

REPORT

Core Report Fiscal Year 2020

April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

June 2020



Cover Image: Protestors block access to the Ring Bridge in Beirut, Lebanon, in late October 2019.
(Nadim Kobeiessi/Wikimedia Commons)

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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

Over the past year, conflicts continued in many parts of the world, causing devastation and leaving behind millions of victims. Impunity persisted for some of the most heinous crimes; justice, human rights, and humanitarian law continued to be dismissed; and nationalist narratives continued to perpetuate and entrench racism, marginalization, and exclusion. Despite these ongoing challenges, there are reasons to be hopeful for positive change. In capitals and regional hubs, broad sections of society have filled the streets in massive, mostly peaceful protests to demand an end to endemic corruption and political and economic disenfranchisement, and long overdue redress for past injustices and historical grievances. These movements have breathed fresh air into what has been a bleak global climate for justice and human rights over recent years.

ICTJ's work to position transitional justice in a wide range of policy discussions, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has reached new heights and is described in detail in the global level section of this report. In October 2019, our annual donor roundtable in The Hague brought together a diverse group representing donor states, foundations, and multilateral institutions in a discussion of strategic priorities and challenges facing the field. ICTJ was asked to develop a new level of understanding on collecting empirical evidence to help inform policy and the design of transitional justice approaches; continue articulating the relationship between transitional justice and related fields (such as peacebuilding and state-building as well as humanitarian and rule of law initiatives); and, when appropriate, support strategic coordination and sharing between donors.

The increased level of attention to transitional justice and a more nuanced, context-specific, and inclusive approach to designing lasting solutions became especially evident during the first-ever United Nations Security Council (UNSC) open debate on transitional justice held in February 2020. ICTJ was honored to advise on the preparation of the debate, which included representatives from all our donor states whose staunch support has made our work possible.

However, as we engaged in strategic follow-up on the open debate during the last month of ICTJ's fiscal year, the COVID-19 global pandemic reminded us of the constant uncertainty in the world. While only time will tell the exact toll on human life, the pandemic is more than just a public health emergency and is bringing to the surface many underlying social, political, and economic problems rooted in historical inequality, exclusion, and injustice. Many victims around the world remain deeply affected by the consequences of past conflicts and dictatorships. These populations, including refugees and those displaced by violence, are particularly vulnerable to its impacts, including illness, unemployment, and the loss of livelihood. In many of the countries where

we work, politicians opposed to transitional justice processes are manipulating the emergency situation in an effort to impede accountability and expand and abuse power.

We have seen serious human rights violations around the globe, such as those occurring in war-torn Libya, Syria, and Yemen, take a backseat in the news. Additionally, several donors are currently shifting their funding priorities, to focus more on humanitarian measures. As some donors may decide to stop funding local groups working on justice issues, ICTJ's support to local organizations is now more critical than ever. While an increased focus on global health is justified, it is important for donors, policymakers, and practitioners to recognize that many victims of human rights violations and armed conflict in countries emerging from war or authoritarian rule will be carrying two burdens going forward — the repercussions of human rights violations they still endure and the impact of the pandemic on their families and livelihood.

We at ICTJ remain steadfast in our mission to help societies dealing with legacies of massive human rights violations to break cycles of violence and build a more peaceful, just, and inclusive future. At the heart of all we do are the voices and needs of victims and the civil society organizations that advocate for them; they are the most powerful catalysts for real change. Women, young people, and members of marginalized ethnic or religious communities, underrepresented among victims in these societies, are most often the targets of human rights abuses, and bear the brunt of discriminatory policies. The only path to sustainable peace and development that guarantees justice for all is one in which victims and civil society actively and meaningfully participate in transitional justice processes.

This core report provides an overview of ICTJ's work at the global, country, and institutional level during its 2020 fiscal year, with a focus on lessons learned and key results. This year, we have changed our approach to the report; it now presents the highlights of our activities in a shorter, more succinct, and user-friendly format. We at ICTJ welcome your inquiries about any aspect 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, each section includes links to relevant resources and ICTJ products.

Global Level

This fiscal year marks the third year of ICTJ's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, according to which we have continued to simultaneously work directly in the field, conduct research, and inform thinking at the global policy level. As the leading organization in transitional justice, ICTJ plays a unique role collecting lessons from the field, victims' perspectives, and successes and failures of societies dealing with transitional justice. We dig deeper into these findings with critical analysis and comparative research that we then share with all relevant stakeholders to help improve interventions and advance the global agenda for justice.

During the reporting period, we carried out a major global initiative on the role of transitional justice in advancing the world's agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ICTJ also supported the inclusion of justice considerations in peace processes and researched pressing issues such as refugees and prevention. Taking lessons from practical experience and adding our expert insight, we provided inputs on several documents guiding policy and the practice of justice; and created training materials based on our comparative experiences and shared it with others. Annex A provides a complete list of publications from FY20 as well as an overview of the communication department and its contributions.

Impact on Policy and Innovative Research

ICTJ has built robust partnerships with national and international organizations to advance the justice agenda globally. Through these alliances, ICTJ has extended its policy outreach and successfully brought a transitional justice angle to policy debates in New York, Geneva, Brussels, and The Hague.

ICTJ helped the Belgian delegation to the United Nations organize the UNSC open debate on transitional justice. The debate was attended by 62 participants, including representatives from 57 countries, three experts, a representative from International Committee for the Red Cross, and a representative from the European Union (EU). The discussion showcased progress on several policy issues that ICTJ has been at the forefront of advancing. These include links between transitional justice and the SDGs, the role of transitional justice in prevention, the role of youth as agents of change, and gender considerations. The debate showed the extent to which



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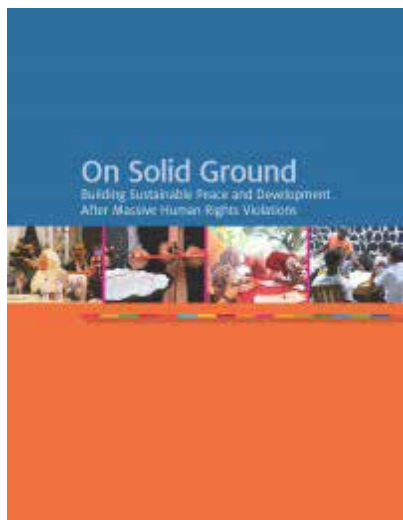
transitional justice is an integral part of the UN's peacebuilding and human rights mandates, and how its conceptualization has evolved into a more nuanced and inclusive one. Moreover, on several occasions, representatives of different countries made specific references to ICTJ's work and reports and acknowledged the key role ICTJ has played in advancing the field.

ICTJ is an active member of two relevant Brussels-based networks: the Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN), which is an informal alliance of 57 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating at the EU level in the broad areas of human rights, democracy, and peace; and the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), which is a civil society platform that brings together 41 European NGOs and thinktanks committed to peacebuilding and the prevention of violent conflict. As coordinator of the HRDN's Working Group on Funding for Democracy and Human Rights and a member of EPLO Steering Committee, ICTJ has been working to consolidate and guarantee support to transitional justice processes in EU policies and programs. As a member of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC), ICTJ has contributed and will continue to provide support to the debate on the review of the ICC.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The ICTJ-led Working Group on Transitional Justice and SDG 16+ has worked to meaningfully integrate transitional justice in the discourse on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In May 2019, in the lead up to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), ICTJ published the final report of the Working Group, [On Solid Ground: Building Sustainable Peace and Development After Massive Human Rights Violations](#),

which articulates the contributions of transitional justice to achievement of relevant SDGs, including peaceful, just, and inclusive societies (SDG 16), gender equality (SDG 5), and reducing inequality (SDG 10). The report offers concrete and actionable recommendations to governments and the donor community to integrate transitional justice into their development agendas and makes the case for stronger support and investment in transitional justice. ICTJ published hardcopies and online versions of the report in [Arabic](#), [French](#), and [Spanish](#).



The working group's impact on international policy discourse related to access to justice is evident in the final report of the high-level international Task Force on Justice, [Justice for All](#). The report explicitly reiterates the working group's conclusions and recommendations regarding the role of transitional justice in preventing the recurrence of violence and injustice, tackling root causes of human rights violations, and developing context-specific approaches. The final report of the Global Alliance for Reporting

Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, [Enabling the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda Through SDG 16+: Anchoring Peace, Justice and Inclusion](#), also reinforces the working group's argument that addressing grievances through transitional justice helps to prevent violence and conflict.

To inform policy and programs in the larger international community, ICTJ organized dialogue sessions in Brussels and New York in June 2019 to draw attention to the working group's report, nurture partnerships among actors in different sectors, and inspire new commitments to justice. The events gathered together representatives of the EU and UN, civil society organizations, international organizations, national governments, academia, and philanthropic entities. ICTJ also participated in the HLPF itself, as well as a series of events to promote the working group's report, including the World Justice Forum in The Hague, the Stockholm Forum on Sustainable

Peace and Development, the SDG16+ Technical Consultation on Justice for Sustaining Peace in Sarajevo, the UNDP Annual Meeting on Rule of Law and Human Rights in New York, and the conference in Berlin of the Council for Civil Peacebuilding and Crisis Prevention which advises the German Foreign Office. We also continued throughout the year to use the sustainable development agenda to frame our policy work and research, including projects on prevention and on police vetting in Kenya.

Prevention

As emphasized in the working group's report on SDG 16+, a crucial contribution of transitional justice to sustainable development is its association with prevention—that is, its capacity to help prevent the recurrence of not only human rights violations but also violence, repression, and violent conflict more broadly. In 2019-2020, ICTJ continued to prioritize prevention as a strategic goal. This included a research project examining the role of that transitional justice can play in prevention by minimizing exclusion, addressing structural problems, and facilitating long-term institutional reform. To be completed in the fall of 2020, the project includes five country case studies written by researchers on the ground in Colombia, Morocco, Peru, the Philippines, and Sierra Leone. Each study is based on a minimum of 50 in-depth interviews with relevant policymakers, practitioners, experts, and victims. An overview report highlighting the main findings and recommendations will accompany the case studies. In November 2019, ICTJ also held its annual Intensive Course on Transitional Justice in Barcelona, for the second time focusing on prevention and guarantees of nonrecurrence, which was attended by almost 30 representatives of civil society, governments, international organizations, and academia from over 15 countries. Due to the focus of our research and policy work in this area, ICTJ began a collaboration in early 2020 with the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice on the topic of prevention.

Complementarity and the Proliferation of Specialized Jurisdictions

A priority for ICTJ continues to be to promote and expand the use of complementarity in the fight against impunity and in support of respect for the rule of law.¹ In FY20, we offered new and timely analysis and created spaces to advance discussions on the topic. For example, we contributed to ongoing processes, such as the upcoming election of the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor, and participated in the first online consultations with independent experts in charge of the Expert Independent Review, making recommendations on how the ICC can better engage with victims' groups. ICTJ served as a panelist at the [annual symposium](#) of the International Nuremberg Principles Academy, discussing with international experts and practitioners about the way forward for accountability mechanisms in the fight against impunity. ICTJ also convened a side event during the Assembly of State Parties of the ICC,² which provided the opportunity to reflect on the challenges facing countries emerging from violent conflict and repression to investigate and prosecute serious crimes and discuss approaches for enhancing cooperation between national and international



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¹ The 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.

² The side event was organized in partnership with the International Nuremberg Principles Academy and with support from the governments of Australia and Sweden.

prosecutors and civil society actors. The conversation took as a starting point the ICTJ report published in FY20, [Guiding and Protecting Prosecutors: Comparative Overview of Policies Guiding Decisions to Prosecute](#), which provides strategies to guide prosecutorial discretion in societies emerging from violent conflict, particularly those that seek to address legacies of mass atrocities.

Our work on complementarity and accountability at the international level is closely linked to our work with domestic jurisdictions. In Uganda, we continued efforts to ensure victims are informed about proceedings at the ICC and Uganda's International Crimes Division. We hosted a [joint event](#) with the ICC in Gulu where civil society and victims could ask court officials questions and provide their thoughts about the realities posed by the lack of accountability in Uganda and, ultimately, the court's limitations. We further advanced the discussion with an [analysis piece](#) about the ICC trial of Dominic Ongwen. In Colombia, ICTJ produced a groundbreaking report that looks in-depth at the unique mixed restorative-retributive justice model being used by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP). Scheduled for release in July, "A Mixed Approach to International Crimes: The Retributive and Restorative Justice Procedures of Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace" examines the potential value of embedding reparative justice measures in a system of criminal accountability, which still retains elements of retributive justice depending on the degree to which a perpetrator acknowledges responsibility. It offers valuable lessons for other contexts that are considering how to incorporate restorative justice and its potential reconciliatory and healing qualities in criminal justice processes.

Promoting Victim-Centered Peace Processes

While demands related to justice continue to be among the most complex and controversial elements in peace negotiations, addressing these demands is often key to ensuring the credibility and legitimacy of peace processes and subsequent agreements. ICTJ provides expert advice and recommendations based on our comparative experiences and sometimes is an integral partner to stakeholders participating in peace processes. In addition to including justice considerations, it is critical that victims' perspectives and needs are incorporated during peace processes. Within the context of Syria, we have continued to provide technical advice to the formal opposition, represented by the Syrian Negotiations Committee (SNC), and have elevated the justice demands of Syrians through meetings, workshops, and conferences. ICTJ organized the first meeting between the SNC and members of civil society. We facilitated an open and constructive dialogue on the best ways to advance victims' rights to justice, truth, and reparations during constitutional negotiations. This meeting offered civil society a crucial and unique opportunity to directly advocate and influence the opposition and ensure their voices and demands are heard, including by the Head of the SNC who was in attendance. A representative from civil society noted, "The meeting [was] important because it brought together political actor[s] and civil society personally for the first time. It provided grounds for dialogue and joint action toward developing [articles] on transitional justice [to be included in



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the constitution], as demanded by all participants.”

After peace negotiations, ICTJ plays a role in supporting the effective, victim-centered implementation of resulting agreements. This is most notable in Colombia. ICTJ continued to provide vital support to all key institutions, including the SJP, the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repitition (Truth Commission), and the Special Unit for the Search for Persons deemed as Missing (Search Unit) to ensure that they can effectively operate and withstand challenges from domestic actors opposed to the peace agreement. Presented in partnership with NYU Law’s Center for Human

Rather than a formal lecture, this year’s event was a conversation between Liv Tørres (Director of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies) and President Juan Manuel Santos. (Olivo/Courtesy of NYU Photo Bureau)

Rights and Global Justice, the focus of the [11th Annual Emilio Mignone Lecture](#) was the role of transitional justice in peace negotiations. The keynote speaker, former President of Colombia and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Juan Manuel Santos, provided valuable insights and reflections on the Colombian peace process and lessons for other contexts. On the importance of victims’ inclusion, President Santos asserted that acknowledgment of victims’ suffering helped lay the groundwork for the future transitional justice process in Colombia and that, in the toughest moments of negotiations, victims’ stories of generosity and resilience kept the process moving forward.

Throughout the year, ICTJ continued to monitor peace negotiations and peace processes and to respond to opportunities to support them. We have also provided strategic thinking to advance justice in South Sudan, Sudan, and Venezuela.

Advancing Gender Justice and Gender Equality

ICTJ has continued to push boundaries in terms of how gender and gender justice are conceptualized. ICTJ’s approach to and work on gender do not equate singularly to working with women or on issues of sexual violence. Rather, it requires taking a nuanced look at how gender norms affect different groups in unique ways because of societal expectations about gender roles, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

ICTJ is partnering with diverse stakeholders to find new and innovative ways to address the victimization of the most vulnerable groups, particularly victims of gender-based violence and crimes. In Colombia, ICTJ assisted two civil society organizations with a report they submitted to the SJP, in which they argue that discrimination and stigmatization against LGBTQI+ persons are so entrenched that violence against members of this community during the armed conflict amounts to a crime against humanity. The systematic persecution of LGBTQI+ persons in specific Colombian villages helped pave the way for armed actors to achieve the territorial control objectives of their criminal plans. The submission represents the first time that sexual orientation or gender identity has been presented before a tribunal as grounds for the international crime of persecution, and it could lead to prosecution in Colombia. In Uganda, we expanded the group

of political actors with whom we work to include those who have not traditionally worked on transitional justice-related issues but who are eager to find solutions to address the many challenges faced by children born of war, particularly those related to their lack of birth certificates and other forms of civil documentation. As a result of these efforts, the National Identification and Registration Authority adopted special procedures and guidelines to give children born of war access to official identification documents.



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We have also continued to study how gender influences the ways in which victims experience and are affected by human rights violations. In Syria, we are examining the impacts of enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and kidnapping. Although more men and boys have been detained than women and girls, the consequences of these violations have distinct implications for female relatives, particularly wives. In the Gambia, ICTJ's work with women victims on the ground resulted in the only [report](#) by women submitted to the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC). The report describes women's experiences during the dictatorship and helped expand the understanding of violations committed against women beyond sexual violence to include forced labor, land confiscation, and other socioeconomic violations. These were not previously perceived as violations, in large part because of how deeply rooted a culture of repression and fear was in the country.



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At the end of the fiscal year, ICTJ began to consider and assess how victims of past violations may be affected differently by the COVID-19 crisis because of their gender. For example, we have already seen an increase in domestic violence against women, preventable maternal deaths, disproportionate job loss and economic hardship, and the entrenchment of problematic gender norms in government responses to the pandemic.



Irina Ghazaryan is one of the “Mothers in Black,” a group in Armenia seeking the truth about the non-combat-related deaths of their sons in the military. (Diana Alsip/ ICTJ)

Finally, ICTJ is committed to gender mainstreaming. We continue to be a member of the International Gender Champions group. The periodic events and panel discussions hosted by the group are an opportunity to bring many of the abovementioned issues to attention of the broad international audience that makes up the network. In several cases, ICTJ has been among the few members discussing gender in terms of its impacts on and implications for a wider group of people that includes but is not limited to women. We are also proud to report that there continued to be gender parity on our Board of Directors in FY20 and among our executive leadership. Of ICTJ's 65

staff members worldwide, 41 are women and 24 are men. ICTJ's senior experts include four women and four men, while the heads of ICTJ's country offices and programs include seven women and two men.

Elevating the Voices of Youth in Transitional Justice

ICTJ has been at the forefront of building global recognition of the key role youth play in transitional justice. We have effectively mainstreamed an innovative approach to working with youth, in which we engage with young people as political actors in their own right, as well as with their constituencies, strategies, ideas, and messages. At the UNSC open debate on transitional justice, several member states highlighted the inclusion of youth to be a key factor of success for transitional justice processes.



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A key component of our work is to partner with youth activists to help build political and social movements for justice-oriented reform. We have used this strategy in places where we see a risk of a return to authoritarianism, or efforts by leaders to tighten their control over citizens in a way that is counter to transitional justice goals. In the Gambia, for example, [Our Nation Our Voice](#)—a youth movement born out of ICTJ's programming—has helped bring youth into the national discussion both in the capital and in the most marginalized areas. As the TRRC enters its final year of work, these youth activists are well equipped to push forward the reforms needed to create a more just and inclusive Gambia.

ICTJ has continued to push the boundaries of transitional justice practice to devise innovative and engaging ways to bring youth into the conversation. We used art to open up dialogue and build consensus, particularly in places where the dialogue around dealing with the past is stalled or overly politicized. We have taken this approach in our work with youth in Colombia,³ [Lebanon](#), the Gambia, and Tunisia.⁴ With a focus on demystifying transitional justice, the Syria program in partnership with the Syrian organization, Dawlaty, finalized a guide for youth titled "[Our Future, Our Justice: Young People Taking Action](#)." It presents transitional justice concepts, capturing the nuances, in an informal and interactive way using content, tips, and strategies that are accessible and appealing to young activists and youth. Beyond Syria, this guide has been used in Armenia, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, and Uganda. One user explained, "I decided to use the youth guide because it is written in a simplified way that helps any trainer organize workshops well. The guide was used to provide transitional justice lessons by Tastakil.⁵ The content of the guide and the way the materials are divided into chapters help the trainer coordinate [their] work more. In my opinion, and based on my experience, the most important part of the guide is the case studies because it is practical rather than the theoretical concepts of transitional justice."

ICTJ's work with youth also helps to bridge generational gaps and create a more inclusive dialogue in which young people and members of other marginalized groups have a voice. Increasingly, we are connecting our engagement with youth to our work with women and our broader efforts to engage policymakers as well as local authorities and leaders. This can be seen in the activities we undertake in Côte d'Ivoire, Lebanon, Tunisia, and the Gambia. For example, in the Gambia,

3 In Colombia, we organized a collective memory project in [El-Pato Basillas](#) and, in Serranía del Perijá, a media project targeting youth in Caquetá in southern Colombia. The latter included a youth festival during which the kids painted murals, made music and other art, and performed theater about sustainability, peace, and community well-being.

4 In Tunisia, we organized the 2017 photo project, [Marginalization in Tunisia: Images of an Invisible Repression](#), and the 2019 exhibition, "[Who am I?](#)"

5 Tastakil is a women's organization based in Turkey with a branch in Idlib, Syria. It works to empower women through education, technical trainings, and political involvement.

we are bringing together members of the Our Nation Our Voice collective together with women from the rural parts of the country and members of the Banjul-based Gender Network.⁶

Since March 2020, we have been leveraging the networks and media savvy of young people to help mobilize others and to have a multiplier effect during the current global pandemic. With restrictions on large gatherings and travel, our youth partners are helping us find ways to continue advancing the cause of justice and reform through virtual platforms and other physically distant means.

⁶ Our Nation Our Voice is a movement of young Gambian artists, activists, and transitional justice advocates whose goal is to bring the voices of young Gambians into the center of the transitional justice process. For more information, visit the Our Nation Our Voice Facebook [page](#) and YouTube [channel](#).

Country Level

Wherever we work, we are constantly assessing and adapting our programming to respond to opportunities as they arise and to the unique needs of each country, developing and deepening our involvement in processes of political dialogue and reconciliation—whatever form they take. Where reforms are the chosen method to deal with violations, we try to ensure these reforms are informed by the types of violations that were committed and address the root causes of injustice in order for them to be meaningful and sustainable.

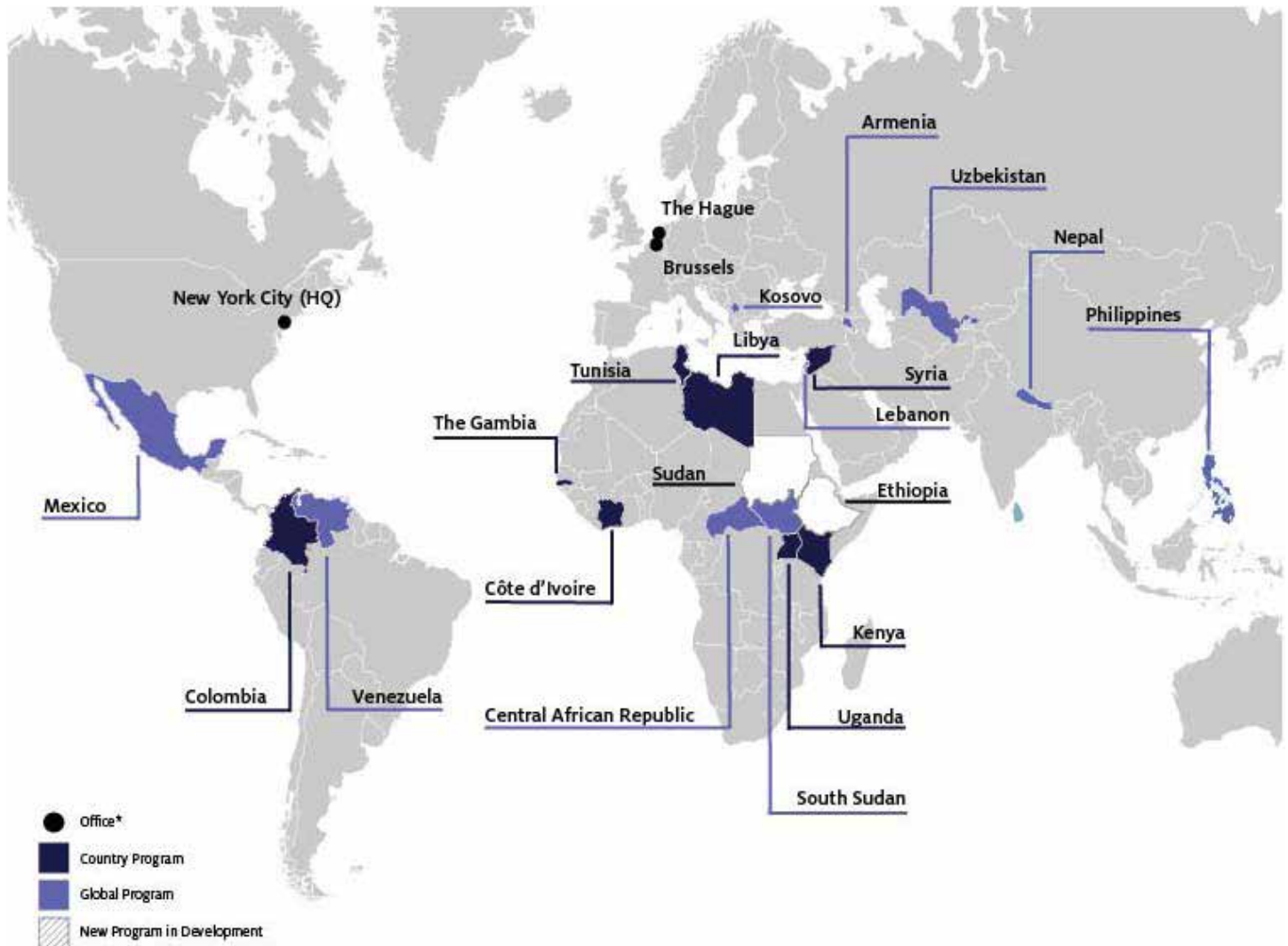
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As societies in transition begin to rebuild, a holistic approach to addressing human rights violations is critical, one that prioritizes violations of economic and social rights on equal footing with those of civil and political rights and violations of physical integrity. We have seen a growing concern about economic crimes, and an increasing number of states are taking on large-scale corruption in their transitional justice processes. Over the course of the year, ICTJ conducted work focused on combatting corruption in multiple contexts. These efforts culminated in a conference that brought together experts, state officials, and activists from Armenia, Kenya, the Gambia, The Philippines, South Africa, and Tunisia. The conference provided a platform for valuable South-South exchanges among the diverse participants who have been or are directly involved in fighting corruption, recovering assets, using those assets to fund reparations, or are assessing strategies to do so in their home countries.

The context of each country where we work has shifted dramatically since the end of the fiscal year with the onslaught of the global health crisis. As governments justifiably realign their priorities, we are seeing a decrease in support for transitional justice, and where transitional processes are being implemented there is a risk they will be stopped altogether. Adept at quickly adapting to fast evolving situations, we have proactively adjusted our work for the next fiscal year, to keep justice at the top of global and national agendas.

ICTJ partnered with a diverse group of domestic and international stakeholders to implement our programs during FY20. A full list can be found in [Annex B](#). This section provides an overview of our work across our Country Programs and Global Programs.

Where We Work



NOTES: *ICTJ offices in New York City, The Hague, and Brussels are responsible for program strategy, delivery, and support; monitoring and evaluation; policy outreach; communications; development; finance; human resources; and administrative support.

The map represents ICTJ countries of operation at the end of fiscal year 2020 (March 2020).

Country Programs are those in which ICTJ’s engagement is longer term and broader in scope. Global programs are those in which ICTJ’s engagement is shorter term, more targeted in scope, and undertaken to respond to specific requests from civil society, state actors, or international stakeholders.

Country Programs

Following the April 2018 revolution in **Armenia**, ICTJ has worked in partnership with Open Society Foundations to provide the post-revolution government advice on designing responsive transitional justice processes to address and pursue accountability for a range of violations and promote citizen's participation. Building on our initial ad-hoc engagements, ICTJ established a program in Armenia, hiring a program coordinator and building a working relationship with the Ministry of Justice. Over the course of the fiscal year, we provided expert advice to state actors on constitutional amendments, judicial reform, and asset recovery, among others. We engaged a diverse range of stakeholders from inside and outside the capital, including human rights lawyers, anti-corruption activists, youth groups, victims and their families, and state actors to push the scope of violations and transitional justice measures considered beyond criminal prosecutions. Through our participation as a principal speaker at a Parliamentary Hearing on Transitional Justice,⁷ bilateral meetings, and subsequent media interviews, ICTJ challenged uninformed and misleading narratives about transitional justice in Armenia.



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Political polarization and social unrest have increased in **Colombia**, and, alarmingly, the killing of social leaders and demobilized FARC members continues. This fiscal year, ICTJ provided wide-ranging support to all key institutions, including the SJP, the Truth Commission, and the Search Unit to advance accountability and the fulfillment of victims' rights. This assistance is based on the mechanisms' needs and requirements, determined in ongoing consultations and joint dialogue with the institutions about where and how ICTJ's international comparative experience, technical expertise, and in-depth knowledge of the Colombian context would be most effective. A notable aspect of this work has been technical trainings, discussions, and other forms of support to the SJP focused on bridging the gap between restorative and retributive justice. Equally important has been our work facilitating the active participation of stakeholders within Colombian society in the transitional justice process. This included supporting civil society to prepare reports for the SJP and Truth Commission, which brought attention to less visible violations.⁸ ICTJ also helped foster a local truth and memory process in Serrania del Paríja.

In December 2019, ICTJ's Head of Office for Colombia, Maria Camila Moreno, received the [Alfonso Lopez Michelsen Award](#), which recognizes those who contribute exceptionally to the achievement of peace in Colombia and to the defense of human rights and international humanitarian law. This award



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⁷ For an excerpt of ICTJ Senior Expert Ruben Carranza's address to the National Assembly of Armenia in Yerevan on May 24, 2019, click [here](#).

⁸ Eighty percent of respondents to our annual stakeholders' survey shared that ICTJ's support significantly contributed to their reports submitted to the SJP.

is a recognition of her 25 years of work toward building peace and a distinction for ICTJ, which played a vital role in brokering a political exit from Colombia's armed conflict and has been an instrumental partner in the implementation of the final peace agreement between the government and FARC guerrillas.

Former Adversaries Come Together to Promote Non-Recurrence and a More Peaceful Colombia

In late 1989, a previously unknown young man, Iván Roberto Duque, made the news when he launched an extreme-right political party, the “National Restoration Movement” (MORENA), which defended conservative family values and was openly anti-communist and anti-unionist. Years later, under the alias “Ernesto Báez,” he co-founded the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), the largest paramilitary federation to operate in the country. Duque became the foremost proponent and ideologue of paramilitarism, taking extreme counterinsurgency measures that led to a bloodbath in the country. Over almost two decades, he created a sophisticated network of politicians, drug traffickers, and businessmen in the Magdalena Medio region at the service of the AUC, resulting in the “parapolitics” scandal (an intermingling of paramilitaries and politics).



Researchers at the Colombia Truth Commission and former guerrilla commanders who had fought against him were surprised that “Ernesto Báez” was willing to participate in a process of truth seeking and reconstruction of historical truth and that he would be open to speaking with his former “archenemies.”

ICTJ and the Truth Commission formed the Working Group of Former Combatants to bring together former guerrillas and former paramilitaries,* many of whom had never even spoken to one another. The aim was to engage them in conversation about the Colombian armed conflict and their participation in the war, as well as reflect on options to ensure

that it would never happen again. As they arrived at the sessions, there were respectful but cold greetings, curious and suspicious glances, and formal yet irrelevant small talk. As the sessions advanced, some participants became upset or angry. When asked about the ideological foundation of the AUC, Duque responded: “Our ideology, the same one as all of us here today, was that we were not going to use words to convince our enemies, but rather we were going to defeat and eliminate them... the only ideology that ruled us all, or at least us, was hate and resentment. There was not enough room for us in the country’s 1,200,000 square kilometers. It was either us or them.” Duque’s words began to permeate the group’s deliberations, leading to conversations of mutual recognition and self-criticism that went beyond any ideological justification. The man who in the past had sincerely searched for the political underpinnings that would legitimize his armed actions was today proposing that participants, with the same fervor with which they had taken up arms, admit their mistake of targeting Colombian society. Despite the unprecedented nature of this interaction, ICTJ was able to establish necessary conditions by creating a safe space for participants to

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engage in a conversation without preconceptions and that was sincere and intimate. As a result, former combatants changed or modified their point of view, listened to and tried to understand others, and admitted wrongdoing or to sought to rectify it.

In addition to helping the Truth Commission better grasp the dynamics of war, which are difficult to perceive in the current historical narrative, the group gave its members new paradigms for understanding the violence they incited and for coming to terms, even empathizing, with their former enemies.

Expectations were high the day of the presentation of the working group's final report to the Truth Commission. Duque and the other former combatants were dressed in their best clothing, aware of the importance of this initiative for Colombia. They had become so close as a group that their first cold and distant meeting seemed long ago. Later, they all admitted that at first they had a hard time shaking hands or sharing the same space. But, they said, little by little they became closer and were able to achieve what Duque called "unity despite our differences." Even though they understood the nature of the event, the members of the audience could not hide their bewilderment. A significant number of the individuals most responsible for the serious crimes and violence committed in the past 50 years in Colombia were sitting together, ready to give their testimony for the purpose of ensuring that the atrocities would never be repeated and to reaffirm this commitment to the Truth Commission.

Before leaving the Truth Commission that Friday, November 15, 2019, Duque said goodbye to a group of ICTJ and Truth Commission staff members. "Thank you for everything," he said. "Do you know something? The only thing I really regret from this whole experience is that it did not begin sooner, because there is so much to be said and so much to repair." He left with a peaceful and unsuspecting smile. Six days later, Iván Roberto Duque died of a massive heart attack in the room of the Dominican convent where he lived.

NOTE: * The working group included former members of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), ELN Replanteamiento, Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL), Movimiento 19 de Abril (M19), Corriente de Renovación Socialista (CRS), Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), and las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC).

PHOTO: Iván Roberto Duque listens intently to the intervention of Francisco Caraballo, a former leader of the Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL) guerilla group, during the seventh meeting of the working group. (María Margarita Rivera/ ICTJ)

Ahead of the 2020 elections, **Côte d'Ivoire** continues to struggle with the same divisions within society that led to the 2010-2011 post-election violence. The government's resistance to accountability has resulted in increasing frustration and a lack of trust among citizens in national institutions. Within a context of rising tensions, ICTJ has continued to take a community-based approach to increase and engage stakeholders in the transitional justice process and empower communities to demand and pursue accountability, acknowledgement, transparency,⁹ and promote social cohesion to prevent recurrence of violence. This includes working with traditional and religious leaders and bringing them together with youth to find ways to prevent violence and resolve grievances. Simultaneously, we have worked with youth, including young women,

⁹ Working with victims' platforms, youth organizations, and other partners, ICTJ's office in Côte d'Ivoire issued five monitoring reports in FY20 that addressed key issues regarding the implementation of the transitional justice process, including reparations, mass graves, and gender-based violence.

involving them in public discussions and helping them identify obstacles to their peaceful participation, develop strategies to overcome those obstacles, and engage with authorities.

Despite the progress ICTJ has made in Côte d'Ivoire over the past seven years to promote a more transparent and inclusive transitional justice process, due to difficulty securing funding and the diminishing political opportunities to pursue justice and accountability,¹⁰ we are preparing to close our office in Abidjan. Over the first quarter of the next fiscal year, we will complete our obligations to local partners and donors to enhance Ivorian youth's participation in the process to overcome legacies of conflict and contribute to sustainable peace and scale back our presence in the country.



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In **Kenya**, the politicization of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) has led to rising tensions and political divisions. Political openings to address the drivers of recurrent conflict and fight impunity continue to decrease. During the year, ICTJ brought together a diverse set of actors, including those not usually involved in transitional justice, to ensure the BBI process includes and considers the voices of marginalized populations and takes account of past and comparative experiences and lessons learned. Due to ICTJ's intervention, victims were able to directly engage in the BBI process. The Dialogue Contact Group (DCG), supported by ICTJ, developed common positions on security sector reform, corruption, and inclusion. It has also strengthened its organizational capacity, raising its profile among state actors, and building bridges between opposing sectors in society. The DCG's analysis and positions are reflected in the BBI's final report submitted in November 2019. Drawing on research and consultations with the DCG, ICTJ also published three position papers to help inform the BBI process.¹¹ ICTJ's work led to victims voicing their concerns during the Universal Periodic Review and exploring opportunities for engagement with the African Union Transitional Justice Policy.¹² Further advancing the conversation on security sector reform in Kenya, ICTJ has continued its collaboration with the Van Vollenhoven Institute at the University of Leiden Law School in the Netherlands on [a research project](#) examining Kenya's police vetting. During the past year, we presented initial findings and policy implications in meetings in Nairobi, The Hague, and New York.¹³



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¹⁰ Major events include the [2018 amnesty issued by President Alassane Ouattara](#) for all crimes related to the post-election crisis, which included about 800 people including former First Lady Simone Gbagbo; the [acquittal of former President Laurent Gbagbo and his former youth minister, Charles Blé-Goudé](#), of crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the crisis by the Trial Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in January 2019; and in April 2020, Côte d'Ivoire's [withdrawal from African Human Rights and Peoples Court](#).

¹¹ This includes [Can Building Bridges Break the Cycles of Corruption and Political Violence in Kenya?](#), [Reforming Kenya's Security Sector: Policing Culture and Youth](#), and [Ending Gender Violence in Elections: Inclusion of Women in Kenyan Politics and the National Dialogue Process from a Transitional Justice Perspective](#).

¹² Several recommendations that ICTJ and its partners contributed to the Universal Periodic Review were included and subsequently accepted by the Kenyan government.

¹³ The project's final products were published in June 2020. These include (1) a report focusing on Kenyan civil society's views of the police vetting, (2) a briefing paper analyzing the decision-making process within the vetting commission, and (3) a policy brief providing key recommendations.

Building and Strengthening a Diverse Coalition Toward a Just, United, Equitable, Peaceful, and Prosperous Kenya

Kenya has grappled with electoral violence since 1992, when a democratic political system was restored. The worst of this violence occurred after the disputed 2007 presidential elections, during which over 1,300 people were killed and over 500,000 people were displaced. In the years that immediately followed, the country made great strides in strengthening public institutions, such as the elections management body and the judiciary, and, as a result, the 2013 presidential elections took place in relative peace. But in the 2017 election cycle, violence broke out again over the fiercely disputed presidential vote, in which the opposition candidate, former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, contested the results and the legitimacy of President-Elect Uhuru Kenyatta, including calling for secession of areas or counties that did not vote for Kenyatta.



Fearing widespread violence, stakeholders across the political spectrum scrambled to find a solution to this political impasse and started engaging the two political leaders in dialogue. These efforts bore fruit on March 9, 2018, when the two leaders shook hands and issued a joint statement calling for unity. They agreed to work together on a comprehensive peace plan known as the Building Bridges to a New Kenyan Nation Initiative (BBI).

The public response to the BBI has been mixed. Civil society in particular has been divided over it. Groups representing the diaspora, the peacebuilding community, and the private sector, among others, engaged with the BBI and have rallied to support implementation of its report. In the other camp

were mostly human rights organizations who considered BBI a political ploy to pacify Raila Odinga and appease his supporters. In their view, it serves narrow political interests and did not endeavor to lay the groundwork for justice and accountability for human rights violations. Groups and individuals on either side have differed on which strategy should be prioritized in the country and thus rarely engage in constructive conversation or collaborate to achieve shared goals.

Though itself a human rights organization, ICTJ nevertheless nurtured a relationship with the National Mediation Forum (NMF), a peacebuilding network composed of religious leaders, members of the diaspora community, elders, peace actors, eminent women, political party operatives, and youth supportive of the BBI. The NMF enjoyed easy access to the political elite and provided an opportunity to raise the need to address root causes of the cyclical violence in Kenya. Through this relationship, ICTJ was able to bring together representatives of human rights organizations including the Kenya Transitional Justice Network, We the People, and victims' groups such as the National Victims and Survivors Network, who were initially critical of the BBI, with members of NMF and key actors in the BBI process. These representatives, who for the most part have not had a seat at the political table, could finally participate in the process and make the case for dealing with past human rights violence as the surest means to prevent conflict in future.

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To synergize these efforts, the NMF resolved to form a more inclusive and multi-sectoral forum to spearhead the dialogue process among the non-state actors and link with the BBI process. This led to the formation of the Dialogue Contact Group (DCG) in 2018. Through their collaboration in 2019, supported by ICTJ, the DCG strengthened its organizational capacity and increased its visibility. The DCG intends to continue initiating national dialogue for a just, united, equitable, peaceful, and prosperous Kenya and to enable more citizens to play a role in the national dialogue process ahead of the 2022 general election and thereby increase sustainability and public ownership. “ICTJ achieved the insurmountable by bringing together the justice and peace sectors in the pursuit of peace,” explained Chris Wakube, formerly of Saferworld and a leading member of NMF. Though each sector is justified in following the path they think will yield peace in the country, Wakube continued, working together is more impactful.

PHOTO: Members of the Dialogue Contact Group pause for a photo at a workshop. (ICTJ)

The economic crisis continued to worsen in **Lebanon** and, compounded by grievances accumulated over years, led a popular uprising in October 2019 that continues today. The protests have united people from different regions, sects, and social and political groups, and given them an opportunity to voice long-ignored grievances, as well as demand social and economic justice and an end to a sectarian system. With still many obstacles facing truth, justice, and acknowledgment in Lebanon, ICTJ has focused on supporting long-term change.

This includes building on our work with the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared and helping it establish a permanent archive with over 6,000 documents related to the committee’s work and activism over the decades. Three of the five phases necessary for the archive are completed. The archive will provide public access to documentation on a part of Lebanon’s national heritage. Moreover, the trainings ICTJ and the Committee have been offering civil society groups and young people who are helping build the archive will improve their capacity to advance justice. At the same time, ICTJ has continued to provide technical assistance based on the comparative experiences to support the implementation of the Law for Missing and Forcibly Disappeared Persons passed in November 2018.¹⁴ In addition to monitoring the preparatory work to establish the commission, ICTJ published an [op-ed](#) calling for transparency in the selection of commissioners and will continue to pursue opportunities to support victims and address Lebanon’s past.



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¹⁴ In June 2020, the government appointed the members of the National Commission for the Missing and Forcibly Disappeared—the key feature of law.

While the security situation in **Syria** continues to deteriorate, civil society remains committed to issues related to justice and accountability. In situations of ongoing conflict, transitional justice approaches, comparative experiences, and lessons learned can offer critical guidance to families looking for their loved ones and can help actors at all levels better address current humanitarian needs. With its expertise and extensive comparative experience, ICTJ is uniquely positioned to provide such support. In FY20, ICTJ pursued alternative methods of acknowledgment that elevate the voices of Syrian victims and civil society. We have convened local, national, and international stakeholders and connected them with one another. We began a second phase of work with Syrian civil society organizations based in Turkey and Lebanon,¹⁵ all of whom collaborated with us on the [Save Syrian Schools](#) project. The new phase provides a safe and productive environment for the partner organizations and builds on the learning and trust they have cultivated over recent years. This new phase focuses on enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, and kidnapping—a high priority issue for our partners and on the international agenda.



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“We are benefitting from the past experiences and lessons learned and that was clear from the first days of this project. This saves a lot of time and effort and gives better outcomes. Now the only thing that remains is implementation.”

— Syrian partner organization

The project examines and will provide resources to mitigate the impact on families and former detainees who have suffered myriad psychological effects, social challenges, and economic repercussions and who are vulnerable to extortion and other forms of abuse in the search for their loved ones.

To raise the voices of Syrian victims and civil society and ensure policymakers consider them and their needs, ICTJ has built on its partnerships with the Syrian Negotiations Committee (SNC) as mentioned above and the Center on International Cooperation at New York University (CIC-NYU). Our work with CIC-NYU has enabled us to look more closely at the issues of Syrian detainees, bring those experiences

to the attention of stakeholders, and provide practical recommendations. ICTJ and CIC-NYU jointly published the policy paper, [Gone without a Trace: Syria's Detained, Abducted, and Forcibly Disappeared](#). Further elevating the voices of Syrians, ICTJ published the research paper, [An Uncertain Homecoming: Views of Syrian Refugees in Jordan on Return, Justice, and Coexistence](#). Based on extensive desk research, the paper provides a better understanding of the impact the conflict has had on refugees, including the harms and losses they have suffered, as well as their expectations, concerns, and priorities for potential durable solutions to their displacement.

¹⁵ The partner organizations include Badael, Center for Civil Society and Democracy, Dawlaty, The Day After, Lawyers and Doctors for Human Rights, Syrian Institute for Justice, Violations Documentation Center in Syria, and Women Now.

In **the Gambia**, the TRRC continued to capture the attention of the nation and diaspora. However, the process suffered from an overall lack of meaningful participation from victims and a lack of consideration given to victims' experiences and needs. In response, ICTJ took a community-based approach to ensure the transitional justice process is credible, inclusive, and transparent. As a result, ICTJ has created some of the only spaces for victims and civil society, including women and those from outside the capital, to directly engage with the truth commission and advocate for victims and their needs. We have strengthened victims' capacity to participate in ongoing discussions about reparations by helping them identify, articulate, and share with the TRRC the enduring consequences of the violations they suffered and their current needs. In terms of advancing gender justice, ICTJ worked with three grassroots women's group to create safe spaces for women to share their experiences in rural areas not visited by the TRRC. These consultations culminated in the submission of the report, [Women's Experiences of Dictatorship in the Gambia: A Submission by Women from Sintet, Janjanbureh, and Basse to the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission](#). As a result of our work on gender and with the TRRC, the TRRC has put in place measures to protect women's confidentiality and revised its communication strategy to ensure women understand they have safe alternatives available for them to give their testimony. These include the option not to participate in public hearings, even if they have filed a statement, and to participate in private hearings conducted by female commissioners. The Deputy Chair of the TRRC, Commissioner Adelaide Sosseh, acknowledged the role ICTJ played to ensure



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women were heard, reporting a 9 percent increase in women's participation, which she attributes to ICTJ's work. We also built on our successful work with youth and continued to promote a citizen-led process by launching the [Our Nation Our Voice](#) music videos and [documentary](#) and by strengthening the capacity of local partners.

Over the course of the year, we have also played a key role in keeping donors and members of the international community informed of developments regarding the transitional justice processes in the Gambia. With less than a year left of the TRRC's mandate, ICTJ has emphasized the potential for the Gambia's transitional justice process to be a success and the importance of consistent, long-term support from the international community to country's democratic transition.



ICTJ staff consult with women in Sintet, the Gambia, about their experiences during the dictatorship (ICTJ)

While elections in **Tunisia** resulted in a new political establishment, including a pro-accountability, anti-corruption president, the future of transitional justice remains uncertain as the process has faced opposition throughout the year and victims' frustration has mounted. Within this context, ICTJ focused on sustaining the transitional justice process by working closely with victims, civil society, and state actors to affirm victims' dignity, promote responsive institutions, and fight impunity. An important element of our work has been to advance the national discussion on pursuing accountability for dictatorship-era corruption by developing an inclusive dialogue and providing technical advice grounded in comparative experiences. We held workshops that bridged a gap between youth fighting ongoing corruption and state actors responsible for pursuing criminal accountability for past corruption and recovering the stolen assets. The year culminated in an international workshop in Tunis, bringing together about 150 experts, state officials, and activists from across contexts to discuss various aspects of addressing corruption through transitional justice and strategies for asset recovery.



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Another equally important element of our work in Tunisia has been helping to develop a more inclusive narrative about the past and to preserve memory. The [Voices of Memory](#) project continues to be a valuable collection of work that promotes critical discussions about Tunisia's past,¹⁶ particularly for youth, as it encourages them to reflect on the historical roots of current issues and their role in speaking out against injustice. The exhibition "[Who am I?](#)" showcased artwork



Young Tunisians discuss the historical roots of current issues and their role in fighting injustices. (ICTJ)

by young Tunisians that reflects on the social and political unease of a post-revolutionary, democratic Tunisia. In an effort to include and amplify marginalized voices, ICTJ explored possible symbolic reparation initiatives with residents of Tataouine in southern Tunisia. Participants' recommendations were submitted to local officials, who have already announced a contest to design a memorial for the 1956 Battle of Agri.¹⁷ Over 570 people participated in the Tunisia program's activities, and on average 73 percent of survey respondents perceived positive results in terms of change of attitude, increase of understanding, or new ideas and initiatives.

¹⁶ Developed by a collective of nine Tunisian women, the Voices of Memory project is one of the only efforts to memorialize the experiences of victims and contribute to societal dialogue about the past. The project includes an interactive art exhibition, a graphic novel, a book, and podcasts to tell the women's stories and invite others into a conversation about the past and its impact on the present. In 2019, the exhibit visited four cities across Tunisia, reaching over 1,600 people and encouraging the broader community to reflect on the past.

¹⁷ In a previous effort to memorialize those killed during the attack by French colonial forces, the Truth and Dignity Commission failed to consult victims, who then requested ICTJ's assistance to discuss memorialization.

The National Transitional Justice Policy (NTJP) was finally approved in **Uganda** in June 2019, four years after the final draft was issued. While the NTJP has renewed hope among thousands of victims that they will finally learn the truth and receive justice for conflict-related human rights violations, effective implementation of the policy is already facing obstacles. The government's increasing authoritarian actions, including continued restrictions placed on civil society and attacks targeting opposition, are not consistent with a state that will meaningfully implement transitional justice. Throughout the year, ICTJ continued to identify alternative paths to address victims' needs, leverage emerging opportunities, and raise awareness of victims' experiences within a context of limited political will to advance transitional justice at a national level. These efforts helped strengthen the capacity of local officials to use local development programs to provide interim relief for victims. As an immediate result, local government actors in some regions have reached out to victims' groups and addressed some limitations to their participation and access to local programs. Already in Lira, Koboko, and Omoro, some victims have applied for and received livelihood grants, while others have joined community groups to apply for local development resources. Additionally, we have seen concrete steps taken by non-traditional transitional justice actors, specifically the National Identification and Registration Agency, to help children born of war gain civil registration and address some of the many challenges they face. A key element of this work was our continuous mentorship of women's survivor groups, which has improved their advocacy and empowered them to identify and pursue opportunities to address victims' needs. During the year, ICTJ took initial steps to expand the geographical scope of its interventions to the Rwenzori region in the South-West in an effort to broaden the understanding of transitional justice from a regional process to a national process and contribute to a shared narrative based on mutual respect and tolerance among Ugandans.



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Simultaneously, ICTJ helped bridge the gap between victims and court proceedings at the International Crimes Division (ICD) in Uganda and the ICC by creating various platforms for dialogue and exchange, as well as the developing resources to improve the efficiency of ICD's proceedings. As a sign of confidence in our role, the principal judge appointed ICTJ as a member of the Court User Committee of the ICD.

Increasing Awareness of Victims' Experiences and Rights to Pursue Solutions in Uganda

Over 10 years after the conflict ended between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government of Uganda, many victims in the West Nile region continue to suffer from the impact of the war. Unlike Acholi and Lango, the victims of the LRA conflict in the West Nile region have received little attention. Without a comprehensive reparation program, victims continue to live with the enduring consequences of the human rights violations, such as physical wounds and disabilities, trauma, economic hardship, and social stigma and exclusion.

In October 2019, ICTJ organized a training for local government authorities from the West Nile region in Arua to increase awareness about the rights of victims and the consequences of the harms they suffered during the conflict, and to enhance the capacity of local

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government authorities to design and implement policies and interventions that are responsive to the needs of victims. It also aimed to create openings and build bridges in seemingly intractable situations.

Christopher Alebo, chairperson of the West Nile Kony Rebel War Victims' Association and survivor of the conflict, has been working for over 13 years to demand justice, truth, and reparations for West Nile victims. During the training, Christopher shared the experiences of victims, the challenges they continue to face in their communities, and the obstacles that prevent them from accessing and benefiting from local livelihood and development programs. He offered practical suggestions of how local governments can support victims of conflict, especially formerly abducted women and children, to overcome the consequences of violations and reclaim their dignity. Among the notable challenges was a lack of information among victims about local government planning processes and how victims could benefit from development programs implemented at the subcounty level. Later on in the training, district planners explained the different stages of the planning process and budgeting cycle, how funding priorities are identified, and the available avenues for victims to participate and influence the process to ensure that their needs are considered and reflected in the district budget. The training also enabled participants to make connections. For example, Christopher exchanged contact information with local government officials for follow up and further engagement.

Christopher shared that in the 5 to 10 years he has been seeking assistance for vulnerable victims through local programs, he had never made as much progress as he did in the training. Local government actors expressed that the training provided them with new information about the plight of victims in West Nile and vowed to work together with victims' organizations to identify solutions to the challenges. One district official said that "the most touching thing I learnt today was the fact that victims of conflict are still living together with us in the communities, and that they are still experiencing issues of trauma [among other challenges], and that they are not being really assisted." The official further commented that they need to map out how to involve victims in the planning of local governments and break down barriers to integrate victims in the communities.

Following the training, Christopher met with the district chairperson and district planner of Madi-Okollo to explore how they can help victims access local government programs. The meeting ended with the district chairperson agreeing to convene a follow-up meeting with local government officials and cultural institutions to discuss the situation of victims. Victims have been invited to share their experiences and recommend practical approaches for local governments to address or mitigate the enduring consequences of the violations they experienced.

Christopher shared that, "If Madi-Okollo works out, I will try to copy this process for other districts. My plan after this is to reach out to the district leadership, the community development officer, and the probation officer of Arua."

While the victims of West Nile have not been assisted by their local governments for almost a decade, local government's new responsiveness is a step in the right direction for victims to potentially receive much needed assistance and for developing a more inclusive transitional justice process. ICTJ believes the exchange of information between victims and state actors is crucial and can empower victims and initiate change. In this instance, knowledge of victims' experiences helped develop an environment more receptive to addressing victims' needs, and the exchange helped instill confidence in Christopher Alebo in his rights and to pursue new avenues.

Global Programs

In the **Central African Republic**, ICTJ provided comments to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) on a draft law establishing the truth commission. Some of our recommendations were taken into consideration. Our work within this context will continue in the next fiscal year as we will conduct a research study on victims in fragile contexts.

ICTJ has provided extensive advice to the preparatory team in **Kosovo** tasked with preparing the legal and technical infrastructure for a future Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). This has included advice on their internal regulations and strategy and giving comments on the draft law to establish the TRC. ICTJ also provided support to the preparatory team in their public perception survey about the future TRC. ICTJ supported the design of a technically sound and unbiased questionnaire, helped analyze the findings, and edited the final report. On March 4, 2020, the final report was publicly launched, revealing Kosovars' view that an inclusive truth-telling process is needed.

In **Mexico**, the government has failed to show support for the implementation of a comprehensive transitional justice policy to address the rising murder and crime rate in the country, despite initial commitments. ICTJ worked with key actors, responding to requests from civil society, victims, and supportive government agencies. We provided them with comparative examples and input on developing concrete proposals for policies related to the search for the disappeared, reparations, and prosecutorial strategies to improve the effectiveness of criminal investigations into massive and systemic abuses. However, with limited political will at the national level and a lack of funding, ICTJ's work on Mexico will be reduced in the next year.

After the process stalled in **Nepal** and we scaled back our presence, international policymakers and victims' organizations continued to reach out to ICTJ for advice and support as they endeavor to develop effective approaches for advancing transitional justice. In response, ICTJ undertook a limited in-country engagement, meeting with nearly 40 stakeholders in the transitional justice process, specifically to advise on the proposed amendments to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act. This issue has long been tabled and seen by victims as one of their last chances to have their voices heard. While the societal and political context remains challenging, we have reconnected with key stakeholders and intend to continue to provide technical assistance to those engaged in the debate on the amendments, enhance discussions at the societal level, and ensure operations are victim-centered.

ICTJ continued to monitor the situation in **South Sudan**. In cooperation with the regional East-African Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, ICTJ planned to hold a basic workshop on transitional justice and further consultations for both South Sudanese officials and United Nations Mission in South Sudan staff. While the activity was planned for this fiscal year, we postponed it to next year due to the global health crisis.

In early March 2020, ICTJ conducted an assessment in Khartoum, **Sudan**, to evaluate opportunities for security sector reforms and comprehensive justice reforms envisioned in the transitional government's constitutional charter, as well as to monitor the newly created committee to investigate past crimes. Given the extremely fragile peace and the continued prominence of the previous regime, a transitional justice path forward remains uncertain. However, it is clear that the Sudanese see transitional justice as needed and that ICTJ's support is wanted.

We continued to monitor the situation and discuss developments or transitional justice strategies with stakeholders in **the Philippines** and **Venezuela**.

Throughout the year, ICTJ received requests for work and technical advice in a number of contexts, including **Ethiopia, Iraq, Libya,**¹⁸ **the Maldives, Nigeria, South Korea, and Uzbekistan.**

Transitional justice solutions refer to the many measures or policies that can be implemented to address and repair the legacies of massive human rights abuses. These measures can be judicial and nonjudicial and include, among others, truth-telling processes; criminal justice initiatives in national, regional, or international jurisdictions; reparations programs; and political and institutional reforms. Table 1 presents the transitional justice solutions that were implemented in FY20, and that ICTJ contributed to, in every country where we work.

Table 1. Transitional Justice Solutions, Informed by ICTJ, Implemented in FY20

COUNTRY	TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE SOLUTION
Armenia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inter-ministerial committee exploring transitional justice strategy 2. Parliamentary committee mandated to develop a national transitional justice strategy
Colombia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Special Jurisdiction for Peace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgment Chamber guide on presentation of reports by civil society organizations • Acknowledgment Chamber guide on prioritization and selection • Protocol for journalists accessing SJP hearings • Analysis and Information Group on the internal restructuring process • First Instance Section with Acknowledgment of Responsibility on conceptualization of the SJP's own or special sanctions 4. Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes of acknowledgment of responsibility and recognition of victims • Presentation of reports by civil society organizations • Recommendations for non-recurrence 5. Special Unit for the Search of Persons Deemed as Missing 6. Memorialization processes in El Pato-Balsillas and Serranía del Perijá
Côte d'Ivoire	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Reparation process, including the draft law on reparations
The Gambia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. National strategy for transitional justice 9. Truth, Reparations and Reconciliation Commission (TRRC) 10. Manual for TRRC statement-takers 11. Review and comments to the TRRC reparations regulations <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

¹⁸ Our work on Libya, in partnership with Lawyers for Justice in Libya, has developed into a full country program and will be implemented in the next fiscal year.

COUNTRY	TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE SOLUTION
Kosovo	12. Government Commission on Recognition and Verification of the Status of Sexual Violence Victims 13. Preparatory Team for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Tunisia	14. National Authority for the Prevention of Torture 15. Specialized Criminal Chambers 16. National Authority to Fight Corruption 17. The State Litigation Agency
Uganda	18. Mapping and documentation of human rights violations by the Human Right Documentation Project 19. Prosecutions by the International Crimes Division 20. Local Development Plans

Lessons Learned

ICTJ has faced an increasingly difficult environment. In the last quarter of the year, these challenges were compounded by the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly threatens progress in societies carrying out transitional justice processes and seriously and adversely affects the most vulnerable and marginalized populations including victims. At the same time, FY20 served as a litmus test for ICTJ's ability to adapt and react to situations quickly and flexibly. ICTJ staff and its partners responded with imagination and persistence, found workarounds to advance justice despite increased difficulties, and produced quick responses to the COVID-19 crisis, learning important lessons in the process. At the global level, we saw the early evidence of success for some of our strategic priorities and identified patterns that will inform our next steps. Below we share some of the key insights from the year.



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Finding New Modalities of Engagement to Respond to Demands for Justice

Our current strategic plan established an organizational model designed to be more adaptable and to respond more quickly to emerging opportunities. We tested our ability to flexibly design engagements and interventions in a variety of ways and modalities in our global program. ICTJ devised new partnerships with other organizations and entities that enabled us to advance the mission. Examples include ICTJ's work in the Facility on Justice in Conflict and Transition assisting EU delegations,¹⁹ ICTJ's participation in an alliance with other organizations in Uzbekistan, a bilateral partnership with an embassy's diplomatic efforts to assist justice in Nepal, an assessment mission in Sudan in collaboration with one of our core donors, and a variety of informal—and at times confidential—consultations and contributions related to the development of policies by grassroot civil society organizations and governments. Program and administrative staff learned valuable lessons in delivering results through different modalities and developing flexible approaches to engagement. The experience leaves ICTJ in a good position in the wake of new challenges.

Sub-Granting Provides Better Information and a Lifeline to Smaller Organizations

ICTJ developed several sub-granting schemes in the past two years in response to demands from both domestic partners and donors. Some of ICTJ's core partners wanted to support local organizations but did not have sufficient capacity on the ground or enough information to properly vet, identify, and work with local partners. They acknowledged that their own working methodologies would not allow them to effectively engage with organizations at this localized level and their administrative processes would prove to be too cumbersome for the capacities of the small organizations they wanted to support. ICTJ's domestic partners, in turn, also lacked capacity and access to crucial resources and saw ICTJ as a trustworthy and close interlocutor that would be able to channel support. Despite the inherent challenges sub-granting presents in terms of management and administrative capacity and investment, ICTJ decided to take it on as the need for aid outweighed the risks. We realized that managing sub-granting schemes

¹⁹ The consortium responsible for implementing the Facility on Justice in Conflict and Transition comprises the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance as consortium leader, Conciliation Resources, ICTJ, the Toledo International Centre for Peace–Colombia, and the Swiss Peace Foundation.

in different contexts had positive unintended consequences.²⁰ For example, in Colombia our management of the “Fund to Support the Implementation of the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Recurrence” resulted in better analysis and rich information due to closer links with a diverse set of organizations with whom we would not have had the financial capacity to work with otherwise. ICTJ has also learned the cost and time required to design, implement, and monitor these sub-granting programs, which will better inform future budget and time allocations to ensure our organization can support these programs efficiently at all levels—technical, administrative and financial. Overall, we have found the experience to be positive as it has proven to develop stronger bonds with organizations and enhance our capacity to build alliances. Sub-granting is allowing ICTJ to bridge gaps and integrate political, financial, and technical support.

Role of the Private Sector

ICTJ positively engaged with different actors in the private sector. We gauged their interest in international justice and rule of law and sought ways to develop it and inform their approach as they become increasingly more involved in these areas, even as some governments have been gradually

drawing down their engagement. One example is ICTJ’s partnership with the Chubb Rule of Law Fund to conduct training of judicial authorities in different contexts, such as the Gambia, Mexico, and Colombia. ICTJ’s expertise was also sought out by several private organizations, including a foundation’s “peace lab,” and a consortium of private and public organizations that we assisted in the design of their justice and rule of law programming. These partnerships with the private sector, if continued, would diversify the support that transitional justice and rule of law fields receive and contribute to their sustainability in the long run. Our findings are aligned with recommendations from Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies, and corresponds with SDG17 (related to partnerships to advance the SDGs).

“ICTJ has consistently demonstrated its alignment with those same objectives and principles (dedicate themselves to learning, adaptation, and improvement), and therefore we are honored to partner with you and your organization.”

— ICTJ donor

Collaborative Approaches to Advance International Justice

The Working Group on Transitional Justice and SDG 16+ mentioned previously has provided interesting and useful insights to ICTJ’s work.²¹ Most important among them is a confirmation that our methodological choices to foster a participatory, horizontal approach are fruitful when engaging with high-level international stakeholders. Three members of the working group highlighted the inter-institutional collaboration encouraged by ICTJ, one of whom saying, “It was a great model of joint collective work between a variety of organizations.” Another member said ICTJ “played a very good role” dealing with differing views “with intellectual integrity” and clearly laying out distinctions between strategic choices and theoretical discussions.

²⁰ See key results section later.

²¹ ICTJ collected detailed evidence of results and insights in an institutional design, monitoring, and evaluation (DME) internal report.

More Nuanced Vision of Transitional Justice

A major goal in our strategic plan is to meaningfully contribute to a new but necessary vision of how transitional justice is understood and to further innovation in how its processes are designed and developed. ICTJ continues to promote a more sophisticated and nuanced approach. Mentioned previously, the UNSC debate provided a unique opportunity to assess how countries approach transitional justice and analyze how it was framed by the representatives of member states who attended.²² About half the participants mentioned the important role of women and youth, and a third of the countries shed light on other social forces such as civil societies, scholars, and community and religious leaders who play an essential role in advancing transitional justice. On the inclusion of youth, several member states highlighted it as a key factor of success for transitional justice processes. ICTJ has advocated for transitional justice processes to recognize, include, and encourage the participation of youth since at least [2012](#), and has [continuously done](#) so since then—a fact that was acknowledged in the meeting. Citing ICTJ’s work, the representative of Lebanon stated, “Youth should be given the important role that they deserve to have in transitional justice, as agents of change, as the International Center for Transitional Justice stated.” She continued, saying “Their participation in transitional justice and reconciliation should be central, and not symbolic.” The active participation of speakers and the substance of their statements point to an improved understanding of transitional justice among the international community.

Bridging the Local and National Divide in Transitional Justice Processes

In contexts where national initiatives have stalled or face serious shortcomings, ICTJ has found alternative paths to address the needs of victims by working with sub-national governments and local development programs. Progress in this area was reported in previous core reports and has been a line of work for the past two years, including important breakthroughs in our past work in Nepal. Lessons from that work apply today to our work in Uganda, where ICTJ has identified local authorities at the sub-national level as the duty bearers who have access to the communities, a more direct stake in the community’s welfare, and ability to direct national and international development resources to address both humanitarian needs and longer-term human rights issues. One key lesson learned in the past fiscal year is that ICTJ (and hopefully other organizations) can play a role in bridging the gap in coordination between local and national authorities. It is often the case that local authorities are unaware of available resources or do not have information about transitional justice initiatives at the national level. ICTJ has learned the importance of our role in continuing to build bridges. We are in a unique position to do this given our connections to local and national authorities, as well as victims, youth, and women, which give us a broader perspective of the process and how it is developing in each context. We encourage our partners to identify gaps in coordination at the national level, where there is a lack of political will or means to coordinate, and devise ways they can address these gaps.

Role of Media in Transitional Justice Processes and Programming

Since the current strategic plan was adopted, ICTJ has expanded its work with media as part of a broader strategy that recognizes societal endorsement and political factors as key to the success of transitional justice processes. ICTJ has undertaken such initiatives in the Gambia, Tunisia, and especially Colombia. During this fiscal year, in Colombia, Contagio Radio implemented an alternative media project with support from ICTJ that resulted in a platform featuring content produced by a group of 14 alternative and community media outlets. In meetings facilitated by

22 Find a more detailed analysis of the UNSC debate [here](#).

ICTJ, the project team was able to introduce the Truth Commission to these alternative media outlets. It generated valuable lessons on issues related the media's framing of transitional justice, political agendas of media outlets, and coordinating with the media that can be shared with donors and other organizations.

Expanded Reach Through Artistic Initiatives

Traditional transitional justice programming has taken a skeptical view of creative approaches, especially those focused on the arts. Some have considered such approaches as “lacking teeth.” However, our work in recent years, including in Côte d’Ivoire, the Gambia, and especially Tunisia and Colombia, has highlighted the importance of the arts and artistic expression to foster and promote cultural change. In seemingly intractable contexts, we have found the use of the arts to be a powerful tool to spark public conversations that were once suppressed, encourage societal endorsement of the transitional justice process, promote empathy, and provide alternative paths for acknowledgment and truth telling. Embracing arts-based approaches to address the needs of a society in transition can help open up formulaic and elitist transitional justice processes and make them more nuanced and tailored to a society, as well as more inclusive and responsive to people’s demands.

ICTJ is learning important lessons on how to effectively conduct such work so that it complements other approaches, addresses the drivers of conflict, and fosters the successful implementation of reforms and policies that address past violations.

Key Results

The progress of transitional justice processes vary greatly from context to context. Factors such as institutional capacity, political will, the strength of the coalitions pushing for reform, societal endorsement, pressing financial or humanitarian needs, security constraints, and the role of domestic and international civil society actors influence progress and results of transitional justice processes. In many contexts, perpetrators and interest groups associated with the prior regime push for counter reforms and try to derail the process. Transitional justice processes are long term and do not always progress in a linear fashion, but they can often experience rapid developments leading to significant change. Below, we present some highlights of the most significant progress in FY20.

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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.*

ICTJ supported processes that allowed thousands of men and women to gain greater access to justice through their participation in them and the resulting solutions to address massive human rights violations. These processes include, for example, the SJP and the Truth Commission in Colombia in which victims participated and through which they received compensation, a reparations program in Côte d'Ivoire, proceedings before the ICD in Uganda, and cases taken up by the Specialized Chambers in Tunisia. A full list of transitional justice processes and solutions supported by ICTJ can be found in Table 1 at the end of the country level section.

In Colombia, ICTJ provided vital support to the implementation of the mechanisms and policies defined in the Peace Accords, including the SJP which has opened seven macro-cases involving more than 260,000 victims and has made 26,538 judicial decisions (at the time of this report's writing). ICTJ also supported the Truth Commission, which has collected 12,000 testimonies, and the Search Unit. By March 2020, the Search Unit had reviewed and organized information from more than 2,000 files that correspond to 599 disappeared persons and had received 5,713 records of missing persons from families, victims' groups, social organizations, international organizations, the public security forces, and illegal armed groups.

ICTJ also contributed to the work of the TRRC in the Gambia, by making it more inclusive and effective. The TRRC has moved forward with its mandate, conducted hearings, and allocated approximately USD \$1 million in funds for reparations. ICTJ also supported Tunisian institutions created as part of the transitional justice process to fight corruption and recover assets.

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.*

ICTJ programs provided comparative experience, accompaniment, and technical advice to state actors that resulted in tangible, concrete progress in transitional justice processes in the form of policies, norms, practice guides, and other tools. Examples include, but are not limited to, rulings and norms of the SJP, internal workings of the Truth Commission and the Unit for the Search for Missing Persons in Colombia, processes to ensure the inclusion of gender in the work of the TRRC, a policy for reparations in the Gambia, local development programs in Uganda addressing the issues of marginalized victims and children born of war, and Uganda's National Identification and Registration Authority taking steps to provide identification documents to the currently stateless children born of war.

At the same time, FY20 also provided evidence that targeted, timely policy advice to state actors who request ICTJ's assistance can also yield positive results. ICTJ's global program and flexible partnerships contributed directly to policies such as the draft normative act of the preparatory team for a Truth Commission in Kosovo, decisions to pursue investigative approaches adequate for addressing system crimes in Mexico, and proposals by UNDP and MINUSCA for a truth commission in Central African Republic.

As an international organization supporting domestic state actors around the globe, ICTJ has been able to help create platforms for the exchange of ideas, experiences, and lessons among stakeholders dealing with similar problems. In the country level section, we described how state actors and activists from Armenia, Kenya, the Gambia, the Philippines, South Africa, and Tunisia came together to share insights on how to pursue accountability for corruption and recover of ill-gotten assets. This international comparative workshop yielded, among other outcomes, key lessons and technical advice on how to design strong institutional reforms and practical anti-corruption strategies. ICTJ is building on the shared experience and preparing a report for broader dissemination, which is expected to be launched during FY21.

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

Over 80 percent of our civil society partners reported that they improved their ability to pursue justice and demand their rights.

ICTJ's impact is not only evidenced by the perception of our partners, but also by what they do. Thanks to our support, they are better able to articulate their demands in an effective way, to engage with transitional justice processes led by the state, and to monitor their implementation. For example, with our help, rural women in the Gambia came together and submitted a [report](#) that presented their perspectives to the TRRC, victims in Côte d'Ivoire monitored otherwise opaque reparations programs, and civil society organizations in Colombia produced and submitted several reports laying bare patterns of violations to the SJP. In Colombia, the reports have been the formal way for civil society organizations and victims to participate in the Truth Commission and the SJP. These reports have documented victims' experiences and presented their analysis. ICTJ worked with civil society to develop the methodology and with authorities to ensure the reports would be used to unveil patterns of violations and inform policy decisions. These reports included landmark findings about the targeted persecution of LGBTIQ+ communities, critical issues of displacement, land possession in Uraba, and other issues.

ICTJ has played a key role as a lifeline, technical advisor, and force multiplier to small domestic organizations that have struggled due to a lack of space for action and support. ICTJ significantly developed and carried out several sub-granting schemes to support and channel much needed help to our partners. This work includes joint initiatives with the Réseau Justice et Paix, Femme

“This report [on Uraba] is a valuable contribution to the process of triangulating and contrasting sources in the investigation of the territorial situation in Uraba (case 004).”

— SJP Acknowledgment of Responsibility Chamber responding to a member of the Uraba consortium

Débout pour le Progrès en Côte d’Ivoire, and Confédération des Organisations de Victimes de la Crise Ivoirienne in Côte d’Ivoire (the groups improved their capacity and later were able to obtain support from the African Transitional Justice Legacy Fund); the “Fund to Support the Implementation of the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Recurrence” in Colombia; capacity building and organizational coaching to the Victims’ Center in the Gambia, which helped make the center more sustainable; a partnership with eight Syrian organizations, which provided them with resources to assist families of the missing and disappeared; a partnership with the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared in Lebanon, which involves building an archive of documentation related to search of the missing and training of student

volunteers; and a partnership with an organization that is documenting violations currently ongoing in Libya.

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

ICTJ has highlighted the importance of societal endorsement to sustain reforms and advance accountability, and the value of quality information to counter attempts to derail, erode, or appropriate transitional justice processes. ICTJ invested significant effort in this aspect of our work, including an overhaul of our Arabic and Spanish websites, which has resulting in a significant increase in the organization’s reach. ICTJ’s average number of unique visitors to our websites jumped from an average of 25,000 unique visitors a month to a steady average of 96,000 people per month, with a peak of 124,000. (Twenty-three percent are people from Colombia, the biggest share of people visiting our websites.) We expect this line of work to be more demanding and represent a more significant portion of the organization’s output in FY21, both due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting need to redirect activities into the digital space and due to organic demand.

Meanwhile, our work on the ground has contributed directly to changes in attitude (as recorded in participant surveys) and the dissemination of information. For example, the Our Nation Our Voice initiative in the Gambia has reached some of the most underserved parts of The Gambia,²³ many of whom had little or no information about the transitional justice process in their own country. In Tunisia, we continued our Voices of Memory project, this time getting young people involved and reaching over 200 participants, with a view to raising their awareness about the country’s past experiences with dictatorship and repression and engaging them in intergenerational conversations. On occasion, these conversations lifted the veil on past situations that had been covered up even within participants’ own families. For example, a young man in his twenties stood up in a meeting in Qulabya, Tunisia, and said to a victim, almost in tears, “forgive me, you’re like my mother and yet I didn’t know.” Similar moments occurred in workshops in Lebanon with young volunteers working with the Committee of the Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared.

23 Some activities under this campaign happened in February 2019 and were reported previously.

At the same time, our engagement with journalists and media outlets has increased significantly, with specific lines of work in Armenia, Tunisia, Colombia, and important lessons learned. ICTJ experts have been quoted and our work cited in global mainstream outlets such as the [New York Times](#), [Reuters](#), and the French newspaper *La Croix*; outlets focused on international development such as the [Austrian Development Magazine](#); and several national outlets in [Lebanon](#), [Uganda](#), and [Colombia](#).²⁴

- *Victims and parties with the responsibility to act come together, hear each other, and advance solutions*

FY20 saw ICTJ cement its role and added value as a bridge-builder, oftentimes managing to bring “unusual bedfellows” together to rethink the justice agenda and find ways to advance solutions, even in the most adverse of circumstances.

In Colombia, through our work with the local NGO Aulas de Paz, former paramilitary combatants were given the opportunity to testify before the Truth Commission and provide information. ICTJ also mediated separately so that members of FARC could contribute information as well. As mentioned in the country level section earlier, ICTJ established a working group of former enemy combatants, in which members could come together, reflect on the past, and call for truth against a backdrop of social and political polarization.

In Côte d’Ivoire, ICTJ convened a group of traditional chiefs and young people to discuss a common agenda to prevent political violence, manipulation, and to address issues unresolved by a stalled transitional justice process.

In Uganda, development actors, local authorities, and victims found ways to acknowledge and address long-standing issues, and to steer development programs to include issues of redress.

In Kenya, despite the political isolation of victims and a government reluctant to implement promised measures, ICTJ seized the BBI as an opportunity to enlist the support of actors from the private sector (including business people and religious groups) who were able to engage for the first time and understand the perspective of those most vulnerable. Eventually, victims themselves were able to provide testimony to the BBI. This interaction helped build a new coalition in support of the reforms recommended by the Kenya Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission.



Participants from various local governments in Uganda’s Teso region attend an ICTJ training in March 2020 on available options for providing interim relief to victims, specifically formerly abducted mothers and their children, through targeted development programs. (ICTJ)

Our work in Syria has also contributed to closing the gaps between international actors and grassroots organizations, providing our civil society partners the channels and increased legitimacy to make their voices heard. ICTJ helped opened space for civil society to engage with the SNC.

²⁴ This article is one of 11 different mentions of ICTJ in mainstream media in Colombia recorded by DME.

ICTJ has helped increase the participation of victims and members of their families, representatives of victims and civil society groups, and regular citizens in the design and implementation of transitional justice processes, making them more inclusive, responsive, and gender-sensitive. Our design, monitoring, and evaluation (DME) data records show that there were over 70 engagements in which victims voiced their experiences, perception, and needs to policymakers.

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*

ICTJ combines work on the ground with the production of high-level analysis and policy advice, with the goal of influencing international responses to massive human rights violations. Highlights of our FY20 policy work include the following:

- We helped link transitional justice to the SDG framework, through our leadership role in the Working Group on Transitional Justice and SDG 16+. This includes the publication of the [On Solid Ground](#) report, but also contributions to international policy. Our work was acknowledged in several international declarations and interventions, and stakeholders in the field recognized our role, in some instances to concrete policy actions. There have been data-supported instances of country representatives and representatives of international organizations using the report to frame discussions about justice policy both internally and externally.
- We have helped develop a more context-sensitive, nuanced understanding of transitional justice as evidenced earlier in the UNSC debate on transitional justice.
- ICTJ continues to play a leading role as a convener and knowledge broker. ICTJ brought researchers and experts together with victims, civil society, and decision makers on the ground through collaborative research projects and other initiatives related to a range of transitional justice issues. Our partners included esteemed academic institutions around the world, such as New York University (working on Syria), the University of Leiden (working on Kenya), the University of La Sabana (Colombia), the National University (Colombia), Hekima University College (Kenya), and Faculty of Law and Political Science at La Sagesse University (Lebanon).
- ICTJ also provided input and technical advice that were then incorporated into several reports, procedures, declarations, and policies of governments, multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations and the African Union, and international bodies. Table 2 presents a list of these policies, procedures, resolutions, and proposals in FY20 that include, reflect, or acknowledge ICTJ inputs.

“Before we would talk about SDGs and nobody would bring up working with victims, accountability. I think this effort did contribute to make sure that questions of accountability for human rights abuses was on the agenda, not only access to [normal] justice.”

— Key stakeholder

Table 2: ICTJ's Contributions to National and International Policies, Procedures, Resolutions, and Proposals, FY20

1.	European Union Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 , March 24, 2020
2.	European Parliament legislative resolution of 27 March 2019 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument , March 2019
3.	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council Establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument — Partial mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament , June 2019
4.	Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, " Enabling the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through SDG 16+: Anchoring Peace, Justice and Inclusion ," July 2019
5.	Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, Fabián Salvioli, A/HRC/42/45 , July 2019
6.	Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Koumbou Boly Barry, A/74/243 , July 2019
7.	The German Federal Government's " Interministerial Strategy to Support "Dealing with the Past and Reconciliation (Transitional Justice)" " in the Context of Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts and Building Peace," September 2019
8.	The Report of the Bureau of the ICC ASP on Complementarity , December 2019
9.	The United Nations Office on Drug and Crime Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes (Second Edition) , March 2020

Institutional Progress

In FY20, ICTJ continued to engage current and new donors to secure sufficient core and flexible funding essential for our operation.

Under the leadership of Chair Joan Spero, ICTJ's Board of Directors welcomed three new trustees, [Robert Cusumano](#), [Bradford K. Smith](#), and [Ellen Taus](#). The Board added two new committees: the Governance and Nominations Committee and the Development Committee. The Governance and Nominations Committee is tasked with maintaining good governance practices, identifying skills and qualities needed in board members, and recruiting new candidates. The Development Committee is tasked with advancing ICTJ's fundraising strategy, particularly with respect to philanthropy and private sector donors such as foundations, corporations, and individuals.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ICTJ has adjusted its methodologies by working remotely. We have always relied on our expertise and agility to respond rapidly and fulfill our mission. One of our strengths is our ability to convene stakeholders to discuss and develop effective, lasting, and global solutions. In response to the restrictions on travel and gatherings, we are working to create a safe digital space for these discussions, guaranteeing the security and confidentiality of our partners. We have prioritized expanding our capacity for remote work, incorporating available and new technology and providing training on new communications solutions.

ICTJ has developed a series of institutional responses. These include temporary teleworking guidelines for staff and a contingency plan that includes a risks and opportunities assessment from an adaptive management perspective and recommendations for crisis management in phases.

In an effort to respond to our staff's needs during this uncertain time, ICTJ has been convening weekly all-staff meetings, online social events, and individual check-ins with our staff around the world. ICTJ has also provided staff members flexibility regarding working hours, deadlines, and leave to accommodate other responsibilities in their personal lives (caregiving, homeschooling, and so on). In an internal survey conducted in May 2020, most respondents reported that the pandemic was affecting their work at a personal level, but 88 percent also said that they approved of the organization's response to the crisis to date. We wish to express our most heartfelt thanks to the commitment and professionalism of each and every one of ICTJ's staff members who are carrying out visible and invisible tasks to make our work possible.

ICTJ is grateful for support from our donors and welcomes any inquiries about our report and the work that took place towards justice, peace, and inclusion in FY20.

Annex A: Communications and Publications

ICTJ's communications department plays an integral role in articulating a more nuanced and dynamic understanding of transitional justice and in informing diverse audiences about the field's grounding principles.

The department supports ICTJ's programmatic, policy, and advocacy work. It widely shares our learning and achievements through captivating storytelling, publications, and other products that draw on our comparative experiences around the world and that amplify the voices of victims and other stakeholders on the ground. In consultation with programmatic staff, the communications team develops and executes dissemination strategies for their products as well as promotes programmatic events and activities. The team collaborates with our programmatic staff to produce expert commentary and analysis on developing situations across the globe. It also works to place these pieces in influential media outlets and to create opportunities for our experts to speak directly to journalists and others in the media. These wide-ranging communications products, some of which are listed below, can be used by transitional justice practitioners, victims, educators, researchers, policymakers, and donors to improve knowledge about lesser known issues, influence the public discourse, and advance policy.

Over the past year, the department has raised ICTJ's global profile through coordinated storytelling and messaging in English, Arabic, and Spanish. The communications team in New York works closely with associates in Beirut, Lebanon, and Bogota, Colombia, to manage ICTJ's Arabic- and Spanish-language websites and social media channels, produce relevant and engaging Arabic- and Spanish-language content, and disseminate our products through well-crafted digital campaigns and targeted outreach.



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Reports



[An Uncertain Homecoming: Views of Syrian Refugees in Jordan on Return, Justice, and Coexistence](#) (May 2019)

Executive summary available in [Arabic](#)



[On Solid Ground: Building Sustainable Peace and Development After Massive Human Rights Violations](#) (June 2019)

Also available in [Arabic](#), [French](#), and [Spanish](#)



[Guiding and Protecting Prosecutors: Comparative Overview of Policies Guiding Decisions to Prosecute](#) (October 2019)



[Our Future, Our Justice: Young People Taking Action](#) (December 2019)

Also available in [Arabic](#)



[Women's Experiences of Dictatorship in the Gambia](#) (December 2019)

Briefing Papers

- [Situating Security Sector Reforms in Kenya's Discourse on Inclusion and National Dialogue Process](#) (April 2019)
- [Briefing Paper: An Uncertain Homecoming: Views of Syrian Refugees in Jordan on Return, Justice, and Coexistence](#) (May 2019)
- ['You Can Change the Course of a Country:' Report on the International Gender Symposium](#) (August 2019), also available in [Arabic](#) and [French](#)
- [Can Building Bridges Break the Cycles of Corruption and Political Violence in Kenya?](#) (November 2019), also available in [Kiswahili](#)
- [Reforming Kenya's Security Sector: Policing Culture and Youth](#) (November 2019), also available in [Kiswahili](#)
- [Ending Gender Violence in Elections: Inclusion of Women in Kenyan Politics and the National Dialogue Process from a Transitional Justice Perspective](#) (January 2020), also available in [Kiswahili](#)
- [Work, Freedom, Dignity: For Young Tunisians, the Revolution Was Not Only About Accountability for Corruption](#) (February 2020), also available in [Arabic](#)

Expert's Choice

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| April 2019 | Rim El Gantri, <u>One, Two, Three, Viva L'Algérie!</u> |
| May 2019 | Elena Naughton, <u>Students Lead the Way: A Vote in Favor of Reparations for Slavery</u> |
| June 2019 | Didier Gbery, <u>A 'Victim-Centered' Approach to Truth Seeking in The Gambia?</u> |
| July 2019 | Roger Duthie, <u>Fits and Starts: Making Transitional Justice Part of the Sustainable Development Agenda</u> |
| August 2019 | Fernando Travesí, <u>A Historic Opportunity for Peace, Democracy, and Justice in Sudan</u> |
| September 2019 | Nousha Kawabat, <u>Will a New Constitutional Committee Secure a More Just Future for Syria?</u> |

- October 2019** [Cristián Correa, Finding Common Ground for a Negotiated Transition in Venezuela](#)
- November 2019** [Sibley Hawkins, Ready for Change: Lebanon's Youth Rise Up](#)
- January 2020** [Rim El Gantri, A Political Solution to the Libyan Conflict: Is It Real or an Illusion?](#)
- February 2020** [Fernando Travesí, A Landmark UNSC Discussion on Transitional Justice](#)
- March 2020** [Fernando Travesí, Justice in the Era of COVID-19: Our Global Responsibility](#)

Multimedia Products

- February 2020** Recorded livestream, annual Emilio Mignone Lecture, [The Role of Transitional Justice in Peace Processes: A Conversation with Former President Juan Manuel Santos](#)
- November 2019** Film, Colombian victims and perpetrators discuss reconciliation, [Fears Swept Away by the Wind](#)
- September 2019** Institutional film, [Side by Side with Victims](#)
- July 2019** Feature story, victims of conflict in Choco, Colombia, work toward justice and peace, [Cacarica: 22 Years of Resistance](#)
- August 2019** Photoessay, a Colombian mother remembers her daughter who was forcibly disappeared by crafting dolls, [The "Cristinas of Conflict" Keep the Memory of Disappeared Women Alive in Colombia](#)

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