



United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

2021 | 40th anniversary

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The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture was established by the General Assembly in 1981 with a mandate to support torture victims and their families. It does so by channelling voluntary contributions to civil society organizations providing legal, social, humanitarian, psychological and medical services. Beneficiaries include human rights defenders, persons deprived of liberty, children and adolescents, refugees and migrants, victims of enforced disappearance, indigenous peoples, victims of sexual and gender-based violence and LGBTI persons, amongst others.

2020:

- 21 Member States contributed \$10.4 million to the Fund
- the Fund awarded 164 direct assistance annual grants, totalling \$7,059,500 and 7 capacity-building annual grants, totalling \$244,350
- through its emergency grants procedure, the Fund awarded 24 emergency grants totalling \$530,000, in 23 countries in all regions of the world
- of these emergency grants, 17 are for almost 4,000 torture survivors disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, awarded through a special call for applications

In 2021 the Fund will:

- award 171 direct assistance annual grants, totalling \$7,164,000 and 6 capacity-building annual grants, totalling \$180,000
- award over \$700,000 for emergency grants to respond to crisis on a rolling basis
- assist more than 47,000 torture victims and their families
- reach at least 79 countries in all world regions

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

To commemorate the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on 26 June, the Fund, along with other UN anti-torture mechanisms and the Association for the Prevention of Torture, convened a public webinar on "[The impact of Covid-19 on torture and ill-treatment](#)".

"In all our work, we must support victims and ensure respect for their right to rehabilitation and redress. This victim-centred approach guides the UN Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture, which assists nearly 50,000 victims of torture annually in some 80 countries. It has also helped us better understand different dimensions of torture, including the use of sexual and gender-based violence, and the specific assistance that different kinds of survivors of torture need." – United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres



The Centre for the Defence of Children and Adolescents of Ceará (CEDECA) was founded in 1994 in Brazil. The NGO combines juridical intervention, social mobilization, strategic partnerships and communication in order to build a society that fully guarantees the human rights of children and adolescents. During the period of social isolation due to COVID-19, CEDECA provided legal and psychological assistance to torture survivors remotely and promoted individual and collective strengthening. [More](#)

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