

# The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime launches 3rd cycle of the Resilience Fellowship to support community responses to environmental crime

**VIENNA, 15 October 2021**

**The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) is pleased to announce the launch of the third cycle of the Resilience Fellowship, which builds a platform for cross-sectoral, global and interdisciplinary collaboration between civil society actors, human rights activists, journalists, artists, scholars, policymakers, grassroots community leaders and others working to counter the effects of organized crime.**

The Fellowship is part of the GI-TOC's flagship Resilience Fund, a grant mechanism that supports civil society and communities working to counter the impacts of criminal governance and violence across the world (more information [here](#)).

The Fellowship's first cycle in 2020 provided support and opportunities to a cohort of 10 individuals from around the world on the theme of disappearances related to organized crime. The Fellows collaborated with each other and attended workshops while working on projects in their local communities. These virtual exchanges resulted in new projects, new narratives and new knowledge about disappearances related to organized crime around the world, culminating in a final collaborative project: [Disappeared is a place: The landscapes and stories of those who are #StillMissing](#)'.

For the 2021 Fellowship, the chosen theme was extortion, and our 2021 Fellows are currently building a global community of local leaders to prevent and counter extortion; developing new ways to protect victims, supporting networks of small businesses as they resist criminal taxes and investigating organized crime groups across borders.

The third edition in 2022 will be on environmental crime. The role of organized crime in exploiting and damaging the environment is violent and omnipresent. Criminal networks profit from billions of dollars at enormous costs not only to the environment but also to peace and security. The links between environmental crime and other criminal activities have been reported globally, while new forms of exploitation and patterns of criminal behaviour continue to emerge. At the local level, the impact of environmental crimes is often direct on people's livelihoods, their health, their human rights and their vulnerability to natural disasters. Despite the challenges they face, local communities use innovative solutions to address crimes against their environment.

The Fellowship will bring together a diverse cohort of civil society individuals working against various forms of environmental crime in their communities. It will provide mentorship opportunities and capacity-building

workshops as Fellows collaborate on exploring environmental crime and community resilience through a cross-cultural lens.

***‘This fellowship has given me a platform to give a voice to victims of extortion and abuse in Malawi. The Fellowship equipped me with the necessary skills and enabled me to engage with others to bring about change and amplify the voice of the victims who are failed by the system, and help them access justice and support.’***

*Siria Gastélum Félix, director of the Resilience Fund.*

***‘The Fellowship is based on a three-pronged approach that supports Fellows through funding and mentoring, networking and collaboration with other Fellows, and opportunities to engage more broadly with society and raise awareness on urgent issues.’***

*Ponelo Kalonga, 2021 Fellow.*

The call for applications was launched today, is open until 15 November 2022 and is available here: [OPEN CALL FOR APPLICATIONS](#). The Fellowship 2022 will run from February to December 2022.

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## About the Resilience Fund

With the support of the government of Norway, in March 2019 the GI-TOC launched the Civil Society Resilience Fund Against Organized Crime, which aims to counter the impact of organized crime worldwide by supporting efforts of civil society and non-state actors in developing resilience in their communities (more information [here](#)). The government of Norway is the Fund’s founding and principal financial partner, and the Fund is also supported financially by the governments of Germany, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

## About the Global Initiative

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) is a non-profit international organization that comprises a network of more than 500 independent global and regional experts. The GI-TOC seeks to open new lines of analysis to provide creative solutions to the challenges of organized crime, and to serve as an exchange and collaboration platform among governments, civil society, scholars, the private sector and other actors. Founded in 2013 and headquartered in Geneva, the GI-TOC has representation on every continent. More information [here](#).