



2 YEARS OF SURVIVOR-CENTRED IMPACT

2023-2026



**Global Initiative
Against Impunity**

Making Justice Work



CONTENTS

- 5** | GIAI AT A GLANCE
- 7** | RESULTS AT A GLANCE
- 8** | OUR FIVE PRIORITIES
- 9** | HOW WE WORK
- 10** | VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION
- 12** | COMBATTING IMMUNITIES AND NON-COOPERATION
- 14** | GENDER JUSTICE WORK
- 16** | UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION
- 18** | UPHOLDING AND STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE
- 20** | THE POWER OF INTERWEAVING CONNECTIONS: FSTPS
- 21** | KNOWLEDGE SHARING
- 22** | THE WORK AHEAD

International justice is at an inflection point. The past years have seen historic accountability advances; yet the international justice system is also under unprecedented political pressure, with deliberate efforts to undermine its legitimacy and operational capacity.

Justice for the gravest crimes is rarely quick. Survivors may wait decades to be heard. Evidence can take years to reach a courtroom. A change in law or political will can suddenly open a path to accountability, or close one.

This is the difficult terrain in which the Global Initiative Against Impunity (GIAI) works. Since December 2023, nine civil society organisations, 46 local partners worldwide, and two associate partners have combined survivor support, legal action, documentation, advocacy and institutional engagement to help keep routes to justice open, and, where possible, move them forward.

Bringing together complementary mandates, we operate as a unified initiative across 28 priority country situations worldwide.

This illustrated impact report captures the implementation of GIAI from December 2023 to May 2026. It highlights achievements across five thematic areas, shows how different types of support have combined to advance accountability, and explores the foundations the programme has laid for lasting impact.



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GIAI AT A GLANCE

An alliance with a joint purpose

GIAI brings together civil society organisations working at different points in the justice process, with survivors, in courtrooms, with investigators and prosecutors, with parliamentarians and with international institutions. Our value lies in connecting these different spaces and forms of expertise when a case, policy opportunity or crisis requires it. Together, we cover the spectrum of what accountability for international crimes requires. The comprehensive approach we take towards justice and accountability places survivors as agents of change.

THE NINE CORE MEMBERS ARE:



Civil Rights Defenders (CRD) is a politically and religiously independent human rights organisation that partners with and supports human rights defenders working in some of the world's most repressive regions.



Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC) is a global civil society network of member organisations in 150 countries, fighting for global justice for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.



European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) is an independent, non-profit legal and educational organisation dedicated to enforcing civil and human rights worldwide through legal means.



FIDH is an international human rights NGO federating nearly 200 member organisations from 120 countries. Since 1922, FIDH has been defending all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Impunity Watch (IW) works with victims, survivors and communities affected by violence to transform deeply ingrained structures of impunity, deliver redress for grave human rights violations, and promote justice and peace.



Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is a multi-party, global network of legislators advocating for human rights, democracy and the rule of law; peace and human security; gender equality and inclusion; environmental protection; and justice.



Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors

REDRESS seeks justice and reparation for survivors of torture, challenges impunity for perpetrators, and advocates for legal and policy reforms to combat torture, addressing torture as an individual crime under domestic and international law, a civil wrong giving rise to individual responsibility, and a human rights violation engaging state responsibility.



TRIAL International is a non-governmental organization fighting impunity for international crimes and supporting victims in their quest for justice.



Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice (WIGJ) is an international feminist organisation working to advance gender justice through the law, with a particular focus on international criminal law and accountability for gender-based harm

ASSOCIATE PARTNERS:



Co-funded by the European Union under the NDICI-Global Europe. GIAI runs from December 2023 to November 2027.



Source: © ECCHR. Andreas Schüller presenting lessons learned from Germany at a conference on the prosecution of international crimes in the Danish parliament on 27 November 2025, Copenhagen, Denmark

Our Objectives

The initiative pursues two mutually reinforcing strategic objectives:



PEOPLE:

Victims, survivors and civil society have the support, tools and access needed to participate safely and meaningfully in justice processes



"Survivors spoke publicly to leaders for the first time, reducing stigma and opening reporting pathways"

Local community-based organisation from DRC



SYSTEMS:

Legal frameworks, justice institutions, and practices are strengthened through sustained civil society engagement with decision-makers



"This verdict is historic. For the first time, a national court has dared to confront the atrocities of the Second Congo War and show that justice can break through even after decades of impunity. Today the Court made one thing unmistakably clear: architects of mass violence will be held to account. Neither time nor political power will shield them."

Daniele Perissi, TRIAL International

THE TWO OBJECTIVES ARE COMPLEMENTARY.

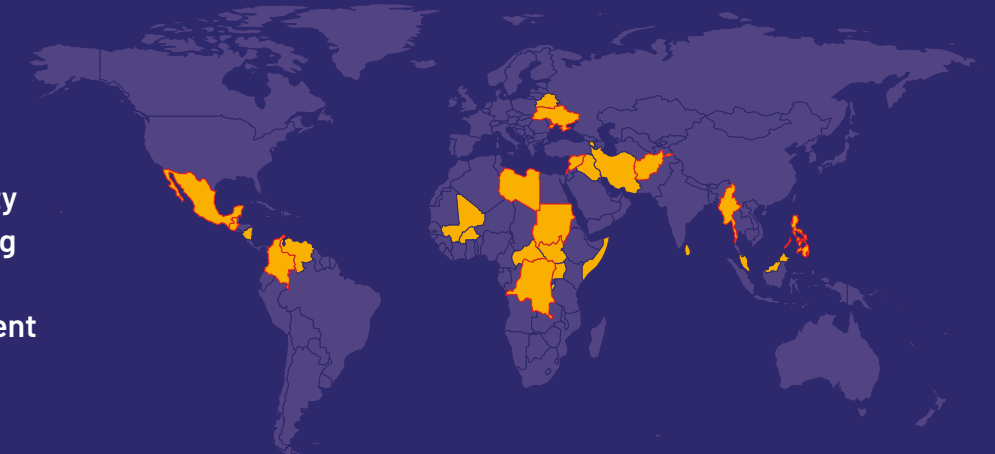
Justice works when the people most affected by violations are able to participate meaningfully in shaping it, and when justice and accountability institutions are able and willing to respond to that participation.

Victim and civil society engagement can influence how justice is understood, pursued and delivered; at the same time, meaningful participation requires institutions and accountability mechanisms capable of translating that engagement into changes in policy, law and practice. GIAI works on both dimensions, connecting survivor and civil society participation with efforts to strengthen the institutions responsible for delivering justice.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Geographic Reach

GIAI works across 28 priority country situations, including 12 target countries where coordination and engagement are more intensive.



12 target countries
out of 28 priority country situations

- Afghanistan
- Armenia
- Belarus
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Central African Republic
- Colombia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Gambia
- Guatemala
- Iran
- Iraq
- Libya
- Malaysia
- Mali
- Mexico
- Myanmar
- Nicaragua
- Palestine
- Philippines
- Somalia (incl. Somaliland)
- South Sudan
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Syria
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- Venezuela

Two Years in Numbers

1,000+

people received legal support

990

serious human rights violation cases were documented in Year 2

1,100+

people received non-legal support

50+

complaints and communications were submitted

16

laws, policies or measures were developed or revised with civil society engagement

180+

local CSOs engaged in the programme; 30% were outside existing GIAI partner networks

50+

civil society recommendations were subsequently endorsed by decision-makers

OUR FIVE PRIORITIES

GIAI's substantive work is organised around five interconnected priority areas. Each reflects a distinct challenge in the global fight against impunity, and a domain where sustained civil society action can shift outcomes.

VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION 1

GIAI works to ensure that victims and survivors are active participants in justice processes that affects them. This spans legal representation and case-building, psychosocial support that makes engagement safe and sustainable, and influence over the policies and institutions that shape access to justice.

IMMUNITY AND NON-COOPERATION 2

GIAI challenges the impunity that flows from state and official immunities, non-cooperation with international mechanisms, and deliberate obstruction of justice processes. Members engage through strategic litigation, amicus briefs in landmark cases, and coordinated advocacy to prevent immunities from being used as shields for perpetrators of international crimes, to denounce non-cooperation by States with the International Criminal Court (ICC), and to encourage compliance with such requests.

UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION 3

GIAI advances the use of universal jurisdiction: the ability of national courts to prosecute international crimes regardless of where those crimes were committed. GIAI monitors cases globally, supports practitioners, tracks suspects across borders, and builds the legal arguments and evidence base that help develop this area of law.

GENDER JUSTICE 4

Gender justice is both a cross-cutting principle across all of GIAI's work and a dedicated area of focus, ensuring that gendered harms are systematically documented, that survivors of gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual and reproductive violence receive appropriate support to participate in justice processes, and that accountability frameworks address these violations properly.

UPHOLDING AND STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE 5

GIAI supports the legal and institutional foundations of the international justice system, including the ICC, the Rome Statute framework, transitional justice mechanisms, and multilateral accountability instruments, through legislative support, parliamentary engagement, strategic advocacy, and efforts to advance new instruments.

HOW WE WORK

Accountability rarely moves through one intervention alone. A legal case may depend on documentation, survivor protection and trauma-informed care; a policy reform may require research, advocacy and sustained access to decision-makers. GIAI combines these forms of support according to the justice pathway involved.



Psychosocial and non-legal support

trauma-informed care, security support, relocation, medical and psychosocial aid, and livelihood assistance



Capacity building

training practitioners, mentoring lawyers, and strengthening local organisations and survivor communities



Advocacy, policy and legislative engagement

tengaging decision-makers at national, regional, and global levels to advance accountability frameworks



Knowledge sharing and coordination

the makingjusticework.org platform, TRIAL International's resources on universal jurisdiction, thematic working groups, joint publications, and practitioner networks



Legal representation and strategic litigation

case representation, complaints filing, and legal arguments that shift accountability norms



Documenting and investigating violations

case documentation, fact-finding, and analytical products that support proceedings and advocacy



Financial support to third parties (FSTP)

grants to local CSOs and survivor groups, extending the programme's reach into highly restrictive environments

1,050+

people received legal support and

1,100+

received non-legal support, from psychosocial and medical care to security, translation, relocation and livelihood assistance.

50+

complaints and communications were submitted to human rights mechanisms and institutions, with 22 referred cases moving forward into investigations by public authorities.

100+

are members of the strengthened Victims' Rights Working Group. The members create more regular routes for victim's rights and participation to reach international justice debates

WHAT IS CHANGING



- Survivors are better supported to remain actively involved in long justice processes.
- Cases and submissions are moving from documentation and complaint into formal investigative pathways.
- Victim organisations have gained more regular routes into institutional debate, including at the ICC.



Source: ©Impunity Watch. Doña Paulina Ixpatá Alvarado, a Maya Achi survivor from Guatemala, gathers with other survivors in front of the Palace of Justice in Guatemala in January 2025.

VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION

By placing survivors at the centre, of support, GIAI ensures that victims are treated as agents of change, with voice and agency: testifying, shaping proceedings, influencing institutions, and gaining recognition, as well as being supported.

From support to power

For victims and survivors of serious human rights violations, justice has varied meanings, and is rarely limited to a court case. It is a personal process that can be empowering with the right support provided at the right time. Obstacles such as fear, trauma, displacement, stigma, financial hardship, physical and security barriers, and repeated contacts with sometimes distant and disconnected justice actors can be overcome with holistic support.

This integrated support matters because participation in justice requires more than legal advice. Survivors need to be safe enough, informed enough, and supported enough to use their voice.

CASE STUDIES



Source: ©TRIAL International. Witnesses in the trial of Michael Correa and their legal representatives in front of the Alfred A. Arraj United States Courthouse in Denver, after the announcement of the decision of the jury on 15 April 2025



Michael Correa trial: Support for victims

TRIAL International provided financial and logistical support enabling survivors to attend the Michael Correa torture trial in Denver, United States. Their participation allowed them to give testimony directly before the court, showing how practical support can enable survivors to take part in proceedings and serve as a form of recognition for survivors when adequate support is in place.



Strengthening Victim-Centered ICC Practice: Duterte and Al-Hishri hearings

Through activities led by the Victims' Rights Working Group (VRWG) – coordinated by FIDH, REDRESS and CICC – around the Duterte hearings held at the ICC early 2026, Philippine civil society and victims' representatives secured direct engagement with relevant ICC actors, including the Registrar, Prosecutor's Office, Victims Participation and Reparations Section, and Victims and Witnesses Unit. This engagement brought victim-specific concerns around protection, communication, accessibility, and survivor-centred participation directly to the Court and informed practical recommendations to strengthen future ICC proceedings and better integrate victims' perspectives into Court practice. The subsequent lessons-learned process captured experiences and concerns identified during the hearings and translated them into practical recommendations for future proceedings.

Building on this experience, the VRWG applied lessons from the Philippines to its engagement around the Al-Hishri hearings in May 2026, undertaking a similar process of engagement with victims, civil society, and relevant Court actors. The process generated additional lessons learned and recommendations on accessibility, communication, protection, and meaningful victim engagement, further strengthening the evidence base for improving ICC practice and supporting more consistent, accessible, and survivor-centred proceedings.



Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): Recovery as part of justice

In Mwenga, DRC, a local organisation supported by GIAI provided medical, psychological or socio-economic assistance to 984 survivors. This included hospital treatment for serious violence-related injuries, 417 individual counselling sessions and livelihood support. The assistance helped survivors address urgent medical, psychological and economic needs, helping them to remain connected to justice efforts. For victims and survivors facing insecurity, displacement or reprisals, this kind of support makes their active participation to accountability processes possible.



Ukraine: Survivors Shaping Reparations and Advocacy

In October 2025, REDRESS and ULAG organised a three-day survivor forum in The Hague for Ukrainian survivors of torture, detention and conflict-related sexual violence, enabling them to engage directly with ICC bodies, reparation institutions, State representatives and civil society. The forum included a dignifying photo session and a survivor roundtable on REDRESS' draft Asset Repurposing Guidelines. It also led to a survivor-led statement urging States to sign and ratify the International Claims Commission Convention and expand its mandate to include victims of crimes committed before 2022. The event enabled the survivors to share their advocacy messages and concerns with decision makers, and bring information from those decision-makers and institutions back to their communities.

FSTP partners advancing survivor-led justice

FSTP partners created spaces in which survivors could shape justice, truth-telling and memorialisation.

- Burundi** | ALM-Buta and the women photographers of Rweze made survivors and families the primary narrators of a memorial archive, combining testimony, photography and psychosocial safeguards.
- Palestine** | A Palestinian organisation transformed extensive documentation of attacks and abuses in detention in Gaza and the occupied Palestinian territory into legally relevant case files, helping bring victims' experiences and evidence into accountability processes in European jurisdictions.
- The Gambia** | WAVE-Gambia created culturally grounded spaces in which more than 300 survivors, relatives and community members used storytelling, music and dance for truth-sharing and collective healing.
- DRC** | In Kazumba, CRIS DE LA FEMME brought survivors, community leaders and authorities together; one survivor's public testimony prompted a territorial administrator to open an investigation.

French Supreme Court (2025):

landmark ruling confirms that functional immunity does not shield state officials from prosecution for international crimes: aligning with legal arguments GIAI partners had advanced against functional immunity for international crimes.

International Law Commission (2025):

GIAI's joint submission on Draft Article 7 argued for a non-exhaustive list of crimes exempt from immunity. ILC's Commentary ultimately acknowledged the list's non-exhaustive character.

European Court of Human Rights (2024-2025):

REDRESS, FIDH, and TRIAL International intervened as third parties in *Ziada v. Netherlands*, a case testing whether immunity can block civil redress for international crimes.

Suspect tracking, immunities, and the ICC (2025):

GIAI and its partners shared practical guidance for practitioners tracking suspects of international crimes in a side-event to the 24th Assembly of States Parties (ASP). This event supported a community of practice on these topics, and strengthened court and States commitments towards making ICC arrest warrants effective.

WHAT IS CHANGING



- Legal positions advanced by GIAI members for years are increasingly entering jurisprudence and formal law-making processes.
- GIAI's legal analysis is formally on the record in proceedings in different forums, and in the International Law Commission's (ILC) drafting process, not just in advocacy statements.
- Civil society is naming the sanctions and departures strategy as designed to divide, and responding with coordinated, public solidarity.
- Practitioners across CSOs, national authorities and international bodies have stronger shared tools for safely tracking suspects of international crimes.



^ ©ECCHR. Panellists Joumana Seif, Ahmad Helmi, Lubna Al Kanawati, Mouna Khalit and Olivia Dehnavi sharing recommendations on supporting justice and reconciliation in Syria on 16 October 2025, Brussels, Belgium

COMBATTING IMMUNITIES AND NON-COOPERATION

Immunity and non-cooperation are two sides of the same barrier. Claims of immunity for alleged perpetrators of mass atrocities let individual officials escape prosecution; non-cooperation lets states escape enforcement altogether, refusing to execute arrest warrants, or walking away from the Rome Statute system entirely. Both weaken accountability at its foundation, GIAI responded to that through strategic and sustained action based on collective legal and policy expertise.

Confronting immunity in the courts and in the law

In 2025, GIAI argued before the International Law Commission that the list of crimes exempted from immunity in Draft Article 7 should not be treated as exhaustive. The final Commentary recognised the list's non-exhaustive character, a step in the direction GIAI argued for.

CASE STUDIES



A French court draws a line on functional immunity, and where the line still doesn't reach

In July 2025, France's Court of Cassation established an important precedent for the prosecution of international crimes. In the case of Adib Mayaleh, former Governor of the Central Bank of **Syria**, the Court ruled that foreign state officials cannot invoke functional immunity to prevent prosecution for crimes against humanity and war crimes. FIDH and the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression, which were civil parties in the proceedings, had argued for this interpretation.

But the ruling also showed the limits of such progress. On the same day, the Court annulled the arrest warrant against Bashar al-Assad, finding that personal immunity applied because he was a serving head of state when the warrant was issued. The court drew a clear distinction: functional immunity cannot shield officials from prosecution for these crimes before French courts, while personal immunity continues to apply to serving foreign heads of state

Together, the rulings illustrate an important feature of GIAI's work on accountability: legal change is often incremental. Progress depends not only on achieving individual legal victories, but on continuing to expand the boundaries of accountability through litigation, advocacy and engagement with justice institutions.

GIAI members also brought legal arguments on immunity into proceedings before the ICC, European and national courts, helping place civil society analysis formally on the record across several forums.

REDRESS and ECCHR joined a coalition led by the Open Society Justice Initiative, alongside Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, opposing the UK's attempt to challenge ICC jurisdiction over the Netanyahu arrest warrant; a follow-up letter from REDRESS, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International preceded the UK's withdrawal of that submission. REDRESS filed a brief in Poland on the customary-law exception to functional immunity in a case concerning **Palestine**.



Standing against non-cooperation

Immunity claims are not the only way states avoid accountability, some simply stop cooperating, or (threaten to) leave the system. In 2025, several states announced plans to leave the Rome Statute system. GIAI members responded through coordinated public and parliamentary advocacy. In Hungary, PGA briefed parliamentarians and mobilised engagement across EU member states; references to the ICC and Rome Statute were subsequently included in a European Parliament resolution. GIAI members also used the 2025 Assembly of States Parties to release a study, Ending Immunity. Ending Impunity: Advancing Accountability for Heads of State at the International Criminal Court, around the protection of the Court².



Strengthening Safe Suspect-Tracking

In February 2026, REDRESS published a guidance note developed with input from civil society, practitioners, the ICC, Eurojust and other actors, and shared it through GIAI networks. Its preliminary findings were presented at a side event at the ICC's 24th ASP, sharing good practice and risks involved in tracking suspects of international crimes.

² On May 2026, Hungary withdrew its prior notice of exit, ensuring its continued membership in the ICC.

FSTP partners strengthening the enforcement chain

While not working directly on combating immunities, FSTP partners generated evidence needed for investigations and enforcement.

■ **Syria** | Massar Families digitised more than 1100 testimonies and produced investigation files for legal follow-up and engagement with the UN's International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism.

■ **Ukraine** | Mnemonic submitted an evidence package to Dutch law enforcement and strengthened cooperation with **Ukraine's** Office of the Prosecutor General concerning the use of archived material.

GIAI supported gender responsive justice work

across litigation, survivor support, documentation and policy influence, helping make gender-based violations more visible in accountability processes.

Gender considerations were reflected in complaints and communications

with several submissions including gender-based crimes, conflict related sexual violence, violations of women's rights and gendered impacts of serious human rights violations.

At least

55%
of victims and survivors

who received legal and non-legal assistance,

are women and girls,

including survivors of gender-based crimes, Indigenous women, women political prisoners and displaced women affected by conflict.

WHAT IS CHANGING



GIAI's gender justice work is showing impact in the following ways:

- Gendered harms that account for a broad spectrum of crimes and violations -beyond conflict-related sexual violence - are becoming more visible in legal submissions, documentation and public accountability work.
- Survivors of gender-based violations are receiving safer, more holistic support to participate in justice processes.
- Gender justice priorities are influencing laws, policies, recommendations, and institutional engagement.



Source: ©Impunity Watch. Maya Achi survivors celebrate another win as Guatemalan courts prosecute three additional perpetrators for crimes against humanity and sexual violence in a second trial in May 2025, Guatemala City, Guatemala

GENDER JUSTICE WORK

Making gendered harms visible in justice processes

GIAI helped bring gender-based violations into legal, policy and documentation work across several contexts. Complaints and communications included gender-based violence elements, including conflict-related sexual and reproductive violence, serious violations of women's rights and the gendered impacts of international crimes.

Cases and submissions with gender justice dimensions included work linked to **Mexico** and **Sudan**, GBV related legal support in The **Gambia**, conflict related sexual violence in **Guatemala**, women political prisoners in **Belarus**, and documentation of gender-based crimes and gendered impacts in **Sudan**, DRC, **Palestine**, **Ukraine**, **Syria** and other contexts.

In **Ukraine**, WIGJ provided case-based mentoring to four lawyers on applying international conflict-related sexual violence standards. One participating lawyer subsequently achieved a successful conviction, showing how tailored technical support can translate into courtroom practice.

The programme also strengthened the evidence base for gender responsive accountability. Gender considerations were integrated into documentation and research on conflict related sexual violence, reproductive violence, attacks on civilians, violations affecting pregnant women and nursing mothers, gender-based crimes survivors, LGBTQIA+ persons, women human rights defenders, and the gendered consequences of displacement, detention, loss of livelihoods and disruption of courts and essential services.

Building a stronger gender justice community

GIAI also contributed to global agenda setting and peer learning on gender justice in international criminal law. Organised by WIGJ, the 2025 Gender Justice and International Criminal Law Conference attracted around 1,400 registrations, with approximately 400 participants taking part in person and online. It created space for high quality exchange on gender justice in international criminal law, with dedicated attention to the MENA region and panels on **Syria** and **Palestine**. It also featured activists from GIAI priority countries, including **Syria**, **Afghanistan**, **Uganda**, **Iraq**, **Colombia**, **Ukraine**, and **Guatemala**. More than 80% reported strengthened collaboration, knowledge sharing or engagement with gender justice issues.



Source: ©WIGJ Gender Justice in International Criminal Law Conference, 29-30 September 2025, The Hague, Netherlands.

CASE STUDIES



Recognition for Maya Achi women in Guatemala

In **Guatemala**, Impunity Watch support contributed to the long struggle of Maya Achi women survivors of conflict related sexual violence. In May 2025, a court convicted **three former members of the Civil Self Defence Patrols** for crimes against humanity and sexual violence committed against Maya Achi women between 1981 and 1983.

The court sentenced each perpetrator to **40 years in prison** and ordered **19 reparation measures**, including health and psychosocial care, education programmes, public recognition, land related measures and memorialisation.

For survivors, the impact was not only legal. It was also personal and collective. Not only did the survivors have their testimonies validated in a court of law, their leadership and mobilisation shattered decades of social stigma, racial discrimination, and institutional silence on the internal armed conflict.

FSTP partners advancing survivor-led justice

FSTP partners created spaces in which survivors could shape justice, truth-telling and memorialisation.

■ **Sudan** | Sudanese Women Rights Action trained women-led groups to document violations, including conflict-related sexual violence, and submitted nine research products to international and regional mechanisms and decision-makers.

■ **South Sudan** | Women Initiative For Development Organization strengthened survivor-centred SGBV response among staff, justice actors and community leaders, supported cases transferred to mobile courts, and convened dialogue that contributed to commitments on GBV focal points, referrals and psycho-social support.

■ **Zambia** | Paralegal Alliance Network trained paralegals on GBV laws and procedures.

■ **Turkey** | MAY 17 established platforms for documenting violations against LGBTI+ people.

UJAR 2025 documented 36 new cases and 27 convictions worldwide.

across litigation, survivor support, documentation and policy influence, helping make gender-based violations more visible in accountability processes.

GIAI partners monitored 31 emblematic cases and situations

tracking developments relevant to accountability practice and advocacy.

Roger Lumbala was sentenced to 30 years

by a Paris court in December 2025 in the first French universal jurisdiction case related to events in the DRC. The case was also supported by TRIAL International and Impunity Watch.

GIAI sits on the steering committee of the EU Genocide Prosecution Network's

«National Authorities Against Impunity» project – an initiative EUGPN staff describe as having emerged «directly as a result from GIAI.»

WHAT IS CHANGING



- Practitioners have a stronger shared evidence base on how universal jurisdiction is used worldwide.
- Cooperation between civil society and specialised authorities has become more regular.
- GIAI-supported cases are showing both the possibilities and limits of universal jurisdiction – from convictions such as Lumbala and Nema to long-running proceedings where justice and redress remain unresolved.
- Affected communities are being connected more deliberately to proceedings taking place far from where crimes occurred.



UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION

When justice is blocked where crimes were committed, courts elsewhere can sometimes provide another route. Universal jurisdiction allows national authorities to investigate and prosecute international crimes committed abroad. GIAI supports the evidence, practitioners, institutional cooperation and legal frameworks that make such cases possible.

Giving practitioners the evidence they need

The 2025 Universal Jurisdiction Annual Review and Interactive Map brought cases, convictions and legal developments together in one place. The 2025 edition, supported largely through GIAI and produced by TRIAL International with partner organisations, documented 36 new cases and 27 convictions worldwide in 2024. A representative of the EU Genocide Prosecution Network described the resource during the independent mid-term review as “super helpful” and reported using it in training and advocacy.

GIAI channels the experience of universal jurisdiction cases into advocating for stronger international justice laws and policies. ECCHR has published the policy brief “Europe’s fight against Impunity for International Crimes” to outline how the EU, alongside Eurojust, Europol and other key players, can and should strengthen this architecture of universal jurisdiction within the EU.

GIAI also uses [experience from universal jurisdiction cases](#) to strengthen legal frameworks. In Poland, recommendations submitted by ECCHR were reflected in a December 2025 legislative proposal recognising the international interest in prosecuting international crimes.

GIAI is also helping turn accumulated experience into better practice. A study on cooperation between civil society and national authorities draws on interviews with almost 100 practitioners and institutional actors, including 30 authorities and 16 lawyers. Cooperation between civil society and specialised national and European authorities has also deepened, including through engagement with the EU Genocide Prosecution Network and civil society working groups.

CASE STUDIES



When a courtroom far away becomes part of local justice



Source: ©Augustin Guichot/TRIAL International, Roger Lumbala trial, 2025

In December 2025, a Paris court sentenced Roger Lumbala to 30 years in prison for complicity in crimes against humanity committed during the Second Congo War.

Impunity Watch and TRIAL International helped connect the proceedings with affected communities in DRC. Journalists from Ituri and North Kivu followed the trial and reported through radio and articles in locally accessible languages, allowing survivors and communities to follow proceedings taking place thousands of kilometres away.

The result was more than a conviction. It was a form of recognition. Survivors and communities could see that their suffering was being heard, documented, and validated in the eyes of the international community through accountability measures for perpetrators.



Testing corporate accountability: the Lundin Oil trial

In Sweden, Civil Rights Defenders has closely followed the long-running Lundin Oil trial, in which two former company executives face charges linked to alleged war crimes in what was then southern Sudan. A verdict is still pending.

CRD's reporting was subsequently taken up by Swedish and international media, including Swedish TV4, BBC and The Guardian, podcasts and independent journalists, expanding attention to the trial and to the barriers, threats and harassment reported by plaintiffs. CRD brought wider attention on the legal arguments and on the experiences of plaintiffs seeking justice far from home.



Testing new boundaries of accountability

Recent cases have expanded the range of crimes and perpetrators addressed through universal jurisdiction. In France, these include the [conviction of Majdi Nema](#) for complicity in the war crime of conscripting minors and the [conviction of Sabri ESSID](#) for genocide and crimes against humanity against Yazidi women and children.

Other proceedings supported by GIAI concern the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Together, these cases show national courts being asked to address an increasingly diverse range of perpetrators and crimes committed beyond their borders.

FSTP partners building cases across borders

FSTP partners connected locally held evidence and survivor testimony with proceedings outside the countries where violations occurred.

■ **Syria** | The Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression submitted 13 documented investigations and complaints to authorities in France, Sweden, Germany and Norway.

■ **Syria** | Syrians for Truth and Justice mapped Syrian victims and survivors and trained survivors and local CSOs on universal jurisdiction, international criminal law, ethical interviewing and data protection.

59 civil society recommendations

were subsequently endorsed by decision-makers.

GIAI supported national implementation of international justice commitments

including work linked to Rome Statute legislation in **Ukraine** and **Armenia**. recommendations on Rome Statute implementation, victims' policies and support to justice institutions.

GIAI members contributed to emerging international accountability frameworks,

including advocacy around the Ljubljana–The Hague Convention and the future Crimes Against Humanity Convention.

GIAI members led the advocacy efforts against US sanctions and their impact on the Rome Statute system

including advocacy for concrete support from state parties and the activation of the blocking statute.

GIAI members supported the participation of local NGOs, survivors and human rights defenders

at ICC hearings in the Duterte and El Hishri cases.

WHAT IS CHANGING



- International commitments are being translated into national law and practice.
- Civil society recommendations are reaching decision-makers and being taken up.
- Victims' rights are being carried into emerging international rules on cooperation, reparations and a future Crimes Against Humanity Convention.



^ Source: ©PGA. Special session on the review of the amendments on the crime of aggression of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on 7 July 2025.

UPHOLDING AND STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

As political pressure on the ICC intensified, GIAI members coordinated legal and political responses aimed at protecting cooperation with the Court and sustaining support for the Rome Statute system. International justice depends not only on prosecutions, but on states translating international commitments into national law, cooperating across borders and protecting the institutions responsible for accountability. GIAI works across this wider architecture, helping turn international commitments into practice while defending the system when political pressure and direct attacks threatens to weaken it.

From Commitment To Implementation

In **Ukraine**, Rome Statute accession entered into force on 1 January 2025. GIAI members supported civil society and parliamentary engagement around accession and subsequent implementation.

In **Armenia**, GIAI members supported work on implementing legislation and cooperation with the ICC following the country's 2023 ratification.

Across the programme, **59 civil society recommendations** were endorsed by decision-makers, while GIAI partners supported **12 ongoing legislative processes** linked to international criminal justice.

Helping Build The Rules That Make Accountability Possible

GIAI members contributed to emerging international cooperation frameworks. REDRESS participated in negotiations on the **Ljubljana–The Hague Convention**, advocating for strong provisions on victims' rights and reparations. GIAI members are also supporting civil society coordination ahead of negotiations on a future Crimes Against Humanity Convention.

Standing behind the ICC amid political pressure

As US sanctions against the ICC and actors supporting its work expanded in 2025–26, GIAI members coordinated public, legal and parliamentary responses. **CICC** documented the effects through **45 interviews**, creating an evidence base for targeted advocacy on protective measures. GIAI members also engaged European decision-makers on possible use of the EU Blocking Statute.

GIAI partners, including PGA, FIDH and CICC engaged European parliamentarians and EU interlocutors, calling for the activation and implementation of the **EU Blocking Statute** as a possible protection against the impact of sanctions on the ICC and civil society organisations. In parallel, GIAI members continued advocacy on the **crime of aggression**, including efforts to harmonise the Rome Statute's jurisdictional regime with those governing the Court's other core crimes.

CASE STUDIES



Advancing international justice in Africa

In November 2025, PGA brought together **22 parliamentarians from 15 African countries** in Nairobi with civil society and international justice experts to discuss Africa's role in international criminal justice. The dialogue produced a Plan of Action on Rome Statute ratification and implementation, cooperation with the ICC, gender-based violence and protection of human rights defenders. Follow-up included a motion in The **Gambia** and requests for legislative assistance from parliamentarians in Malawi and Zambia.



Syria: survivors shaping transitional justice institutions

Impunity Watch and Syrian partners brought together 22 representatives from 21 victim associations and CSOs to develop survivor-informed criteria for a future national commission on missing persons. The resulting policy paper was endorsed by 38 Syrian NGOs. When the Commission subsequently announced its 12-member Advisory Committee, half of its members were women and four had participated directly in the consultation process.

FSTP partners bringing local evidence into international processes

FSTP partners carried locally generated evidence and survivor priorities into national, regional and international forums.

■ **Sudan** | Sudanese Women Rights Action submitted research to bodies including OHCHR, the UN Human Rights Council, the **Sudan** Fact-Finding Mission and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

■ **Mexico** | Ideas documented 23 enforced-disappearance cases, contributed to the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances' review under Article 34 and submitted communications to the ICC and the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

■ **Libya** | A Libyan FSTP partner established a Victims' Rights Coalition and produced a survivor-centred shadow report to support engagement with the ICC.

■ **Ukraine** | Mnemonic contributed policy inputs to the Dialogue Group on Accountability for **Ukraine** and expert guidance to Ukrainian judges on assessing open-source evidence.

46

grassroots organisations directly supported since 2024.

705

people reached through Small Grants and the Emergency Fund during the reporting period: 426 women and 279 men.



Source: Collage prepared by Impunity Watch and Civil Rights Defenders joint booklet "Transitional Justice in Action", 2025

THE POWER OF INTERWEAVING CONNECTIONS: FSTPs

Some of GIAI's most locally grounded work is carried out by organisations outside the consortium. Financial Support to Third Parties gives local and grassroots organisations flexible resources to document violations, support survivors, pursue accountability and strengthen community-based approaches to justice.

Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP)

FSTP complements consortium legal and policy work with community-based approaches including survivor support, documentation, truth-telling, memorialisation, dialogue and mobilisation.



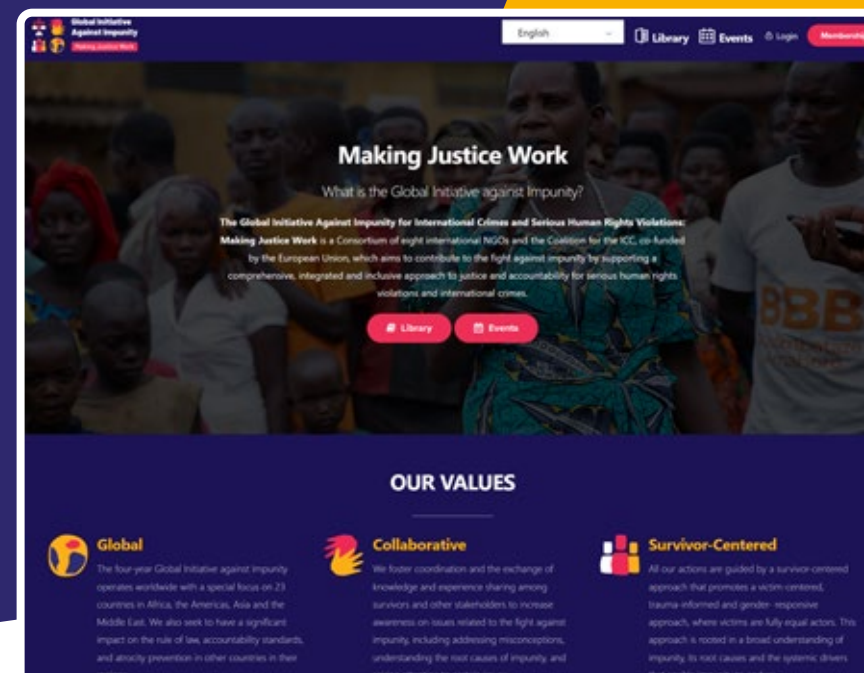
Burundi: survivor-led memorialisation and healing: In partnership with the survivor association ALM-Buta, the women photographers' collective Rweze documented the experiences of all 40 families affected by the 1997 Buta massacre through testimonies, portraits and personal objects. The resulting

Stories of Interrupted Lives archive transformed memorialisation into a process of collective healing, truth-telling and symbolic reparation, complementing Impunity Watch's wider transitional justice work.



The Gambia: connecting community dialogue with national transitional justice: WAVE-Gambia combined support to women affected by enforced disappearance with community and interfaith dialogue, documentation, rights awareness and engagement with the Ministry of Justice's Post-TRRC Unit. As a member of INOVAS, a victims' network convened by Impunity Watch, it helped connect survivor-led community processes with wider advocacy and implementation of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission's recommendations.

More information about how FSTP partners work on transitional justice



KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Launched in 2025, MakingJusticeWork.org is GIAI's knowledge management platform, a curated hub of legal, advocacy, media and GIAI-specific resources organised across four sections plus an events calendar, tagged for filtered search and available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

A leading Sudanese Human Rights Defender has described the platform's efforts to connect civil society, justice practitioners, and international institutions as "extremely valuable, particularly at this difficult time for Sudan."

LEGAL PRACTICE

Case updates, legal submissions, amicus curiae submissions, criminal complaints, legal briefs, memoranda and analyses of jurisprudence, and universal jurisdiction resources.

Examples include the Universal Jurisdiction Annual Review, an amicus intervention concerning gender crimes and reproductive violence in **Colombia**, materials on victim-centred reparations in the Al Hassan case, and legal analysis of universal jurisdiction practice in Argentina and the United Kingdom.

ADVOCACY & POLICY

Reports, policy briefs, joint statements and advocacy tools.

Examples include resources on protecting the ICC, gender apartheid in **Afghanistan**, militarised masculinities in human rights investigations and documented violations in **Sudan**.

LEARNING & EXCHANGE

Webinars, videos, programme learning and practitioner resources.

Examples include victim participation at the ICC, threats and sanctions against the Court, withdrawals from the Rome Statute, state impunity, videos explaining how universal jurisdiction works in practice, and the programme's contribution to justice and accountability across its priority contexts.

Use of the platform extends across regions, including the United States, the **Philippines**, **Venezuela** and **DRC**. The next phase will focus on expanding resources, strengthening exchange and learning more about how practitioners use the platform in advocacy and accountability work.

MakingJusticeWork.org

THE WORK AHEAD

Two years into GIAI, the evidence suggests the priority for the next phase is to deepen the approaches that are already showing results and strengthen the connections between them.

01 Strengthen survivor-centred learning

Develop safer and more consistent ways for victims and survivors to assess the support they receive, their opportunities to participate and how justice processes respond to their priorities.

02 Connect different forms of justice

Strengthen links between criminal accountability, truth-seeking, transitional justice and broader survivor priorities.

03 Deepen locally led action

Continue flexible support for local and grassroots organisations and strengthen exchange between FSTP partners, consortium members and practitioners.

04 Strengthen collective response

Use GIAI's combined legal, political and advocacy capacity to respond more rapidly to developments affecting international justice, the ICC, immunities and gender justice.

International justice rarely advances in a straight line. GIAI's first two years show how coordinated civil society action can help keep justice pathways open, strengthen survivor participation and influence accountability institutions. The next phase will focus on making these connections stronger and more sustainable.



Source: ©Cristina Chiquin/Impunity Watch. Indigenous Maya Achi women commemorate the National Day Against Forced Disappearances in Guatemala City on 21 June 2019. In January 2022, they celebrated a historic ruling on war-time sexual violence, committed against them during the internal armed conflict. / Pexels

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2 YEARS OF SURVIVOR-CENTRED IMPACT **2023-2026**



**Global Initiative
Against Impunity**

Making Justice Work

Cover photo: ©Impunity Watch

Indigenous Maya Achi women celebrate the re-painting of a mural in Rabinal, Guatemala on International Women's Day 2026, commemorating their decades-long fight for justice. The mural is part of reparations measures granted in their case, and is crucial to promote historical memory to ensure such violence never occurs again, and contributes to the healing and dignification of the victims.