



DRL Transitional Justice Programs

Strategic Approach

The Transitional Justice (TJ) portfolio in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor's Office of Global Programs (DRL/GP) prioritizes **integrated, victim- and survivor-centered**, and **locally owned** programs to promote transitional justice measures – judicial and non-judicial, formal and informal, retributive or restorative – to **address legacies of human rights violations and abuses** and **promote long-term, sustainable peace**. With a wide range of tools, DRL works to prevent recurrence of such violations and abuses, help rebuild social cohesion, and restore citizens' trust in formerly abusive institutions. DRL works with partner bureaus, offices, and embassies across the U.S. government to advance this work.

Within DRL's mandate of advancing inclusive and accountable democracies and promoting respect for human rights, DRL/GP TJ programs seek to ensure the participation and leadership of civil society organizations, survivors, and victims' families in transitional justice processes. In addition to **long-term programs** that span multiple phases of transitional justice processes, the DRL/GP TJ portfolio is uniquely situated to support a range of **rapid response** and **small grants** that address urgent transitional justice needs around the globe through the **Global Initiative for Justice, Truth, and Reconciliation (GIJTR)**.

DRL Program Impacts

A strategic approach to DRL's work requires inclusion of both informal and formal transitional justice processes. However, in many cases, a comprehensive approach is limited by geopolitical challenges, and therefore it is critical to find realistic entry points through which to achieve progress toward transitional justice.

Truth-Telling and Memorialization

Promote truth-telling initiatives (both formal and informal) to acknowledge and reveal human rights violations and abuses while combatting the culture of denial.



Colombia

Since the signing of the 2016 Peace Accord between the Government of Colombia and the FARC, DRL programs have consistently empowered survivors and local organizations in their **search for truth and peaceful coexistence** through their active involvement in the Colombian Truth Commission (CEV). The reporting and case submissions of over **63 DRL-supported local partners and survivor groups** working in remote regions of the country (i.e., Cauca, Cesar, and Meta) contributed significantly to the Commission's final report published in July 2022. Its findings and recommendations represent an **integral step forward for victims** with respect to truth, accountability, and reparations within the ongoing Colombian transitional justice process.

Justice and Accountability

Strengthen criminal accountability and access to justice in the pursuit of combatting impunity and bolstering the rule of law. This may be accomplished through a range of available legal processes and jurisdictional options, including universal jurisdiction.



Guatemala

Local partners have prepared forensic reports and served as expert witnesses in multiple domestic trials involving allegations of human rights abuses, crimes against humanity, and genocide based on their investigation, exhumation, and identification of victims from the civil war. This critical participation resulted in the **successful investigation and prosecution** of atrocity crimes committed during the civil war, including in the case of the disappearance of 14-year-old Marco Antonio Molina Theissen, the Dos Erres massacre trials, and the Ixil Genocide case against Ríos Montt. This work continues to be pivotal to the ongoing, critical case of CREOMPAZ (Comando Regional de Entrenamiento de Operaciones de Mantenimiento de Paz), Latin America's largest case of enforced disappearance.

Atrocity Prevention and Non-Recurrence

Establish and expand downstream (into upstream) preventive strategies aimed at averting violence and breaking cycle of conflict.



Central African Republic (CAR)

Support to **non-recurrence networks** through the training and mentorship of local Peace Committees and **participatory community mapping exercises** has mitigated the threat of armed groups to marginalized populations in some of CAR's most remote areas. This has resulted in **increased coordination** among diverse stakeholders in the field of natural resource management to **promote non-recurrence of violence**.

Reparations

Advance survivors' access to reparations by acknowledging the needs of victims for redress and addressing the consequences as well as causes of human rights violations and abuses in material and symbolic, individual and collective ways. Reparations can include rehabilitation services to survivors, compensation, restitution, and symbolic measures.



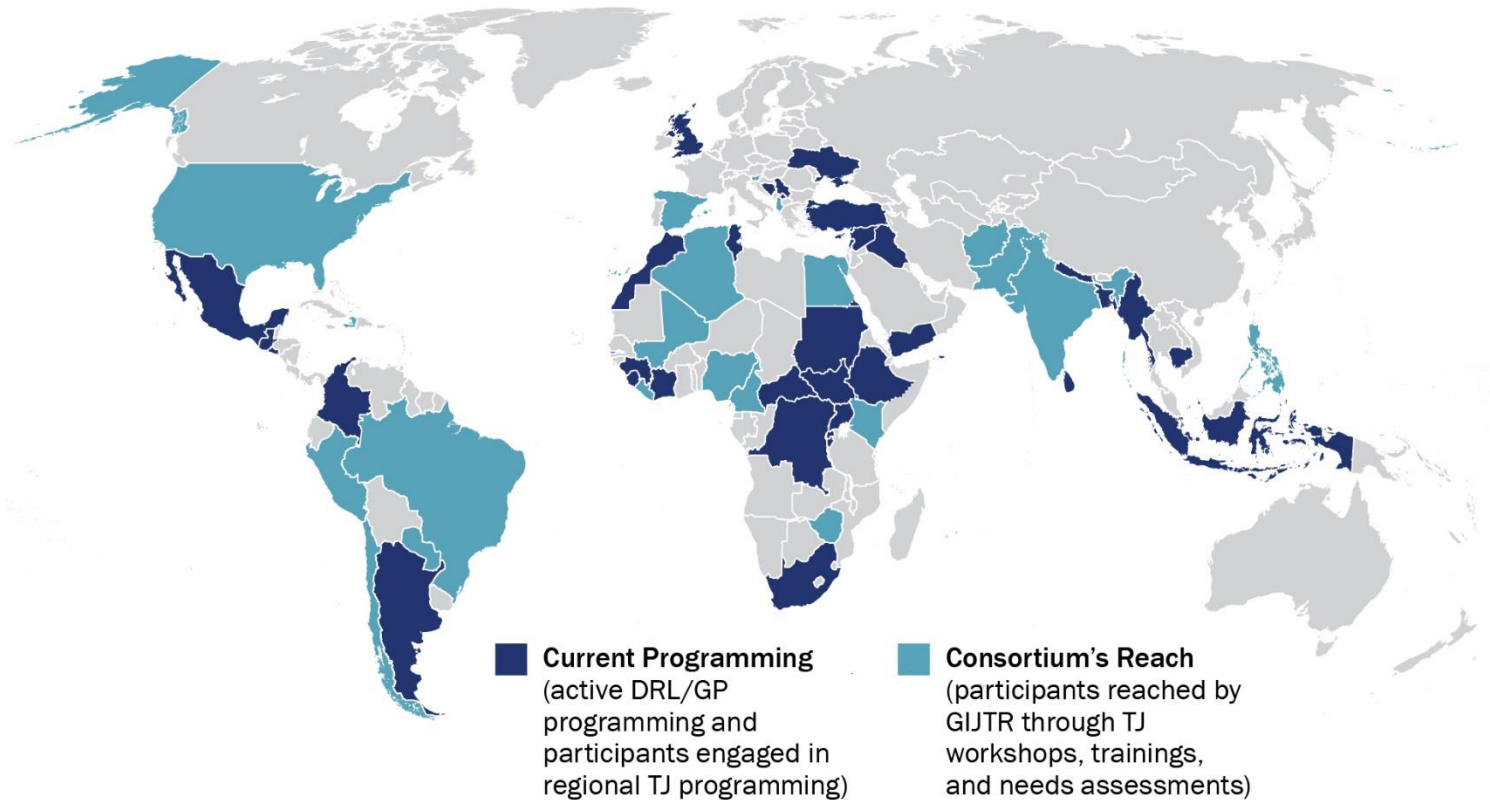
Syria

Activities to date have supported Syrian civil society-led collection, analysis, and preservation of **over 1.8 million pieces of data**, including documents, videos, and interviews, for use across **all transitional justice processes**. Programs also work with Syrian civil society to **empower survivors of atrocities perpetrated by the Assad regime, regime allies, ISIS, and other non-state armed actors** in the transitional justice space to address trauma and healing directly through rehabilitation work for survivors of torture, and **advance victims' claims** with respect to issues such as property restitution.

Reach

DRL/GP's Transitional Justice team manages approximately **\$105 million** in active foreign assistance programs, connecting people from **60 countries** in all regions of the world.

Unclassified



Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.

2696 11-22 STATE (INR)

Program Highlight: Burma

In 2018, DRL/GP – consistent with a funding directive from Congress – supported a documentation survey, **collecting evidence on human rights violations and abuses in Burma**. This evidence ultimately **informed Secretary Blinken's determination** that members of the Burmese military committed **genocide** and **crimes against humanity** against Rohingya.

With this directed funding, DRL has **bolstered the capacity of local groups and networks in Burma** that are investigating and documenting atrocities and contributing to the work of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM), OHCHR, and other investigatory and documentation processes. DRL/GP is also pursuing targeted programming around **conflict-related sexual violence documentation** in Burma, after identifying this as a critical gap in the pursuit of accountability for atrocities that have and may continue to be committed in Burma.

Read More

"The day will come when those responsible for these appalling acts will have to answer for them."

ANTHONY J. BLINKEN
U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE

To read Secretary Blinken's announcement of the genocide and crimes against humanity determination regarding Rohingya in Burma, which DRL-supported documentation helped inform, visit state.gov/burma-genocide/

This documentation has also had impacts beyond the U.S. genocide and crimes against humanity determinations. **The Gambia**, for example, has filed a **seminal case** against Burma for its alleged violations of the Genocide Convention in connection with atrocities against Rohingya, a case which the United States has supported by sharing information, including collected by the Department of State through DRL-supported programs.