital infrastructure) and increased sub-granting to partners on the ground within several funding agreements.

As discussed above, during FY22, we developed our new five-year strategy for 2022-2027, renewed our anchor partnerships with the Netherlands and Sida, maintained our strong relationship with the government of Luxembourg and entered a new three-year partnership with the government of Finland. Our focus on diversifying funding streams continued, and ICTJ was able to attract new institutional funders representing the public and philanthropic sectors alike. Our strategic virtual engagement programs have been instrumental in this success. These include virtual quarterly briefings called "Inside ICTJ" focused specifically on Board development, individual prospect development, and our foundation relations; inter-sector donor hosted events; convenings developed for the policy community presented around the globe; and our transitional justice course promoted within policy, civil society, and philanthropic spheres.

The list of our major supporters is included in the table below. Our increased ability to engage new philanthropic support is of particular significance; during this time of major geopolitical and economic crisis when we must rely on consistently expanding network of funders. In FY22, ICTJ welcomed new and returned funders such as the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Humanity United, The J. M. Kaplan Fund, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The Skoll Foundation, and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund. As we build closer relationships with these funders, many of whom participate in established philanthropic networks, we work with the Development Committee of our Board to create access to individual philanthropy focused on making strategic investments in addressing the most pressing issues of our time.

Our board development work is of particular significance in this regard. During FY22, we prioritized a dual agenda: identifying board prospects that have experience in nonprofit governance and in philanthropy while also ensuring that our Board reflects our work and commitment to diversity and inclusion. ICTJ's Governance and Nominations Committee of the Board successfully led efforts to recruit 5 new board members representing expertise in nonprofit governance, philanthropy, academia, business and rule of law as well as national and racial diversity and gender parity, consistent with our culture and values.

ICTJ's Strategic Partners provide political and major multi-year financial support to our organization. They are:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland
- Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

The following table provides a list of other major donors to our organizations.

Table 3. ICTJ’s Major Donors, FY21

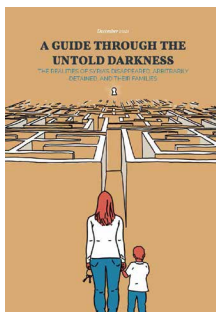
Governments	Foundations and Individuals (\$25,000+)
Republic of Austria, Austrian Development Agency Republic of France, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs German Federal Foreign Office Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Swiss Confederation, represented by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs USA State Department: Office of Global Criminal Justice (GCJ) State of Victoria, Department of Premier and Cabinet (Australia)	Anonymous (2) Charina Endowment Fund Chubb Rule of Law Fund Cordaid Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Humanity United J.M. Kaplan Fund The Kimball Foundation Legal Horizons Foundation Mai Family Foundation Open Society Foundations Rockefeller Brothers Fund Skoll Foundation Joan and Michael Spero Family Charitable Fund Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
Multilateral Organizations	Other Organizations
Democratic Governance Facility The European Commission United Nations Children’s Fund United Nations Development Programme United Nations Peacebuilding Fund	Chemonics International Global Survivor’s Fund International and Ibero-American Foundation National Endowment for Democracy

Annex A: Publications and Selected Editorial Content



[Gearing Up the Fight Against Impunity: Dedicated Investigative and Prosecutorial Capacities](#) (March 2022)

Also available in [Arabic](#).



[A Guide Through the Untold Darkness: The Realities of Syria's Disappeared, Arbitrarily Detained, and Their Families](#) (March 2022)

Also available in [Arabic](#).

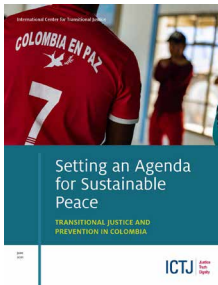


[A Transitional Justice Approach to Foreign Fighters](#) (December 2021)

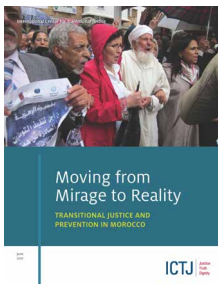
Also available in [Arabic](#).



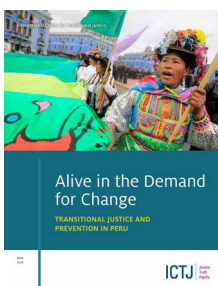
[Transitional Justice and Prevention: Summary Findings from Five Country Case Studies](#) (July 2021)



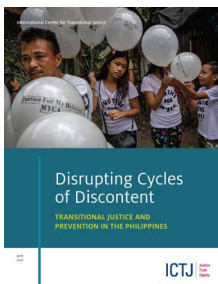
[Setting an Agenda for Sustainable Peace: Transitional Justice and Prevention in Colombia](#) (July 2021)



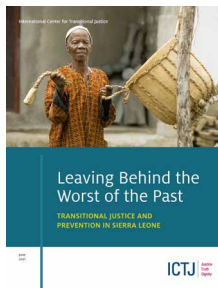
[Moving from Mirage to Reality: Transitional Justice and Prevention in Morocco](#) (July 2021)



[Alive in the Demand for Change: Transitional Justice and Prevention in Peru](#) (July 2021)



[Disrupting Cycles of Discontent: Transitional Justice and Prevention in the Philippines](#) (July 2021)



[Leaving Behind the Worst of the Past: Transitional Justice and Prevention in Sierra Leone](#) (July 2021)

Reports

Briefing Papers

- [Accountability in Policing COVID-19: Lessons from the Field](#) (September 2021)
- [The Color of Justice: Transitional Justice and the Legacy of Slavery and Racism in the United States](#) (April 2021)

Expert's Choice

- March 2022** [Fernando Travesí, A Just Peace for a Besieged Ukraine](#)
- February 2022** [Salwa El Gantri, Judicial Independence in Tunisia in Grave Danger](#)
- January 2022** [Nousha Kabawat, A Step Toward Justice in Syria](#)
- December 2021** [Didier Gbery, Measured Optimism in The Gambia as Stakeholders Consider the TRRC's Final Report](#)
- November 2021** [Maria Camila Moreno Múnera, Five Years of Light and Shadow: Colombia's Final Peace Agreement Marks a Milestone](#)
- September 2021** [Fernando Travesí, What Does the Future Hold for Afghanistan?](#)
- August 2021** [Anna Myriam Roccatello, Tunisia's Transition Imperiled](#)
- July 2021** [Sibley Hawkins, We All Fiddle, and Afghanistan Burns](#)
- June 2021** [Ruben Carranza, Justice Is More Than Accountability for Victims of Rodrigo Duterte's 'War on Drugs'](#)
- May 2021** [Nousha Kabawat, No Longer Welcome: Syrian Refugees in Denmark Face an Impossible Choice](#)
- April 2021** [Anna Myriam Roccatello, Protesters and a Shadow National Unity Government Refuse to Surrender in Myanmar](#)

ICTJ

Justice
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