

PATHWAYS TO SYSTEM CHANGE

Working together to make justice a reality

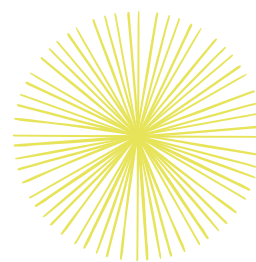
Executive summary*Fighting impunity, making justice work*



“ The efforts of grassroots activists working tirelessly to unearth injustice and call for systemic change give us hope, even in the midst of crisis. Building a community of support and solidarity around them will increase their chances of being heard by those in power, and to make a lasting impact. _____”

MARLIES STAPPERS Executive Director, Impunity Watch.





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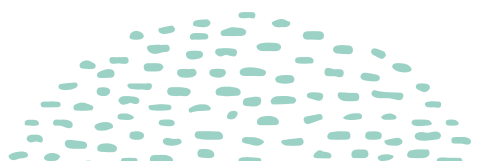
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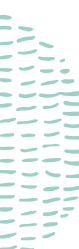
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Introduction

Who we are: Impunity Watch is an international non-profit organisation working with victims of violence to deliver redress for grave human rights violations, uproot deeply ingrained structures of impunity and promote justice and peace.

For more than 15 years we have worked in countries emerging from violent conflict. We have found that victims and survivors know best what is needed to achieve justice for themselves and for past violations in their communities, and to prevent violence from recurring, yet they are routinely excluded from these processes. Our role is to address this omission and uproot deeply engrained structures of impunity.

We gather and share knowledge on the root causes of impunity, partner with grassroots organisations to amplify their demands to policymakers and build coalitions to push for deeper systemic change.

About this plan

The previous strategic period saw Impunity Watch grow in experience and the number of programmes we carry out. We know that we cannot fight impunity without addressing wider structural issues, such as inequality and oppression. Working towards systemic change in partnership with others will therefore guide all our work in this next strategic period.

Who are the victims?



REFERENCE TO VICTIMS IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN INCLUDES VICTIMS, SURVIVORS AND COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ABUSES.

“ We continue our fight for justice, so these human rights violations never happen again. ————— ”

MARIA ALICIA CATLAN

Member of AMDE in Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa, and survivor of the armed conflict in Guatemala.

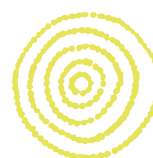




PHOTO: CARLOS ALONZO/IMPUNITY WATCH

Our vision and mission

Our vision is that victims of serious human rights violations can shape the processes of justice to get redress and contribute to addressing the root causes of impunity. This will lead to justice and accountability becoming the norm.



Our mission: We work together with victims, survivors and communities affected by human rights violations to transform justice by:



1. **Gathering and sharing knowledge** on the root causes of impunity and what justice means from a victim perspective.

Growing partnerships and working with coalitions of victims so that their collective voice and demands are strengthened.

2.



3. **Mobilising joint political action** with victims to ensure that justice processes are shaped by them, and policymakers act on their demands.

The joint work with victims, survivors and affected communities is at the heart of everything we do.



What is impunity?

A climate of impunity exists when those in power systematically abuse human rights, commit crimes or other misdeeds, and exclude others from opportunities without fear of consequences.

This can happen in the guise of racism, gender inequality, other forms of discrimination, and harsh practices of violent or 'militarised masculinities' – within the security sector and beyond.

This has profound consequences for society, in particular for those suffering from conflict and oppression. We must therefore seek to overcome impunity and its root causes together with victims, both locally and globally.

“ Every detainee is a human soul with a full life to live. We’re not talking about numbers. We’re talking about humans, about our sons, about our loved ones. _____ ”

FADWA MAHMOUD Families for Freedom, Syria.

Our theory of change

Overcoming impunity requires long-term commitment and engagement. Interventions must consider that impunity is endemic in structures in society and there are many inhibitors to consider when we look at how to overcome it.

We see three main obstacles to overcoming impunity:

Knowledge is disconnected: Measures put in place for justice and reparations are often detached from the needs of victims and survivors.

Barriers to meaningful victim participation: Victims and survivors struggle to be involved in a meaningful way in the pursuit of justice, for instance because of trauma, discrimination and insufficient resources.

Lack of political will: There is a lack of political will to involve victims in justice at a local and global level, with other policies given a higher priority.

To address these obstacles, three intervention strategies drive our theory of change:

1. Gathering and sharing knowledge with our local and international partners, including through research, training and policy work.

2. Building partnerships and coalitions with victims' organisations. These provide advice and help strengthen the

voices and demands of survivors in relevant policy debates.

3. Mobilising joint political action by connecting knowledge and demands from coalitions with relevant regional, national and international policymakers. This builds on the first two intervention strategies.



PHOTO: CRISTINA CHIQUIN/IMPUNITY WATCH



Our theory of change

These interventions and outcomes happen at local, national, regional and international levels.



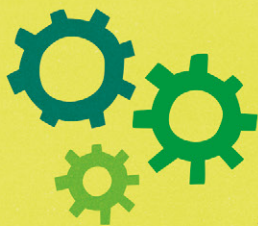
KEY SHIFTS

OUR VISION



Victims

Participate in justice processes



Decision makers

Act on victims' demands

JUSTICE



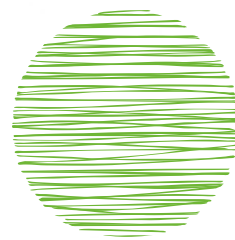
Root causes of impunity are addressed



Accountability and rule of law become the norm



Victims continue to be engaged in justice processes





Lessons from our previous strategic period

Our previous strategic plan enabled us to become more targeted, strategic and skilful in working towards our vision, in part because of our level of collaborative work within movements and coalitions locally and globally.

The feedback we have received is that we should continue on this path, as well as sharpening our understanding of strategies to overcome impunity and uproot its causes. We need to ask ourselves how we adapt to a

changing environment with changing needs. We will also step up our efforts to identify entry points on the international level and act upon them.

“Victims and survivors on the ground have a vision, a locally led and transformative approach. They need long-term resources to preserve and maintain their goals. —”

RAM KUMAR BHANDARI Network of Families of the Disappeared/NEFAD, Nepal.



Objectives 2023–2027

What do we want to achieve in the next five years in our mission to overcome impunity?

Our programme objectives for 2023–2027 have been distilled from our theory of change; a strategic planning process which included broad consultations with our staff, partners and stakeholders; mid-term reviews of our programmes; our practical experience during the previous five years of work; and our recent research findings.



PHOTO: JUSTICE FOR GIRLS' PROTEST IN ZAGREB. THE BALKANS INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING NETWORK.

Programme objectives

Here are our priority areas in our drive for systemic change:

Objective 1: Gather and share knowledge to deepen understanding of the root causes

and consequences of impunity, informed by grassroots perspectives.

Objective 2: Strengthen key partnerships at international, national and regional levels, and develop new coalitions and collaborations to fight systemic impunity more effectively.

Objective 3: Increase our grassroots partners' and Impunity Watch's presence and visibility in key policy hubs at the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union, mobilising political action to combat impunity.

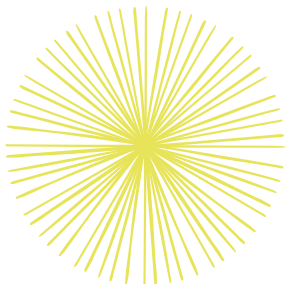
Organisational objectives

There are three focus areas that we see as important to strengthen our interventions so they can be more effective in contributing to change.

Objective A: Strengthen our processes of internal learning and the way we generate and exchange knowledge to deepen our understanding of systemic change, how change happens, and to reflect on our role and contribution to combating impunity.

Objective B: Ensure stable and sustained resourcing and funding to allow us to work towards our strategic objectives and priorities.

Objective C: Ensure appropriate structures, systems and processes are strengthened and in place to enable us to work towards our strategic objectives in a coordinated, cohesive, and deliberate manner.



[Read our full Strategic Plan →](#)



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