"Healing is an act of resistance."
— FRANK COHN, Executive Director, VAST, Canada

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Clarity in a Time of Crisis

“In the midst of every crisis, lies great opportunity.” And also, we might add to Einstein’s famous quote, great clarity too. It was an attribute the visionary physicist applied so effectively to seemingly unsolvable problems that he produced, in a single short equation, an explanation for the universe.

Torture is a seemingly unsolvable, universal problem, and unfortunately less amenable to logic. “Will it ever be possible to eradicate torture?” asked Peter Kooijmans, a Dutch jurist and diplomat, who was the UN’s first Special Rapporteur on Torture in his February 1986 report. Four decades on, the answer remains profoundly disturbing. “Torture and ill-treatment continue to be practiced with almost complete impunity throughout the world,” wrote Nils Melzer, the latest Special Rapporteur, in his 2021 report. “And victims of such abuse or their relatives rarely obtain the redress, reparation and rehabilitation to which they are entitled under international law.”

Crisis and impunity were in abundance in 2021: the human rights disaster that was the West’s withdrawal from Afghanistan; the resurgence of dictatorships from Belarus to Burma (just one of a record number of coups worldwide); the violent insurrection in Washington; China’s relentless dismantling of civil liberties; Ethiopia’s Nobel Peace Prize president plunging his country further into bloody civil war; a second year of civil liberties suspended in the battle with COVID-19; and the imminent return of imperial war to Europe.

Amid such crises, torture was the tool by which authoritarian power terrorised, censored, and suppressed. Mass protests demanding human rights and better governance in Chile, Sudan, Colombia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Georgia, and Malawi - for just a few of the 58 nations which experienced sustained anti-government protests in 2021 - were most often met by police violence and disproportionate force.

Where then - for the IRCT and its mission to eradicate torture and provide the best possible rehabilitation to its survivors - the opportunity? What clarity was possible amid such chaos? Surprisingly lots, as we hope the contents of this Annual Report reveal.

First, and perhaps most importantly to a membership organisation such as ours, a renewed and strengthened solidarity, a confidence in each other to respond when needed; expressed in the record numbers of members taking the opportunity of webinars to share their knowledge with others, from how to provide remote rehabilitation during a pandemic, to treating traumatised Afghans; or the unprecedented scope of sub-grants the Secretariat was able to distribute to support members struggling with COVID-19 (500,000 EUR to 55 member centres); or the active participation of members in IRCT’s new Advisory Boards, in shaping the focus of our Strategy 2022-2025, and in designing and leading its core projects on Livelihoods and Survivor Engagement. In 2021, it appeared that the sheer scale of challenges faced by members and the survivors they serve prompted an instinctual reaction, a clarity of purpose heard time and again throughout the year: ‘We need to connect. We need to support each other to get through this.’

Secondly, the year’s crises provided ample opportunities to innovate, and in such innovation to understand our own purposes with greater clarity. Rigged elections in Belarus prompted massive scale police brutality against pro-democracy protestors. But with no space to work inside the country and no national member centre, the challenge was accessing survivors. The answer was collaboration and capacity building with Belarus’ few remaining national civil society actors to ensure high quality evidence gathering could be translated, digitised and sent to our forensic experts for analysis. The result was the most comprehensive report to-date evidencing torture as State policy in Belarus, a report which fed directly into international accountability mechanisms, and which confirmed our strategic role as a supplier of credible evidence of torture.

Enforced remote working due to continuing COVID-19 lockdowns spawned not only innovations in telehealth - the provision of health care services, including rehabilitation for torture survivors, through telecoms rather than in-person - but also the opportunity, through necessity, to conduct online forensic examinations of torture survivors. This has the potential to create ground-breaking changes, ensuring more equal access to justice for torture survivors because physical proximity to high-level forensic expertise will no longer be a determinant. As the leading global expert on documenting torture, the need for the IRCT to develop an international best practice standard for such remote evaluations was clear.

Finally, and perhaps most dramatically, the events of 2021 clarified - in sometimes acute and stark relief - what is at stake in the work of an anti-torture organisation. Torture is the ultimate abuse of power, and in 2021 that abuse was writ large across the bodies of tens of thousands of protesters. The skull cracked by police baton. The patterned burns on bare flesh from stun guns. The tramline bruises across thighs and backs as riot police followed orders to punish protesters for demanding freedom.

Fighting impunity and supporting torture survivors directly challenges such abuse of power. As Frank Cohn of our member in Canada, likes to put it: “Healing is an act of resistance.” The IRCT remains, first and foremost, a network of health professionals. But what 2021 clarified, beyond doubt, is that in a world of power abused, doctors treating torture survivors are also frontline human rights defenders; criminal justice is only one (and usually the final) act of accountability - documenting torture, naming perpetrators, and demanding investigations are acts of accountability themselves (and often the most important to survivors); and that in this era of disinformation, alternative facts, and the struggle for democracy, the IRCT’s five decades of collective expertise documenting torture and healing its survivors is a powerful tool for establishing truth. And, as Einstein himself put it in another moment of clarity amid the great crises of his time: “The effort to strive for truth has to precede all other efforts.”
Global Standards on Rehabilitation

This was the year IRCT’s GSR went from words on a page to a curriculum to be learned, shared and practised. The GSR are the world’s first comprehensive set of internationally agreed best-practice standards aimed at ensuring survivors of torture can receive the best possible rehabilitation wherever they are.

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Rebuilding Lives Together Highlights

Global Impact Data

60,181 Total torture survivors treated

11,487 Legal supports, about 230 per week.

3% LGBTI+ survivors treated

44% Survivors living in poverty

3,456 Partnership activities, about 25 partners each member

one in six Survivors report sexual or gender-based violence

Webinars

Over 1,000 people joined IRCT’s demand-driven thematic webinars during 2021, with numbers rising steadily throughout the year. From Prison Monitoring to the return of the Taliban to Afghanistan, our webinars brought more members together than ever before, to share knowledge and solidarity in these times of crisis.

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Torture Journal

In its 30th year of publication, IRCT’s Torture Journal reached more readers, increased outreach to the Global South, established the basis for a new form of indirect torture, transformed from paper to digital, became indexed for free in Scopus, a leading social sciences database, and had a documentary film made about it. Not bad for a publication that began in 1991 as a newsletter to IRCT members.

Page 24
IRCT Advocacy Impact Highlights

Torture in Belarus
IRCT’s forensic experts turn allegations of police brutality into substantiated evidence of a systematic policy and practice of torture in Europe’s last dictatorship. 50 case files, 613 pages, 286 photos, and one clear conclusion adopted by the UN’s investigation. Find out more, and what comes next, at: Page 27.

Reviewing the Reluctant
What happens when a State refuses for 20 years to report on its implementation of the UN Convention Against Torture? Find out what happened at Nigeria’s first-ever review at the Committee Against Torture, and the leading role played by the IRCT and its member in holding the government to account. Page 36

Stronger Together Highlights

Solidarity Through Pandemic
COVID-19 continued to make a massive impact on the ability of IRCT members to help torture survivors rebuild their lives. By the end of the year, the IRCT had distributed over 500,000 EUR to 55 member centres, ensuring the most at-risk survivors continued to receive essential care. Page 45

Banning Conversion Therapy
In 1999, only Brazil banned conversion therapy, the practice that aims to change, ‘repair’ or ‘cure’ an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity. Today there are 14 direct and indirect State bans, three regional bans, and eight more States are in the process of legislating a ban. Find out how IRCT’s Independent Forensic Expert Group, our research report, and our session at WorldPride 2021 in Copenhagen helped establish conversion therapy as torture, and pressured States to act. Page 43

Moving Pictures
In 2021, the IRCT embraced social media as never before, engaging stakeholders and involving members in a new series of short videos that reached hundreds of thousands of users, and turned the acronyms of member centres into the faces and personalities that drive them. Page 47

Collective Efforts
Unanimously approved in 2021 after months of consultations between the President, Executive Committee, the Council, and representatives from all IRCT’s seven regions, IRCT’S Strategy 2022-2025 is the roadmap that will guide the organisation’s collective efforts and strategic priorities for the next four years. The new Strategy makes a simple division of goals: Healing and Justice. Page 49
**Global Impact Data 2021**

**Survivors treated**
60,181

- **Asia**: 6%
- **Latin America**: 2%
- **North America**: 9%
- **Europe**: 14%
- **Sub-Saharan Africa**: 18%
- **Middle East and North Africa**: 20%

**Poverty rate**
44%

- **Female**: 44%
- **Male**: 47%
- **Other**: 1%
- **Not Recorded**: 1%

**Sex**

- **Female**: 51%
- **Male**: 47%
- **Other**: 1%
- **Not Recorded**: 1%

**LGBTI+**
1,841 survivors treated in 2021 self-identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or non-binary

**Survivor Engagement**
2,649 survivors were engaged in mentoring other survivors, speaking out, influencing policy decisions or in other ways part of advocacy work in 2021

**Sexual or Gender-Based Violence**
9,442

**Legal Support**
11,487
Supported to trial, or other psychosocial support, administrative or legal support or medico-legal evaluation

**Advocacy Activities**
7,213 activities such as cases, meetings, conferences, and trainings

**Livelihood Support**
13,885 survivors received livelihood support in 2021

**Response Rate**
82%

**Partnerships**
3,456 organisations or institutions members worked with in 2021 in relation to anti-torture work, including both State and non-State NGOs
IRCT: A Global Movement

Who We Are

We are a global network of civil society organisations that provide rehabilitation to torture survivors and fight for justice. Our membership consists of 160 organisations in 76 countries, with over 4,000 staff backed by a Secretariat in Copenhagen and an office in Brussels. Each year, we collectively support more than 50,000 torture survivors to rebuild their lives and engage in over 12,000 advocacy interventions to promote justice and reparations for victims, and to try to end torture.

OUR MISSION
Is to ensure that torture victims everywhere are able to access appropriate rehabilitation services. We are equally dedicated to fighting impunity, advancing access to justice, and preventing torture from reoccurring.

OUR VISION
Is a world without torture. We work to ensure that individuals and communities subjected to torture receive the rehabilitation and justice, as well as other reparations, that they deserve and are entitled to.

160 organisations in 76 countries

60,181 Survivors treated in 2021

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5. Rebuilding Lives Together

The global standards include commitments to keep services independent and accountable, ensure non-discriminatory access and the safety of clients, and to support their families. Acknowledging the strong connection between rehabilitation, empowerment and justice, the standards also commit IRCT members to make torture survivors central agents in their rehabilitation work and to help them access justice and advocate for their rights.

Under guidance from IRCT’s Health Advisory Board including Australia member ASETTS, each of the 17 standards was broken down into a training module to be delivered through an E-learning course. Some 40 members contributed video footage explaining one of the standards and what it means for improved rehabilitation work in their context. A graphic designer helped produce a mixed-media format, including dilemmas and interactive exercises to motivate learning.

A Practical Guideline to the GSR was developed to assist members to implement the standards in their own centres alongside a Self-Assessment Tool (in English, French and Spanish) to be completed by member centres to inform the design of their own GSR Implementation Plan for 2022. 70 members responded, providing a baseline to measure implementation, change and improvements in torture rehabilitation services in each member centre.

5.1 Rolling out the Global Standards on Rehabilitation

This was the year IRCT’s Global Standards on Rehabilitation (GSR) went from words on a page to a curriculum to be learned, shared and practiced.

The GSR are the world’s first comprehensive set of internationally agreed best-practice standards aimed at ensuring survivors of torture can receive the best possible rehabilitation wherever they are. The GSR were adopted unanimously by IRCT’s General Assembly in October 2020 following a four-year consultation in which more than 90% of all members contributed to their development. They represent a statement of collective wisdom and universal applicability from the world’s largest reservoir of experience in the field of torture rehabilitation and are thus an integral component of the IRCT’s work going forward.

5.2 Gathering Data on Torture and Rehabilitation

5.2.1 Global Impact Data

Now in its third year, IRCT’s Global Impact Data - a survey which asks all members to give numerical answers to a dozen questions about their centres and clients - is producing consistent results in many fields, variations in a few, and baseline figures for key projects under our new Strategy. The crucial figure of just over 60,000 survivors treated through 2021 is a slight increase on previous totals for 2020 and 2019 (when there were also slightly higher response rates), and confirms that we can say with some confidence that IRCT’s global membership treats over 50,000 survivors per year, whose rehabilitation can be considered to directly benefit the lives of an average of five family members. We thus make a direct impact on at least 250,000 people a year. The roughly even split between male and female survivors treated continued, while we can see that with an average of 1,710 LGBTI+ survivors treated over the past year (3% from an average of 57,054 survivors treated), the LGBTI+ community remain a significant minority. We also know that many LGBTI+ survivors treated at our centres will not identify themselves as such out of fear of violence or recrimination in societies where non-heterosexuals are considered abnormal, and thus our number is likely to be a significant underestimate. However, it is roughly consistent with best estimates of the global proportion of persons who are LGBTI+. The number of survivors reporting sexual or gender-based violence remained consistent with 2020 and 2019 levels, and at 15% of all survivors treated, nearly one in six, the problem remains very serious.
Poverty can be seen as the leading risk factor for torture, with an average of 48% of survivors treated by IRCT’s members also living in poverty, according to the standard in their nation. This compares to a global average of roughly 20% living below the internationally recognised medium poverty line of $3.20 per day, meaning the poor are more than twice as likely to be tortured. Legal support to survivors continued at nearly 12,000 per year (230 per week) meaning, on average, each centre actively supported a survivor in justice processes every week, and was planning for the next one as well. Members’ partnership activities increased in 2021, back to 2019 levels, making an average of some 3,330 per year, giving each member who responded to the survey around 25 partners to work with. Advocacy activities were significantly down, nearly 50%, from their level of 2019 and 2020, and further follow-up with members will be required to determine the cause of the drop. Finally, for the first time, the survey asked members to identify how many survivors were also receiving support through the centre to rebuild their livelihood, and also for how many survivors were actively engaged in advocacy. The data provides a baseline on which to measure the impact on these two key thematic projects, which are goals of IRCT’s Strategy 2022-2025. The baseline figure of one in four survivors receiving livelihoods support was surprisingly high, but may correlate with the fact that half of survivors live in poverty. The figure of just 5% of survivors being actively engaged in advocacy was surprisingly low, but is likely in part to reflect the dangers of speaking out in many of the States where most torture occurs.

Poverty can be seen as the leading risk factor for torture.
5.2.2 Anti-Torture Database

Two decades into the IRCT’s work on gathering data to understand torture rehabilitation and to fight impunity, the project can be described as having entered its fourth phase. Phase one began in late 1999, when the IRCT launched its Global Torture Victims Information System (GTIS). Phase two began in 2013, with the EU-funded Data in the Fight Against Impunity (DFI) project, an effort to establish standardised clinical record-keeping system in 33 member centres. The result was the Anti-Torture Database (ATD), and the subsequent Global Anti-Torture Evidence (GATE) project expanded the ATD to a further 10 centres and sought to use the data collected in a range of strategic advocacy initiatives. Phase four sees the ATD aligning with the Danish government’s Tech for Democracy initiative, an effort to make digital solutions work for human rights outcomes in a world of increasing autocracy and disinformation. A grant from Globalt Fokus, the coordinating body for Danish NGOs, has allowed IRCT to upgrade the ATD to allow installation and synchronisation across multiple devices, while personal data of survivors remains encrypted, and so that centres can customise the data points they collect to make it more context specific.

The IRCT has long believed that systematic collection of torture data is central to the fight against impunity. Credit: IRCT

5.3 IRCT Global Movement Embraces Learning Online

If 2020 was the year of rapidly adapting to a socially distanced crisis, 2021 was the year IRCT and its global membership embraced the learning from that crisis and integrated online connectivity into their everyday work. The digital dividend paid off in three main areas:

5.3.1 Fabo

Our platform for members only has been re-structured with the aim of making it more user friendly. The IRCT Membership Community remains the main landing page, but different sites have been created for specific purposes. The IRCT E-Learning site is now the central hub for all the E-learning material and experiences that IRCT and its members are offering. The section on webinars promotes upcoming webinars, hosts past recordings for those who could not attend, and has a forum for members to continue the conversation. Upcoming sections will be the E-learning courses on the implementation of the Global Standards on Rehabilitation and the Istanbul Protocol. What Are Other Members Doing was created to promote a sense of community and connect members. In this section, members can share a short video presenting their work, centre, or experiences. There is also a section to share events that other members are hosting, such as webinars or trainings. Introductory trainings were delivered to seven member centres to introduce them to Fabo and guide them through the platform.

5.3.2 Webinars

Over 1,000 people joined IRCT’s demand-driven thematic webinars during 2021, with numbers rising steadily throughout the year. The success of the six webinars (see below) was down to a simple formula. First, we listened to what our members told us they wanted to know more about. Then we sourced speakers with the relevant expertise from other centres or the wider torture rehabilitation community. Finally, we created an easy-to-use format for registration and attendance. Each webinar consisted of time-limited presentations by speakers followed by an open question and answer session. For members who were not able to attend at the time, webinars were posted in full on the E-learning Fabo page, while selected webinars were edited down into public videos of around 15 minutes that highlight and contextualise the key insights, published as IRCT Insights on YouTube on social media accounts.

2021 was the year IRCT and its global membership integrated online connectivity into daily work.
5.3.3 Telehealth

Hailed as a gamechanger by some and a threat to medical ethics by others, the increasing adoption of telemedicine or telehealth – the provision of health care services, including rehabilitation for torture survivors, through telecoms rather than in-person – was a crucial experience for many IRCT members as the Covid-19 continued to catalyse profound changes to the provision of torture rehabilitation through 2021. During an IRCT webinar held to discuss supporting survivors through the pandemic, there were a range of responses to the possibilities and pitfalls offered by the adoption of telehealth.

“All our work is based on direct contact. Our task is to be with the people,” Mima Dahic, Coordinator at Vive Zene. Based in Tuzla, 100km north of Sarajevo, Vive Zene was established in 1994 to care for women and children traumatised by war, torture and violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. “The pandemic was like an upgrading of their trauma,” said Dahic. “So that for us was a sign that we cannot work from home because it’s not possible. Most of them don’t have computers to have Zoom and these online platforms. But we organised Viber groups, and we also asked donors to buy smartphones for them. And I think the lesson that we learned is that for people who survive war and trauma it’s important at least the feeling that they are not alone.”

In Chile, massive social protests triggered by the State’s response to the pandemic were met by excessive police violence. IRCT member CINTRAS in Chile cares for survivors of torture from Augusto Pinochet’s two decade military dictatorship, and those tortured were called ‘Rehabilitation without livelihoods is like a car without tires.”

— PEACE AVOLA, ACTV, Uganda

Vive Zene was established in 1994 to care for women and children traumatised by war, torture and violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Credit: Northfoto
‘A Life of Anxiety’

Just over a month on from the Taliban’s return to power in Afghanistan, the IRCT hosted a webinar for members, with speakers including Afghan experts from Australia, to reflect on the consequences for torture survivors, and the ongoing violence in the country. Despite promising peace, the Taliban are hunting and executing perceived opponents, causing Afghans inside and outside the country to experience direct and indirect severe mental and physical pain and suffering. With some 200 participants, the webinar was the most well attended of 2021.

“Afghanistan has been in conflict for the past 40 years... but most Afghans say that what has happened now in the current crisis, with the Taliban taking over for a second time, is the most painful and stressful and traumatising experience of all.” Dr Nooria Mehraby, Clinical Trainer at IRCT member STARTTS in Australia which saw a doubling of the number of Afghans it treats from August to September 2021.

“Broadly speaking, members of our community, culturally, are very reluctant to seek assistance in terms of mental health. And I think that has a huge bearing. But I know that many of them are suffering. Those of us who lived through the Soviet occupation and then civil war, there’s some triggers in this, that bring back memories. So it’s a life of anxiety ” Khalil Nasri, Director of the Ariana Australian Association.

“We have no policy for Afghan people in Turkey; 40-50,000 Afghans are stuck in one eastern city; irregular migrants not allowed to be registered, so they cannot seek any psychosocial support. We had a very sad story: An Afghan mother fled with her son and daughter. Her husband was killed in a bombing, her two sons were kidnapped by her son and daughter. Her husband was killed and her remaining son committed suicide because he could not receive any support.” Sebnem Korur Fincanci, the Turkish Medical Association.

“Persons from Afghanistan have been our largest patient group for a couple of years now.” Sara Fridlund, Deputy Director, Health and Care Department, Swedish Red Cross.

“What did our psychological teams find? Feelings of guilt at leaving family members behind. So we try to get them back in contact to reduce anxiety. Becoming a refugee is both an external and stressful and traumatising experience of all.” Dr Nooria Mehraby, Clinical Trainer at IRCT member STARTTS in Australia which saw a doubling of the number of Afghans it treats from August to September 2021.

Despite promising peace, the Taliban are hunting and executing perceived opponents, causing Afghans inside and outside the country to experience direct and indirect severe mental and physical pain and suffering. Credit: Khalil Nasri

IRCT’s 2022 Survivor Engagement project builds on the experience of members such as Tree of Life, Zimbabwe, in how survivors can take control of their own healing journey, as well as helping others.

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“When considering the experience of the members such as Tree of Life, Zimbabwe, in how survivors can take control of their own healing journey, as well as helping others.”
5.4 Torture Journal Turns 30, and Goes Green

In its 30th year of publication, IRCT’s Torture Journal reached more audiences than ever before; hugely increased its outreach to the Global South; established the basis for recognising a new form of indirect torture; transformed from paper to digital; secured its collected wisdom in an online searchable archive; became indexed for free in Scopus, a leading social sciences database; had a documentary film made about it; was feted online by hundreds of admirers from around the world over two days of anniversary celebrations; saw itself in video shorts on Twitter for the first time; and cemented its reputation as the world’s leading academic source for peer-reviewed research and debate from the medical and legal frontiers of torture rehabilitation and prevention.

Not bad for a publication that began in 1991 as a newsletter to IRCT members.

To mark its 30th anniversary, the IRCT in November hosted two days of online panel discussions on the updated Istanbul Protocol, Torture and Resilience, Survivor Engagement, and Sexual Orientation attended by readers, writers and supporters of the Journal and its work from around the world. The IRCT also produced a 30-minute documentary, ‘Behind the Lines: Personal Reflection on Life and Work of Torture Journal,’ featuring some of the individuals behind the life and work of Torture Journal, past and present. The celebration was capped by the award of the first CTI Prize for the most impactful article over the past 30 years. Members voted for the series of articles by Ole Rasmussen, one of four doctors in Denmark who answered the call by Amnesty International to treat torture survivors from Chile, the work that gave birth to the IRCT movement.

To celebrate its 30th anniversary, the IRCT made a documentary film about some of the individuals behind the life and work of Torture Journal, past and present.

The Thematic Approach

Torture Journal began publishing issues dedicated to particular themes in 2005. They proved extremely popular with readers. Thematic issues have included gender; documenting torture in children; politically motivated torture; access to justice and reparation; doctors and torture; and, most recently, on the indirect torture arising from the practice of enforced disappearance, the subject of 2021(2), the longest issue in the Journal’s history. One of those who spoke most fondly of the thematic issues during the Journal’s 30th anniversary celebrations was Nora Sveaass, Professor Emeritus at the University of Oslo and a former member of the UN Committee Against Torture. “Some of these issues are practically worn out because they have always been with me on travels, at meetings, and different kinds of events. I don’t know how many times I have used them in the context of teaching, writing and even arguing in UN-CAT,” said Sveaass, holding the worn issues up for the camera to see. She went on to praise the Journal for its broad approach to a subject that began, five decades ago, in the forensic study by doctors of torture’s health impacts. “Although it is developed on a medical platform, it can never be accused of medicalising these issues or narrowing them down to health issues alone [...] It is not only descriptive or analytic with respect to these topics. Even though it’s a strongly based research journal, it communicates a very strong message related to the need to fight, the need to document and the need to act.”

The Journal’s thematic approach has now been integrated into the IRCT’s new Strategy for 2022-2025 through a call for papers on the connection between support for the livelihoods of torture survivors and their rehabilitation outcomes, a key plank of the Strategy’s Goal 1.

Torture Journal’s Year in Numbers:

- Issues Published: 3
- Downloads: 18,173
- Abstracts Viewed: 31,914
- Total Submissions: 55
- Submissions from Global South: 20
6. IRCT Advocacy Impact

6.1 Breaking the Silence

Torture is not only severe pain or suffering. It’s also censorship. State perpetrators do all they can to silence survivors, ensuring the continuation of near total impunity. Thus, the first step to ending impunity and allowing survivors to participate in justice processes is to break that silence by credibly exposing torture whenever and wherever it occurs. Breaking the silence, compiling an acknowledgement that torture has occurred, is the essential first step to making States change their behaviour. Three IRCT interventions to expose torture in Belarus, Colombia, and Venezuela, illustrate the impact such breaking of silence makes.

6.1.1 Belarus: A Coordinated Policy of Torture

Released in November following nine months of work, the IRCT’s “Belarus: A Coordinated Policy of Torture” was the first such published report by forensic experts and found “compelling evidence” of a coordinated policy and practice of systematic torture and ill-treatment against Belarusian citizens detained for protesting 2020’s rigged presidential elections in Europe’s last dictatorship. A team of medical experts from IRCT’s Independent Forensic Expert Group (IFEG) collaborated with a local civil society actor, the International Committee for the Investigation of Torture in Belarus (ICITB), to examine 50 cases of detainees selected at random from a database of some 1,500 and found “highly patterned evidence of injuries” inflicted at 15 different police stations across Belarus. This report, which is one of the first by experts to review the available forensic evidence, firmly establishes the existence of medical and visual evidence that is consistent with and corroborates the allegations.
of torture and ill-treatment by complainants in every case we examined,” said the IRCT. The report, made possible through a Swiss government donation, was widely published online and garnered interest from relevant foreign ministries in Copenhagen, such as Poland and Lithuania, NGOs and journalists. The UN Investigative Mechanism to investigate and document human rights violations in Belarus adopted the IRCT’s findings in its latest report and the IRCT has been collaborating with the mechanism to gain access to evidence. A Russian translation of the report was published simultaneously by the ICITB. IRCT’s report concluded that individuals appeared to have been targeted due to suspected participation in or support of protests - irrespective of whether they were actively engaged in any such activities at the time - and that the Ministry of Internal Affairs’ ‘Special Purpose Police Detachment’, known by its Belarusian acronym OMON, was a leading perpetrator of the torture. The OMON serve as riot police, and members wear balaclavas to keep their identity secret.

Towards a Ban on Torture Trade

The IRCT’s expertise on torture and ill-treatment during protest saw its staff appointed first to the European Union’s (EU) Expert Group for the Implementation of the EU Anti-Torture Regulation, which aims to ban the trade of goods that are used for torture or the death penalty, and a few months later to the UN Expert Group drafting the first set of international rules to ban States and companies buying and selling violent law enforcement equipment, such as police batons with spikes or electric charges, widely used in torture.

“I was silent. They continued to beat me.”

“On the evening of 10th August, I was walking home. The riot police officers stopped me. They started beating me. Beating with feet, batons, then grabbed me by the arms and legs and carried me into the paddy wagon. While they were carrying me, they stopped several times and beat me again. They put me on the ground near the paddy wagon and started shouting, ‘Who did you vote for?’ All this was accompanied by obscenities. I was silent. ‘For Tikhanovskaya?’ [Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, the opposition candidate for president] I was silent. They continued to beat me.”

— A MAN FROM BARANOVICHI, a small city in Western Belarus, describing his detention in a police truck.

6.1.2 Colombia: Expert Opinion Substantiates Evidence of Police Brutality

It was a year of mass protests in Colombia against the social and economic policies of President Ivan Duque. And it was IRCT’s forensic expert group who contributed to the most important report on whether torture had occurred in the brutal response by police to those protests. After reviewing photographic evidence of violence against protesters, IFEG issued an expert opinion that concluded live ammunition was being used on and had caused the deaths of individuals, and that police weapons such as teargas and kinetic impact projectiles were being misused, causing death and severe injury. The opinion supported a report by Human Rights Watch published on 9 June that confirmed 34 deaths had occurred during the crackdown. The report highlighted IFEG’s evidence and was cited in over 800 media sources, including leading news agencies such as the Associated Press, in both Spanish and English. IRCT also supplied HRW and other civil society actors with a standardised reporting form to assist in gathering evidence of torture, as well as a guide on documenting torture committed during protests and detention. This was shared on social media, and re-posted thousands of times on Twitter.

“Beatings and degrading treatment by the police on detained demonstrators are being used as a form of physical and psychological torture. It is used for the explicit purpose of instilling psychological terror in the population as a way of exercising authoritarian control.”

— ÁNGELA OSPINA, director of IRCT member the Centre for Psychological Assistance (CAPS).
Protests: Where State and Citizen Meet

Torture is not just violent interrogation for confession. And it’s not only keeping prisoners in appalling conditions. It’s also, and most likely to be, the police baton cracking the skull of the fallen protestor; the indiscriminate firing of tear gas cannisters at close range into a crowd, turning a lawful tool of control into an illegal and lethal projectile; or the inherently disproportionate force of using a spiked baton against people on a peaceful march. As authoritarianism rises, so do protests for democracy and human rights. Violence by riot police, security forces, and soldiers against protesters is often the most extensive application of the State’s power to torture and ill-treat its citizens.

Protests are a principal fault-line where State power and citizen’s rights meet. It’s for that reason that documenting torture and ill-treatment during protests is central to IRT’s Strategy 2022-2025 and why our Advocacy Director was appointed to a UN group of experts drafting the first set of international rules to ban States and companies buying and selling violent law enforcement equipment widely used in torture.

6.1.3 Venezuela: Evidencing Extra Judicial Killings

Venezuela’s security forces were found to have committed egregious human rights violations, including systematic torture of civilians, amounting to crimes against humanity in a 2020 report by the UN’s Independent International Fact-Finding Mission. A year later, those same security forces continued their crimes against the civilian population of Apure state on the border with Colombia. IFEG reviewed photographic evidence of the bodies of Apure residents killed by security forces, who alleged the six dead were “neutralised” as “terrorists” and were able to conclude that the bodies had likely been moved, the weapons in the photographs staged, and that one person had been shot at close range. The IFEG opinion was central to the report by Human Rights Watch, which was subsequently mentioned in the media of at least 42 countries and in six languages.

6.1.4 Brazil: Killing, Cover-Up, Court

In April 2021, Brazil’s Supreme Court held hearings to consider strategies to reduce police killings in Rio de Janeiro. In 2020, IRCT worked with Human Rights Watch in countering an attempt to silence evidence of torture and extra-judicial killing in Brazil. Police in Rio de Janeiro killed nine people during a raid on a favela - an historically neglected slum area - in 2019. Subsequently, as HRW documented, they attempted a ‘false rescue’: moving the bodies to local hospitals under the pretence of trying to save life, but with the real purpose of destroying crime scene evidence and hampering investigation. IFEG examined the autopsy reports and noted that while the grossly substandard quality of the autopsies made it impossible to definitively conclude that all of the victims had died at the scene, victims had multiple gunshot wounds and signs of severe trauma. IFEG reported that such injuries “may rapidly lead to death” and in one case they were so severe that “death was highly likely to be instantaneous.” This provided strong evidence that the persons were dead before their bodies were taken to the hospital. A year on, HRW provided evidence to the Supreme Court, including the IFEG report, on the attempted cover-up.
Inside a Forensic Expert Analysis

Who are IFEG?
Established by the IRCT in 2009, members of IFEG are preeminent medical experts in the forensic examination of victims of torture, and its 42 members have examined around 40,000 cases and testified in court and other forums over 4,000 times.

What is a forensic expert analysis?
Forensic expert analysis on torture involves a comprehensive examination of all of the evidence of torture by medical experts, an assessment of that evidence against current best medical knowledge, and then the issuing of a qualified conclusion, such as a likelihood ratio, about how closely the evidence of torture matches the allegation of torture. In the Belarus report, IFEG found “compelling” evidence of a “coordinated policy” of torture. Had the evidence not been so strong, for example, the experts might have found merely “significant” evidence of “incidents” of torture.

What evidence was available to IFEG?
In total, the 50 cases filed, chosen at random from some 1,500, included 130 documents with 613 pages, 286 photographs and four videos. Every case file contained an interview with an individual claiming to have been arrested between 9-12 August 2020 and subjected to torture or ill-treatment by the police and security forces during and/or subsequent to arrest. Almost every case file (49 cases) also included photographs of the complainant’s injuries taken at or before the time of interview. In addition, 35 cases included medical documentation. All case materials were translated by the ICITB from Belarusian to English.

Why did the IRCT intervene in Belarus?
Because we have the expertise and situation required. In the wake of President Alexander Lukashenko’s rigged re-election, Belarus’ state-run Investigative Committee reported receiving some 5,000 complaints of torture and ill-treatment. However, in August 2021 the Committee announced it would not initiate any criminal proceedings because the State’s use of force was in accordance with Belarusian law, “in the suppression of offences”. In response to this statement, IRCT and IFEG asserted the importance of conducting effective forensic investigation of torture reports according to the international agreed principles set out in the Istanbul Protocol with a view to ensuring accountability and reparations for victims of these extensive human rights violations. The activists of ICITB had gathered huge amounts of evidence of alleged torture. IFEG has the world-leading expertise to substantiate the allegations, and thus maintain pressure on international actors to sanction Lukashenko and his regime. A year after our intervention, 21 States, working together with IRCT member in Denmark, Dignity, the UK’s Redress and 14 other Belarusian and international NGOs established the International Accountability Platform for Belarus (IAPB). The IAPB is mandated to gather evidence of crimes under international law committed by Belarusian authorities in the run-up to, during and after the 2020 presidential election, with the aim of contributing to accountability mechanisms, including eventual trials of perpetrators. The IRCT is a member of IAPB’s Advisory Council.

What comes next?
That largely depends on how the 21 States of the IAPB choose to use the evidence they now have. Torture in Belarus has been credibly exposed and the silence well and truly broken. The path to a day in court for survivors of Lukashenko’s torture policy is likely long and winding. Belarus is often referred to as Europe’s last dictatorship and its appalling record on human rights means it is not a Member of the Council of Europe and has not ratified the European Convention on Human Rights, meaning no case against it can be brought to the European Court of Human Rights. Although torture and inhumane treatment is a criminal offence in Belarus, and its criminal code Article 128 outlines ‘Crimes Against the Security of Mankind’, Amnesty has documented how those reporting torture have been targeted and charged with criminal offences. Nor does Belarus recognise the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. However, under the principle of universal jurisdiction, crimes against humanity, including widespread or systematic abuses directed against a civilian population, can be tried in any jurisdiction, as demonstrated recently by German courts which tried and convicted Syrian officials for their role in torturing thousands of protesters in Damascus. Inspired by those trials, in May 2021, ten Belarusians in Germany filed criminal complaints under the principle of universal jurisdiction against Lukashenko alleging torture and crimes against humanity.

Want to know more?
Watch an interview here with one of the founders of IFEG, Professor Dr Djordje Alempijevic, explaining the role of forensic experts in substantiating allegations of torture, and his work on cases from Belarus.
6.2 Strengthening Laws and Policies

Once torture has been credibly exposed, State perpetrators can no longer deny it is taking place and victims should no longer be left without access to justice and reparations, including their right to rehabilitation.

An important aspect for IRCT’s mission to eradicate torture is ensuring that national anti-torture laws and government policy comply with international standards. This change starts and ends at the national level where the IRCT and its members are leading advocates for change. By working with its members during reviews of their States by the UN Committee Against Torture (UN CAT), the body that monitors implementation of the Convention Against Torture (CAT), and the Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR), both located in Geneva, the IRCT can advocate for strengthening national anti-torture laws and policies. We also advocate directly with UN and regional human rights mechanisms to develop strong international anti-torture standards that reflect the perspectives and experiences of survivors. In 2021, five members came to Geneva, while three others began implementing its recommendations.

### 6.2.1 Advocating at the Committee

Treaty rules require that State parties to CAT submit a written report on how they are preventing torture and providing rehabilitation to its survivors to the Committee every four years. The Committee, which is made up of ten independent experts, then uses the report to question officials from that State during two days of hearings at the UN headquarters in Geneva, before issuing a series of recommendations to the State. Civil society groups, like IRCT members, can also submit reports to the Committee for consideration, to inform its questions and recommendations. In 2021, the IRCT helped its members from Bolivia (IETI), Kyrgyzstan (Golos Slobody), Nigeria (PRAWA) and Serbia (IAN) to secure what we considered strong and focused recommendations from the Committee during its review of those States. As a result, the recommendations effectively reinforce key advocacy priorities of IRCT members in those countries. IRCT support included capacity development on UN advocacy and support with writing national advocacy reports and engaging with the Committee in Geneva. Members provided very positive feedback on the IRCT’s support and the utility of the process.

“IRCT support was really fantastic, and I could see the effect of that in our presentation to the Committee compared with others,” said Chioma Anuna, Team Lead Research and Documentation at IRCT’s Nigeria member Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA) on her return from Geneva. All four members are now working on follow up to the recommendations to make sure their governments take steps to implement. In Nigeria, PRAWA are implementing an IRCT-funded project to push the government to begin implementing the Committee’s recommendations while in Bolivia, the Ministry of Justice already announced that it will provide reparations to victims of torture from the 2019 election-related protests.

### 6.2.2 Third Cycle at the UPR

Started in 2008, the UPR is a unique process in International Human Rights Law: A review of all 193 UN Member States on their human rights records - regardless of which human rights treaties the State in question has ratified or not - convened by the elected State-members of the Human Rights Council and involving diplomats from any and all other UN Member States. It’s a big process! Much like the treaty monitoring procedure of CAT, the UPR allows IRCT members to advocate for stronger anti-torture laws and policy through their written input and direct advocacy with diplomats conducting the review. The final outcome of the UPR is a series of recommendations from States participating in the review, which are then either accepted or simply noted by the State under review. The UPR process has now completed its third cycle, meaning all States have been reviewed three times.

“Our attitude over the years is regrettable. Going forward we commit to be more proactive in our engagement.”

— AMBASSADOR ABIODUN RICHDNS ADEJOLA, below, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the UN in Geneva, during the country’s first review by the Committee Against Torture in 2010. Credit: UN Web TV
Reviewing the Reluctant: Nigeria at the Committee Against Torture

Nigeria ratified CAT in 2001. But for two decades, the country refused to be reviewed by the Committee. In November 2021, the Committee went ahead anyway, and PRAWA was there. So, for the first time, were Nigerian officials. “Our attitude over the years is regrettable,” Ambassador Abiodun Richards Adejola, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the UN in Geneva told the Committee. “We are in the process of reforming and restructuring the National Committee Against Torture to make it more independent and responsive. Going forward we commit to be more proactive in our engagement and live up to our obligation to the Committee under the Convention.”

Nigeria did not submit a report to the Committee, but the Nigerian officials did answer the Committee’s questions. Although torture is prohibited under Nigeria’s 1999 Constitution and the 2017 Anti-Torture Act, the Nigerian officials recognised legal gaps remained. The Criminal Justice Act, Correctional Services Act and prison and police reform were given as examples of Nigeria strengthening its torture prevention policies. “The government of Nigeria recognises the need for urgent immediate and radical reform of our criminal justice system,” said Olawale Fapohunda, Vice-Chairman of Nigeria’s National Committee Against Torture. “It is also correct that the process has been slow, but you have to recognise that ours is a country of 36 states. To achieve meaningful reforms will require negotiation.” Supported by the IRCT’s Advocacy Director, PRAWA led the production of the civil society report submitted to the Committee which, among other things, called for the government to include rehabilitation of torture survivors as a policy under the Anti-Torture Act. That advocacy paid dividends: Paragraph

Uganda: Thousands Tortured Every Year

Like many nations, no one knows just how many people are tortured, or are survivors of torture, in Uganda. The country hosts around 1.5 million refugees, and IRCT’s best data suggests that, on average, one in three refugees have suffered torture or ill-treatment. Ugandans themselves are tortured with appalling regularity. Official figures from the Uganda Human Rights Commission report some 1,500 people are tortured per year. But IRCT and other rights groups know that is a huge underestimate. The Uganda Police Force (UPF) and the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) are the leading perpetrators. In 2021, the IRCT supported our member in Uganda, the African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV), with advocacy towards the UPR of Uganda, which took place in January 2022. The support included capacity development, support with writing the national advocacy report, and holding online meetings with UN diplomats in Geneva.
ACTV’s Alex Kigoye had three big asks for the diplomats to include in their UPR recommendations to Uganda:

1. Police must follow the Prohibition and Prevention of Torture Act (PPTA) and investigate allegations of torture.
2. Government must follow the order by the Uganda Human Rights Commission and pay prompt compensation to torture survivors.
3. Government should ratify the Optional Protocol to CAT which authorises the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture to make regular visits to places of detention.

In its National Report to the UPR, the Ugandan government said it had taken “effective measures to prevent any acts of torture or ill treatment, including a complaint and investigation procedure” set up under the PPTA. While the numbers (see box) offered by the State suggest steps towards accountability and reparation, in the experience of the IRCT much more will need to be done before the scourge of torture in Uganda is eradicated. The UPR recommendations were to be published in early 2022.

Claims of State: Steps Uganda Reported It Had Taken

- 10,000 army officers trained in prevention of torture
- 21 prison staff disciplined and punished: 2018 - 2021
- 10 officers tried and sentenced since 2018
- Three billion Ugandan Shillings (EUR 760,000) paid in compensation to victims of human rights violations 2016-2018

Source: Uganda National Report to UPR 2022

UPR Impact

Members in Lebanon and Nepal secured excellent UPR recommendations in January 2021. Following our work with Lebanon’s Restart, the IRCT was invited to participate as a technical expert in consultations between State agencies and civil society on implementation of its UPR recommendations. And with the support of the IRCT, TPO Nepal spent part of the year conducting advocacy activities to promote implementation of UPR recommendations at the local level in several locations in Nepal. Finally, after working with our member in Bolivia, the Institute of Therapy and Investigation (ITEI) on its earlier UPR, IRCT was able to secure recommendations on structural changes to its national preventive mechanism (NPM), the key torture prevention body, to increase its independent functioning, which the Bolivian government accepted.

6.2.3 UN Special Rapporteur on Torture: Expanding Accountability

The latest report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture (SRT), delivered to the UN General Assembly in July, found that torture and ill-treatment “continue to be practised with almost complete impunity throughout the world, and victims of such abuse or their relatives rarely obtain the redress, repARATION and rehabilitation to which they are entitled under international law.”

The report was a powerful indictment of States’ failure to prevent torture or provide rehabilitation to its survivors. The IRCT submitted expert evidence to the SRT to support the drafting process. For IRCT’s Advocacy Director, the report marked an important milestone for the understanding of accountability. “If we only perceive accountability as criminal justice then success will always be limited because the focus will be off those other actions that can bring accountability,” said Asger Kjærum.

“The evidence we have at the IRCT of a victim-centred understanding of accountability is that exposing torture is also accountability, naming perpetrators and having an investigation is also accountability, even if it does not lead to a criminal justice process. Expanding the conceptual understanding of accountability matters to victims, and everyone else fighting to eradicate torture.” The report is expected to generate stronger global acceptance of standards on accountability for torture including key IRCT priorities such as investigation and documentation, victims’ rights and participation in accountability processes and taking the more holistic approach to accountability. To learn more; Click here for a conversation with Nils Melzer, the current SRT.
6.3 Civil Society and Independent Institutions

From Belarus to Nigeria, Bolivia to Nepal, neither breaking the silence around torture nor strengthening anti-torture laws would be possible without an active and healthy civil society. Although every member offers professional medical services, IRCT members are also civil society organisations (CSOs) and human rights defenders occupying a public space. Strengthening the capacity of CSOs strengthens the ability of people to have their voices heard by those in power, a crucial advocacy tool in the fight against torture.

Strengthening CPTA to Prevent Torture in Africa

Every day across Africa, countless ordinary people, activists, journalists, teachers, trade unionists, LGBTI+ persons, politicians, and minority groups are tortured and ill-treated in contexts ranging from elections to protests, poverty to discrimination. Many of these victims end up languishing in prisons, with very little recourse to remedies. The Committee for Prevention of Torture in Africa (CPTA) was established by the African Commission in 2009 to promote the absolute prohibition of torture and ill-treatment as enshrined in the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and set out in the Robben Island Guidelines, named after the island near Cape Town where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 18 of his 27 year sentence.

Every year the CPTA receives hundreds of requests to intervene in cases, and therefore asked expert organisations to help it design a systematic approach it could take to receive and act on allegations of torture, or when there is an imminent risk of political oppression or torture. In 2021, the IRCT participated as an expert in the development by the CPTA of a new early warning system to be used by the Committee to react to emerging situations of torture and ill-treatment on the continent. Based on IRCT expertise and documentation tools, the warning system takes a strong victim-centred approach and includes cost effective processes for evidence collection and evaluation. The system will be launched in 2022 and IRCT will continue its close collaboration with the CPTA and civil society organisations across Africa to make sure it provides effective protection against torture.

IRCT expertise and documentation tools support the CPTA’s new mechanism for receiving and acting on allegations of torture in Africa.
Capacity Building to End Police Brutality in Nigeria

Nigeria's security forces have been in crisis for a decade, battling Islamists in the north, separatists and oil militias in the south, and a wave of organised crime. Amid the chaos, the State’s Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) became notorious for torturing citizens with complete impunity, leading to a wave of mass protests across the country, that were met with more police violence, torture and extrajudicial killings.

Amid the national outrage, IRC member PRAWA played a leading role in convincing the Nigerian government to disband the unit in 2020 and retrain its officers. The National Human Rights Commission subsequently set up independent investigative panels, at both state and federal level, to gather evidence of torture and ill-treatment and other human rights violations committed by SARS. PRAWA’s director was appointed as a member of the federal investigative panel. IRC and PRAWA provided several online trainings to both sets of panels on how to engage effectively and respectfully with victims, how to collect and assess evidence of torture using the Istanbul Protocol and how to determine and award meaningful reparations. As a result of the trainings, the IRC was requested to provide technical support to the federal and state-level panels responsible for investigating and issuing recommendations for reparation, accountability and prevention. The Investigative Panels are now finishing their work and IRC is analysing the evidence gathered.

Human Rights in Action: Towards a Global Ban on Conversion Therapy

The progress towards a global ban on conversion therapy - that set of practices that aim to change, ‘repair’ or ‘cure’ an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity - is a powerful illustration of how CSOs can work to secure human rights. In 1999, only Brazil banned conversion therapy. It would take 15 years of speaking out, gathering evidence, and advocacy by CSOs around the world before, in 2016, the UN created the position of Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (IE SOGI). As the OHCHR put it, the position was created because although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, in all regions of the world, there are acts of violence and discrimination committed against individuals because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. In 2020, the IRC’s Independent Forensic Expert Group (IFEG) released a statement documenting how conversion therapy violates the global prohibition against torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. In a further research report, IRC identified State involvement in conversion therapy in at least 68 countries. Also in 2020, and building on IRC and IFEG’s work, the IE SOGI, Victor Madrigal-Borloz (formerly IRC’s Secretary General) published a report evidencing the harms of conversion therapy and calling for a ban. A year later, IRC hosted a break-out session discussing the harms of the practice during World Pride in Copenhagen, hosting human rights defenders from China, Ecuador and Kenya. As of end January 2022, seven States now ban conversion therapy outright, there are three regional or state bans, seven States have indirect bans, and eight more are in the process of legislating a ban. “I just had one electric shock treatment six years ago, but I still remember the psychological harm that brought to me,” said a human rights defender from China.

Want to know more?
Watch IRC’s video: It’s Torture, Not Therapy, here.

IRCT advocacy operates at many levels and often has impacts in several areas. This explanation of our advocacy on anal examinations shows how expert evidence contributes to changing global practices, one of which is the move to ban conversion therapy. Credit: Rhona Godarzi

Former IRC Secretary General and now UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Victor Madrigal-Borloz. Credit: IRC
7. Stronger Together

The IRCT exists because of and for its members. As a membership organisation, engagement by members is the driving force and democratic basis of the organisation. Just as torture rehabilitation, the fight against impunity, and torture prevention are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, so do the IRCT Statutes make clear that collective responsibility for rehabilitation, standards, and knowledge sharing is the basis on which our 160 members in 76 countries agree to work together. Members come in all shapes and sizes, from the highly specialised medical centre working in a single city, to the local branch of sprawling social welfare organisation, working across a continent. Together, the sheer diversity of IRCT members’ expertise, gathered together in solidarity for a shared purpose, represent the organisation’s greatest strength. In 2021, a year of significant global crises, harnessing that strength, encouraging it to grow, and communicating it to IRCT’s professional and public audiences was as crucial as ever.

7.1 Special Assistance: COVID Grants

COVID-19 continued to make a massive impact on the ability of IRCT members to help torture survivors rebuild their lives. Some centres were forced to close; staff and clients got infected and died; fundraising events were cancelled; grants were withdrawn.

To ensure the uninterrupted provision of rehabilitation to torture survivors and support centres in adjusting to the specific challenges of COVID-19, including provision of remote services and protective equipment, the IRCT secured new funding from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Inge Genefke and Bent Sørensen Anti-Torture Support Foundation. ATSF was founded in 2002 by IRCT founder Inge Genefke and her late husband Bent Sørensen. Distribution was based on need and prioritised members in Global South countries. By the end of October, over 500,000 EUR had been disbursed in two rounds to 55 member centres. Furthermore, the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (VFVT) call for applications was re-distributed to all members and the IRCT issued several letters of attestation of membership to support members in the application process. An application for 135,000 EUR was submitted for a new round of COVID-19 subgrants in 2022. Seven members in Sub-Saharan Africa also received rapid response grants through Danish NGO collective Globalt Fokus: SAP (Burundi), Fedicongo (DRC), REMAK (DRC), SOVIP (DRC), Mahteso (Kenya), and CAT Kenya (Kenya). The funding went to direct service provision, IT security, safety and security measures, staff-protection and care, as well as networking and advocacy.

By the end of October 2021, IRCT had disbursed over 500,000 EUR of COVID grants to 55 member centres.
IRCT members around the world were asked to contribute their thoughts to a short video used to explain the impact of COVID-19 on their work and how the grants were used to support survivors.

“For all of us this pandemic has brought a different lifestyle, but for torture survivors, for sure, it was more difficult.” ARCT, Albania

“This grant is going to support these torture survivors by providing them protection against COVID-19.” Mahteso, Kenya

“Voices from the Frontline:

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7.2 Solidarity in Emergency: New Rapid Response Fund

Approved by the Executive Committee in their June meeting, the IRCT’s new Emergency Rapid Response Fund represents the solidarity of members expressed in hard cash, whenever and whoever needs it most. Financed from members’ own voluntary annual membership fees, which in 2021 totalled some 60,000 EUR as paid by seven out of 10 members, the Fund’s objective is to support front-line human rights and/or health-based staff to carry out their life-saving work in a world where solidarity, support for rehabilitation services, and space for civil society organisations is shrinking fast. One of the first recipients of the Fund was Amis des Victimes des Violations des Droits Humains (AVVDH) in Congo who received EUR5,000 in November 2021 to help relocate a colleague and his family persecuted by local authorities. Also receiving emergency grants in 2021 were TRC Palestine, PAL Liberia and CAPS Colombia.

Letters of Support:

In December 2021, the IRCT provided two member centres (CINTRAS, Chile and PVCHR, India) with reference letters of support so that they could apply for global funds for rehabilitation.

7.3 Wise Counsel: Embracing Advice

Research shows time and again that embracing cognitive diversity, the expression of differing ideas and ways of thinking, leads to better problem solving and organisational outcomes.

With a problem as persistent and terrible as torture, the IRCT has long been open to a range of expertise, including from our pro bono expert advisory boards. The Health Advisory Board has been instrumental in formulating the content of the E-learning course on the IRCT’s Global Standards on Rehabilitation (GSR), testing proposed problem questions and the application of best practice against their cumulative years of experience. The result is an E-learning course tailored to the needs of rehabilitation professionals, and accessible to all. IRCT explored joint projects with Dan Church Aid and other organisations to develop the E-learning potential on IRCT’s members-only site on IRCT’s projects with CVT, including material on anti-corruption and prevention of sexual misconduct in the development sector together; collaboration with Redress on implementing lessons learned from their work on direct assistance to Syrian refugees in Lebanon; collaboration with CVT in the US on the development of E-learning materials; and potential collaboration with CSVR in South Africa on the creation of an E-learning course on Social Justice.

New members of the Editorial Advisory Board for the Torture Journal: Alice Edwards, a lawyer and formerly Head of the Convention against Torture Initiative; and Daniel Weishut, a clinical psychologist.

Justice. The Compliance Advisory Board was constituted with representatives from Sub-Saharan Africa, MENA, Europe and Asia. The Board ensures IRCT members adhere to the requirements of their membership, including on transparency, turnover, number of survivors treated each year, and staffing. The Board found two members to be non-compli-
7.4 Collective Efforts: Strategy 2022-2025

IRCT’s Strategy 2022-2025 is the roadmap that will guide the organisation’s collective efforts and strategic priorities for the next four years. Its contents represent the input of over 100 of IRCT’s 160 members, and months of consultations between the President, Executive Committee, the Council, and representatives from all IRCT’s seven regions. It was unanimously approved in a virtual vote that included the threshold of at least 30 percent of members in each region voting. The new Strategy makes a simple division of goals: Healing and Justice. In a world of increasing authoritarianism, States are utilising torture to suppress dissent, silence civil society, and marginalise minorities and those living in poverty. Impunity remains almost absolute. With its medical and legal expertise, the IRCT and its members stand on the frontline of this global struggle against the abuse of power. Our Strategy sets out how we will work to heal torture survivors by ensuring as many as possible receive the best possible support to rebuild their lives, and have more space to make their voices heard. And by exposing torture, strengthening the capacity of civil society and State institutions, and by advocating with the international human rights mechanisms, we will work for the goal of justice, reparation, and the prevention of torture. The IRCT’s vision is for a world without torture. But as long as torture persists, we will work to ensure that individuals and communities subjected to torture receive the rehabilitation and justice that they deserve and are entitled to.

Stronger Together... And Face to Face at Last

Remote video conferencing is certainly a fantastically efficient way to work, and for a global organisation like the IRCT it facilitates a level of interaction between members and between the Secretariat and members that was unimaginable to our founders in 1985. But you still can’t beat getting together, face to face, for lunch in the sun, or a coffee and Lebanese sweets, as the Secretariat was lucky enough to enjoy this year on visits by the Psycho-trauma Centre of South Netherlands (PTC-ZN) and the Restart Centre of Lebanon. For PTC-ZN it was a first trip to understand more about how the IRCT works, while for Suzanne Jabbour of Restart it was a return to familiar territory, having been IRCT President and now a member of our Council. Top of the agenda was the question of what happens to a nation’s mental health when political corruption destroys the State, as it has in Lebanon? Jabbour’s answer: “Basic needs have to be met. You cannot offer effective therapy to a person who is asking for bread.” Perhaps it was no coincidence that the two overseas members who visited Copenhagen in 2021 were also themselves very much meeting in-person, having signed a partnership agreement in April to exchange expertise in treating complex trauma.

“I look forward to sharing my legal and policy expertise to help the Journal reach an even more diverse range of scholars, practitioners and specialists working in this important field.”

– ALICE EDWARDS, lawyer and former head of CTI

The Health Advisory Board has been instrumental in formulating the content of the E-learning course on the IRCT’s Global Standards on Rehabilitation (GSR), ensuring an E-learning course tailored to the needs of rehabilitation professionals, and accessible to all. Credit: IRCT

From left: Tiko Tsomalia, a professor at the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) where she teaches classes in reporting, writing and social campaigning; Ana Prieto, an Argentinian journalist and author now working for AFP Fact-Checking; Cheryl Brownstein-Santiago, a veteran US newspaper reporter; and Katya Tikhonova, a former journalist from Russia, now living in San Diego. The Board held four meetings through 2021, focused particularly on communicating the challenging, but fascinating, topic of the Torture Journal as it reached an even more diverse range of scholars, practitioners and specialists working in this important field.

The Communications Advisory Board in 2022-2025 Efforts: Strategy 2022-2025

The Communications Advisory Board in 2022-2025 supports human rights against rising authoritarianism through the goals of Healing and Justice. Credit: IRCT

ant with the requirements of their membership, and thus recommended the ending of their membership, a matter that was being considered by the Executive Committee in 2022. The Communications Advisory Board became operational in 2021 with four members: Tiko Tsomalia, a professor at the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) where she teaches classes in reporting, writing and social campaigning; Ana Prieto, an Argentinian journalist and author now working for AFP Fact-Checking; Cheryl Brownstein-Santiago, a veteran US newspaper reporter; and Katya Tikhonova, a former journalist from Russia, now living in San Diego. The Board held four meetings through 2021, focused particularly on communicating the challenging, but fascinating, topic of the Torture Journal as it celebrated its 30th anniversary, and the best use of social media to advocate for the rights of survivors. Finally, the start of 2021 saw two new distinguished members join the Editorial Advisory Board for the Torture Journal: Alice Edwards, a lawyer and former Head of the Convention against Torture Initiative; and Daniel Weishut, a clinical psychologist with over thirty years of experience, including treating survivors of the Holocaust and other traumas. The Board brings together leading professionals from across the sector to build on the clinical and academic reputation of the Journal.

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7.5 Engage and Involve: Communicating the IRCT

In today’s packed marketplace of ideas and competing priorities, there’s an indisputable truth: Civil society organisations that wish to succeed and ensure their long-term viability must also succeed in media. And that means not only monthly emails to members, but daily Tweets to the public. And it means not only written words, but posters, videos, and even podcasts.

In 2021, IRCT Communications fully embraced the social media landscape of Web 2.0 with two key goals: Engaging IRCT’s key stakeholders and interested members of the public through professional media products that reinforce key IRCT messages; and involving the members network in opportunities to learn about each other’s work, grow in solidarity and exchange of knowledge, and see themselves reflected in both internal and external communications. A series of new products and standards were implemented to meet these goals.

Moving Pictures

Research shows consistently that videos get far more attention online than written content, and so in IRCT’s Meet Our Members series we showcase, in short videos of around five minutes long, the people and places which make the IRCT what it is. Putting a face to the acronym, our courageous and caring global network of health professionals and human rights defenders introduce you to how and where they work. Online thematic webinars featuring speakers from across IRCT’s global network are an excellent way to build solidarity and grow the collective knowledge of our health experts. From these webinars, IRCT Insights Series provides viewers with a distillation of the best insights on healing and justice for torture survivors from our experts around the world, with explanations in text boxes and additional imagery to bring the topic alive. Finally, our Special Features is a home for all our films documenting progress on key thematic projects, such as livelihoods or survivor engagement, to one-off specials, such as the 30th anniversary of the Torture Journal.

Words Matter

While videos engage and involve, written words will always remain essential to communicating the IRCT. A new and improved website will launch in 2022 to reflect the new Strategy, but through 2021 the website news was brought into line with professional journalism standards, including content, writing style, headlines, use of quotes, and embedding links for further research. IRCT Briefing is a new Q&A format that seeks to answer key questions on complex topics, while social media posts were written strategically to engage and influence IRCT’s key internal and external audiences, while building professional collaborations. The Secretary General continued her monthly email newsletter, ‘What’s Cooking’, written in engaging, personal style to all members to ensure they can easily remain up-to-date on what the organisation has been, and plans to be, doing.

Strengthening our Messaging, Growing our Audience

The audience for a health-based torture rehabilitation network of professional doctors and lawyers is never going to be huge. However, with the implementation of strengthened messaging and new communications products, 2021 saw considerable relative increases in online audiences. Google reported users of the website grew from some 4,000 in January to around 8,000 in December, while our Facebook page now has 25,000 followers. Our short video on poverty and torture reached over 65,000 people and was watched by over 5,000 of them. Twitter audiences are notoriously difficult to grow, but IRCT’s following went from 3,000 to 3,450 during the year, and our followers on the professional network LinkedIn also grew substantially, by over 600, to reach some 2,300 by year’s end.

Key IRCT messaging

Torture is central to the human rights struggle of our time.

Torture silences survivors; justice starts with truth.

Torture persists; rehabilitation is a right.

Poverty and torture are linked.

Collaboration is key.

Expertise is our greatest added value.
June 26: #TogetherWeCanEndTorture

In celebration of the international day against torture, and in a first of its kind, the IRCT coordinated with four other global anti-torture organisations (FIACAT, OMCT, APT and Redress) to promote each other’s content ahead of 26 June under the hashtag #TogetherWeCanEndTorture. IRCT posted around 20 Tweets and Facebook updates and was re-tweeted dozens of times by members of the collaboration. The collaboration succeeded in getting the #TogetherWeCanEndTorture into use by non-members, including the UN’s Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, other anti-torture organisations, and other related CSOs. The 26 June Fabo page also stimulated membership engagement with Fabo as a space where they could have their events shared and visualised. To mark the day offline and in-person, the IRCT in Copenhagen invited torture survivors and those who support them to the home of the Secretary General to speak about their experiences. Attendees included ambassadors from the Swiss and Norwegian embassies, the Danish Foreign Ministry, members of the Rotary Club in Denmark, the Centre for Danish Islamic Counselling (CDIR), current and former staff from Oxfam IBIS and the WHO, lawyers from DLA Piper, one of the world’s largest law firms who do pro bono work for the IRCT, and students from the law and economics departments at Copenhagen University. “We’re here today, in one of the best cities in the world, in the happiest nation on earth, because we know that for most people, most of the time, life isn’t like this, and for torture survivors, at least to start with, life is hardly life at all,” said Lisa Henry, IRCT’s Secretary General. “It’s eight centuries this very week since an English King signed the Magna Carta, the law that said individuals must be free of arbitrary arrest and torture; it’s 75 years since the end of a World War that saw leaders pledge never again and States accept a universal prohibition on torture always and everywhere; and yet in 2021 IRCT rehabilitation centres around the world, 160 of them in 76 countries, are still treating over 50,000 survivors of torture, thousands of them every day.”

Did you know?
Established at the behest of Denmark as an annual event to speak out against torture and support survivors throughout the world, 26 June marks the moment in 1987 when the UN Convention Against Torture (CAT) came into effect. Today, the Convention has been ratified by 173 States.

“For me, Syria is now that picture of torture.”
— LILAS HATAHET, a Syrian journalist imprisoned in Damascus for her critical reports on the Assad regime’s crackdown on peaceful protests, addressed the audience at IRCT’s June 26 event.

“When they took me to prison it was not for torture but to let me see how they torture people. Now, every time I think of Syria, I see that picture, the picture they forced me to see. This is what Danish people and other nationalities struggle to understand when they ask Syrian or Iraqi or Iranian refugees why they don’t want to go home. It’s because for us, that home and those happy memories there, are gone. It’s not the same country. For me, Syria is now that picture of torture. The Danes love to put their flag on birthday cakes. I was so surprised when I first saw that. We Syrians would never do that. For refugees, our relationship with our country is completely different.”

Lilas Hatahet, a Syrian journalist imprisoned in Damascus for her critical reports on the Assad regime’s crackdown on peaceful protests, addressed the audience at IRCT’s June 26 event.
8. Finances

For the period 1 January to 31 December 2021, the IRCT had a positive result of 56t EUR. Income totals 1,738t EUR, covering expenditure of 1,682t EUR. Given surplus, IRCT was able to grow the reserve to 365t EUR.

The main variances to the results of 2020 are due to the continued COVID-19 related limitation of projects and activities both for local partners and global interventions at the UN and regional human rights mechanisms. Significant projects on global indicators and global data faced challenges in implementation due to COVID-19 restrictions (Output 1,2 and 3). At the same time, IRCT continued a high level of online support and engagement with the membership. A successful webinar series and an online conference to celebrate 30 years of Torture Journal were held with high global participation. Travel activities and costs remained low for all areas of the Strategy implementation both due to a shift to digital methodologies and due to the COVID-19 related cancellations and postponements of trainings, strategic meetings and interventions with partner countries and other stakeholders. Common costs increased due to additional investment in IT and digitalization as well as the move of the IRCT Secretariat in Copenhagen. The new office and hybrid working modality set-up will decrease costs significantly as of 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a fundamental impact on the IRCT both at member and Secretariat level and resulted in significant changes both in expenditure and income. The IRCT held close contact with its main donors who provided flexibility for adjusting to the new circumstances. Their support enabled IRCT to be agile and flexible in adjusting to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in reaching significant milestones towards our strategic goals. In particular, a third round of COVID-19 sub-granting was made possible with the generous support of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ATSF. The increased use of digital working methodologies across all activity areas helped to connect and empower the membership during these tough times and at the same time resulted in a low spend on project travel and governance meeting costs. In 2021, IRCT also experienced one case of cyber-fraud with a member centre leading to the potential loss of 10t EUR on an emergency subgrant. The clarification is still ongoing, and provisions have been made to cover the potential loss.

The main donor for 2021 remained the DMFA, supporting IRCT with 1.2m EUR per year. A tranche of 100t EUR from 2020 was applied to additional COVID-19 subgrants. Following a review and a close dialogue about IRCT’s impact, the DMFA received a new three-year application for 2022-24 and finalisation for the new funding agreement will happen in early 2022. IRCT was successful in getting one additional core donor to diversify the IRCT funding base. The new US foundation Be Thou My Vision is supporting IRCT with a core grant, which started with a 1-year grant and after successful implementation, a new 3-year core grant 2022-24 was achieved. The collaboration with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs continued for two projects in 2021. And funding from one new government donor, USAID, was secured for 2022-26. Furthermore, Novo Nordisk Foundation provided a new project grant for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) work in Lebanon. IRCT also received project funds from the European Commission as well as Danish foundations and individual supporters. IRCT members provided funding to the organisation through membership contributions; 68% of the members contributed over 60,000 EUR. These funds were allocated to cover governance costs, to the new emergency grant scheme for members in crisis situations, and to the Torture Journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRCT Financial Results 2021</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income statement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted grants</td>
<td>1,369,378</td>
<td>1,368,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted grants</td>
<td>353,614</td>
<td>446,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancies income</td>
<td>15,143</td>
<td>1,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>1,738,135</td>
<td>1,816,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>-1,682,185</td>
<td>-1,752,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profit/loss for the year</strong></td>
<td>55,950</td>
<td>63,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core capital</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted funds</td>
<td>365,000</td>
<td>1,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained earnings</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In total</strong></td>
<td>310,890</td>
<td>366,840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IRCT ANNUAL REPORT 2021
## Income

### UNRESTRICTED GRANTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National governments</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark: Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>1,115,709</td>
<td>1,102,269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark: SKAT VAT reimbursement</td>
<td>3,126</td>
<td>2,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark: Ministry of Culture</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7098</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other (Organisations and individuals)</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigrid Rausing Trust</td>
<td>120,847</td>
<td>91,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be Thou My Vision Foundation</td>
<td>28,899</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conrad N. Hilton Foundation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>92,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish trusts and foundations</td>
<td>26,882</td>
<td>13,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership contributions</td>
<td>19,970</td>
<td>49,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals: Soona Brown</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals: Residents Denmark and EU</td>
<td>6,536</td>
<td>6,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals: Residents elsewhere</td>
<td>2,409</td>
<td>2,355</td>
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### RESTRICTED GRANTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National governments</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (subgrants)</td>
<td>104,379</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss: Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Global Indicator”</td>
<td>37,860</td>
<td>11,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss: Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Belarus”</td>
<td>13,807</td>
<td>6,193</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multilateral institutions: European Commission</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBSS: “Country Based Support Scheme”</td>
<td>5,704</td>
<td>37,301</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other (Organisations and Individuals)</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigrid Rausing Trust</td>
<td>19,992</td>
<td>317,694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Torture Support Foundation</td>
<td>100,835</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novo Nordisk Fonden</td>
<td>21,009</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalt Fokus</td>
<td>8,589</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership contributions</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSVR: Contribution</td>
<td>8,285</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCT: Contribution</td>
<td>2,367</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICHHR: Contribution</td>
<td>39,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention Against Torture Initiative</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustinus Fonden</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conrad N. Hilton Prize Coalition: “Fellowship”</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Income**: 1,369,378 1,368,099

## Expenditure

### Global Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Non-Salary</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRCT Standards</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Standard Setting &amp; Accountability</td>
<td>116,294</td>
<td>207,005</td>
<td>82,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Global Standards**: 116,294 207,005

### Global Monitoring & Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Non-Salary</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Data</td>
<td>5,877</td>
<td>8,026</td>
<td>41,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Indicators</td>
<td>12,455</td>
<td>78,363</td>
<td>26,043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Global Monitoring & Evaluation**: 18,332 86,389

### Global Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Non-Salary</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared online platform &amp; Toolbox</td>
<td>59,529</td>
<td>42,477</td>
<td>98,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torture Journal</td>
<td>34,674</td>
<td>68,237</td>
<td>39,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symposium &amp; General Assembly 2020</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18,690</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Global Knowledge**: 94,203 110,714

### Note 6: Global Finance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Non-Salary</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRCT Strategy Funding</td>
<td>65,005</td>
<td>37,024</td>
<td>32,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Finance Facilitation</td>
<td>45,386</td>
<td>193,588</td>
<td>15,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector Finance</td>
<td>2,937</td>
<td>1,052</td>
<td>1,287</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Note 6: Global Finance**: 113,328 231,664

### Note 7: Well-run Organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Non-Salary</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership &amp; Governance</td>
<td>52,634</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>119,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication &amp; Branding</td>
<td>62,490</td>
<td>20,934</td>
<td>51,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>31,946</td>
<td>1,393</td>
<td>27,159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Note 7: Well-run Organisation**: 147,070 22,793

### Note 8: Common Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Non-Salary</th>
<th>2021 (EUR)</th>
<th>2020 (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership &amp; Management</td>
<td>36,186</td>
<td>18,606</td>
<td>53,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Administration</td>
<td>88,746</td>
<td>47905</td>
<td>73,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/Communication Systems</td>
<td>17,105</td>
<td>96,702</td>
<td>33,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>50,531</td>
<td>18,735</td>
<td>15,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Costs</td>
<td>7935</td>
<td>151,942</td>
<td>10,648</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Note 8: Common Costs**: 200,503 333,890

**Total Expenditure**: 353,614 446,163
9. Our Donors

- Special thanks for the extraordinary contribution from Australian members OSSTT and STARTTS to Torture Journal.
- Thank you to all our private supporters, and a special thank you to Soona and Edward Brown.
- Thank you to all IRCT members who have contributed financially in 2021.
- Thank you to everyone who contributed who contributed their work pro bono.

10. Democratic Structure

Governance

The democratic base of the IRCT’s governance is the General Assembly, which decides the policy and strategy of the organisation. Each member has one delegate and one voice at the General Assembly. It is the forum through which members facilitate and advance their joint global work in the fight against torture. The General Assembly meets every three years, online or in person (and more frequently if relevant) and elects the Council.

The Council provides regional and thematic input to IRCT’s Strategy. It holds annual online meetings to monitor and further the progress of IRCT’s work at the global level and in the regions. The Council comprises 19 members: 14 representatives from the member organisations, of which seven form the Executive Committee and seven act as regional representatives; in addition, five thematic advisors provide input in key areas such as communication, research and resources.

The Executive Committee is the board of the IRCT. It ensures the overall direction, compliance and accountability of the organisation and appoints the Secretary General. The Executive Committee comprises seven members, one from each region, including President and Vice-President, who are elected by and from among the Council members. The Executive Committee meets online a minimum of three times per year, but usually once per month.

Finally, the Secretariat, based in Copenhagen, Denmark, with a liaison office in Brussels, Belgium, coordinates and directs membership engagement for achieving our strategic goals and leads the organisation’s global anti-torture advocacy efforts. This includes coordinating global actions and learning exchanges, providing legal and advocacy expertise to members, intervening in strategic cases and policy processes, and advocating to increase the resources and funding available to members, the Secretariat, and others in the sector.

Members

Every IRCT member provides rehabilitation to torture survivors and conducts advocacy against torture. Through the IRCT network, members exchange knowledge and experience and provide support to each other, especially in the face of political attack due to their human rights work. In particular, members develop and share new rehabilitation techniques; explore solutions to similar challenges with others from around the globe; and collect data and documentation to strengthen national and international reporting and advocacy efforts. Not least, they contribute with member fees to support the network.

Advisory Boards

The work of the IRCT Secretariat is supported by a network of esteemed health, legal and human rights experts who contribute their time pro bono to advise and support our approaches and activities. These experts sit on IRCT advisory boards and help to strengthen our work in the areas of communications, compliance, health, research, and resources.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ms Lela Tsiskarishvili  
IRCT President Executive Director, GCRT, Georgia

Mr Cristian Urbalejo  
IRCT Vice President Executive co-coordinator, CCTI, Mexico

Ms Kathi Anderson  
Executive Director, Survivors of Torture, International, United States

Mr Khader Rasras  
Clinical Psychologist, TRC, Palestine

Ms Robyn Smythe  
Director, STTARS, Australia

Mr Peter Kum Che Mebeng  
Executive Director, The Trauma Centre, Cameroon

Ms Khalida Salimi OBE,  
Founder, SACH - Struggle for Change

Elected by the Asia Region:

Mr Suraj Koirala  
Regional representative Technical Advisor, TPO, Nepal

Mr Debabrata Roy Laifungbam  
Executive Committee

Elected by the Europe Region:

Mr Metin Bakkalci  
Regional representative Secretary General, HRFT, Turkey

Ms Lela Tsiskarishvili  
Executive Committee

Elected by the Latin America and the Caribbean Region:

Ms Angelina Ospina  
Regional Representative Director, CAPS, Colombia

Mr Cristian Urbalejo Luna,  
Executive Committee

Elected by the Middle East and North Africa Region:

Ms Suzanne Jabbour  
Regional Representative Chief Executive Officer, RESART, Lebanon

Mr Khader Rasras  
Executive Committee

Elected by the North America Region:

Ms Lin Piwowarczyk  
Regional Representative Director, Boston Center For Refugee Health And Human Rights, United States

Ms Kathi Anderson  
Executive Committee

Elected by the Pacific Region:

Mr Jorge Aroche  
Regional Representative CEO, STARTTS, Australia

Ms Robyn Smythe  
Executive Committee

Elected by the Sub-Saharan Africa Region:

Mr Taiga Wanyanja  
Regional Representative Counsellor and Coordinator, Mwatikho Torture Survivors, Kenya

Mr Peter Kum Che Mebeng  
Executive Committee

ADVISORY BOARD CONVENERS:

Ms Hana Hamzeh  
Communications

Mr Pradeep Agrawal  
Compliance

Mr Michael Brune  
Health

Ms Sebnem Korur Fincanci  
Research

Ms Mihiiri Ferdinando  
Resources and Sustainability

Members list

Asia

Bangladesh  
Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Survivors (CRTS)

Cambodia  
Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO)

China  
Justice Centre Hong Kong

India  
Jan Mitra Nyas/Peoples’ Vigilance Committee on Human Rights (PVCHR)

Shubhodaya Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Violence (SOSRAC)

Tibetan Torture Survivors Program (TTSP)

Vasavaya Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (VRCT)

Indonesia  
Alliance of Democracy for Papua (ALDP)

Rehabilitation Action for Torture Victims in Aceh (RATA)

Pakistan  
Human Development Organisation (HDO)

Struggle for Change (SACH)

Philippines  
Balay Rehabilitation Centre (BALAY)

Medical Action Group (MAG)

Republic of Korea  
Gwangju Trauma Centre

Kim Keun-Tae Memorial Healing Centre (KMHC)

Sri Lanka  
Family Rehabilitation Centre (FRC)

Europe

Albania  
Albanian Rehabilitation Centre for Trauma and Torture Victims (ARCT)

Armenia  
Foundation Against the Violation of Law (FAVL)

Austria  
Hemayat - Support centre for survivors of torture and war (HEMAYAT)

Intercultural Centre for Counselling and Psychotherapy (ZEBRA)

Malaysia  
Health Equity Initiatives (HEI)

Nepal  
Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT)

Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation Nepal (TPO)

Pakistan  
Human Development Organisation (HDO)

Struggle for Change (SACH)

Philippines  
Balay Rehabilitation Centre (BALAY)

Medical Action Group (MAG)

Republic of Korea  
Gwangju Trauma Centre

Kim Keun-Tae Memorial Healing Centre (KMHC)

Sri Lanka  
Family Rehabilitation Centre (FRC)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims - Jutland (RCT JUTLAND)</td>
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<td>Centre for Psychotraumatology</td>
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<td>Parcours d'Exil - Medical and Psychological Rehabilitation for Torture Victims (PARCOURS)</td>
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<td>Georgian Centre for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (GCRT)</td>
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<td>Doctors Against Torture Humanitarian Organisation (MCT)</td>
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<td>Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims Memoria (RCTV Memoria)</td>
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<td>De Evenaar, Centrum voor Transculturele Psychiatrie Noord Nederland</td>
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<td>The Centre for Victims of Political Persecution (CVPP)</td>
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<td>Committee Against Torture (CPT)</td>
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<td>International Aid Network, IAN, Centre for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (IAN CRTL)</td>
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<td>Comisió Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR)</td>
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<td>Consultation for Victims of Torture and War (CTG)</td>
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<td>International Medical Rehabilitation Centre for the Victims of Wars and Totalitarian Regimes (IRC)</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Freedom from Torture (FFT)</td>
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<td>Latin America</td>
<td>Room to Heal</td>
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<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Argentine Team of Psychosocial Work and Research (EATIP)</td>
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<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>Institute of Therapy and Research about Sequelae of Torture and State Violence (ITEI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Centre for Mental Health and Human Rights (CINTRAS)</td>
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<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Centre of Psychological Assistance Corporation (CAPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Foundation for Integral Rehabilitation of Violence (PRIVA)</td>
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<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Assocació Equipo de Estudios Comunitarios y Accion Psicosocial (ECAP)</td>
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<td>Human Rights Office of the Archbishop of Guatemala (ODHAG)</td>
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</table>
**Honduras**
Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre for Survivors of Torture and Relatives (CPTRT)

**Mexico**
Collective Against Torture and Impunity (CCTI)
Mexican Commission for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH)

**Peru**
Centro de Atencion Psycosocial (CAPS)

**Middle East and North Africa**

**Egypt**
El Nadeem Centre for Psychological Management and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence

**Iran**
Organisation for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV)

**Iraq**
Bahjat Al-Fuad Rehabilitation of Medical and Psychological Centre for Torture Victims (BFRCT)

**Jordan**
Institute for Family Health - Noor Al Hussein Foundation (IFH)

**Lebanon**
Association Justice and Mercy (AJEM)
Khiam Rehabilitation Centre of the Victims of Torture (KRC)

**North America**

**Canada**
Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)
Intervention Network for Persons Having Been Subjected to Organised Violence (RIVO)
Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST)

**United States**
Access - Psychosocial Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture (APRCVT)
Bellevue - NYU Programme for Survivors of Torture (PSOT)
Bilingual International Assistant Services (BIAS)

**Boston**
Boston Centre for Refugee Health and Human Rights (BCRHR)
Centre for Survivors of Torture, Dallas (CST)
Centre for Survivors of Torture, San José (AACI/CST)
De Novo Centre for Justice and Healing (DENNOVO)
Florida Centre for Survivors of Torture (FCST (JFCS)
Heartland Alliance Marjorie Kovler Centre
Libertas Centre for Human Rights
Mount Sinai Human Rights Programme (MSHRP)
Programme for Survivors of Torture at the Multicultural Centre of Northern Virginia Family Service (PSTT)
Program for Torture Victims of Los Angeles (PTVLA)
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The Centre for Victims of Torture (CVT)
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Western New York Centre for Survivors of Torture (WNYCST)

**Sub Saharan Africa**

**Burundi**
Solidarité d’Action pour la Paix - Grand Lacs (SAP-GL)

**Cameroon**
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Trauma Centre Cameroon (TCC)

**Chad**
Association Jeunesse Pour la Paix et la Non Violence (AJPNV)

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Trauma Centre Cameroon (TCC)

**Chad**
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Democratic Republic of Congo
Amis des Victimes des Violations des Droits Humains (AVVDH)
Centre Mater Misericordiae (CMM)
Fédération des Femmes pour le Développement Intégral au Congo (FEDICONGO)
Regroupement des Mamans de Kamituga (REMAK)
Solidarité avec des Victime et pour la Paix (SOVIP)
Women and Children Protection (WCP)

Uganda
African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV)

Zimbabwe
Counselling Services Unit (CSU)
Tree of Life Trust (ToL)

Kenya
Centre Against Torture Kenya Foundation (CAT)
Independent Medico Legal Unit (IMLU)
Mwatikho Torture Survivors Foundation (MATESOF)

Liberia
Association of Psychosocial Services (LAPS)
Rescue Alternatives Liberia (RAL)

Nigeria
Prisoners’ Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA)

Rwanda
Uyisenga Ni Imanzi (UNM)

Senegal
Centre Africain pour la Prévention et la Résolution des Conflits (CAPREC)

Sierra Leone
Community Association for Psychosocial Services (CAPS)

South Africa
Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV)

The Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture (TCSVT)

12. Support the IRCT

When it comes to torture rehabilitation, sadly, demand always outstrips supply. IRCT members consistently report not having the financial resources necessary to treat all torture survivors who ask for help. By donating, even a small sum, you can assist us in the fight to eradicate torture and to provide the best possible rehabilitation to more survivors and their families.

By Credit Card
Please visit www.irct.org to make a donation using a credit card. All transactions are guaranteed safe and secure using the latest encryption to protect your personal information.

By Mobile Pay
(In Denmark)

By Cheque
Cheques made payable to International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) may be sent to:

International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims
Fælledvej 12,
Globalhagen House,
Building C, 2nd floor,
2200 Copenhagen N,
Denmark

By Bank Transfer
Danske Bank
Holmens Kanal Branch,
Holmens Kanal 2,
1090 Copenhagen K,
Denmark
SWIFT code: DABADKKK

Danish Kroner (DKK) Account
Registration No. 4183
Account No. 4310-821152
IBAN DK90 3000 4310 8211 52

Euro (EUR) Account
Registration No. 4183
Account No. 3001-957171
IBAN DK69 3000 3001 9571 71

U.S. Dollars (USD) Account
Registration No. 4183
Account No. 4310-005029
IBAN DK18 3000 4310 0050 29