

# The GI-TOC's Resilience Fund selects 10 Fellows to address human rights and organized crime

**Vienna, 10 February 2023**

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) is pleased to announce the selection of 10 successful applicants for the 2023 Resilience Fellowship, the theme of which is human rights and organized crime. The annual Fellowship 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 2023 Fellows are diverse in background, geography and approaches, coming variously from Latin America, the Caribbean, francophone Africa, East Africa, Western and South East Asia. The group includes journalists, artists, community advocates and LGBTQ+ activists.

*Every day all over the world, people's right to life and liberty are violently shattered by the powerful combination of criminal organizations and corrupt states. Organized crime enslaves and tortures people everywhere ... silencing the press, disappearing people and targeting minorities with impunity. Human rights defenders are paying with their lives. We cannot let them stand alone. We urgently need networks to support them, and we aim to do so through the 2023 Fellowship.*

– Siria Gastélum Félix, Resilience Fund director

## Meet the 2023 Resilience Fellows

Name	Country	About
Juan Enamorado	Honduras	Juan is an educator and a cultural manager for development. He creates safe learning spaces for at-risk youth to engage in artistic and athletic pursuits, keeping them away from the gangs and crime characterizing his city.
FA	Iraq	FA is a freelance journalist and filmmaker from Iraq. She has covered human rights issues in both Arabic and English, such as the rights of children of unknown parentage, persecution of minorities in Iraq, the rights of refugees and displaced persons and violence against women.
Bobbo Moussa	Cameroon	Bobbo is a historian, specializing in security issues, defence and strategy. He works on violent extremism and new threats linked to criminality and illicit markets in the Lake Chad basin.
Vyalirendi Jacques Muhindo	Democratic Republic of Congo	Dr Muhindo's work focuses on youth and children in local communities at risk of engaging in criminal activities in a region grappling with security issues caused by armed conflict. He leads a platform where locals can participate in peace-building issues.
Marcela del Muro González	Mexico	Marcela is a journalist based in San Luis Potosí, Mexico. She has documented the impact of violence on communities in her region, including disappearances and gender-based violence.
N	Philippines	N is a psycho-therapist trainee and a poet working with indigenous and environmental activists who suffer trauma, threats, intimidation and disappearances from armed groups.

Niara	Colombia	Niara is an educator and activist working to create safe environments and care routes for Afro-Colombian communities living in north-western Colombia, where there is a high presence of criminal activity. Community members and victims are constantly threatened and stalked and subjected to sexual and gender-based violence.
Stephen Okanwy	Kenya	Stephen is a queer <i>activist</i> , who will address attempts to counter human rights violations against LGBTQ+ community members in Kenya by anti-gender movements who leverage organized criminal groups to profile, intimidate and even murder queer activists.
Soussoule Sanozil Guerrier	Haiti	Soussoule is a published children's books author. She focuses on the education of children and youth in areas affected by organized crime in southern and western Haiti.
Kelana Wisnu	Indonesia	Kelana is a journalist, editor and researcher. He is co-founder of Pustaka Pias, a decolonization-focused independent publisher, and a reporter for Jakarta-based media outlet Narasi TV. His work focuses on the rights of victims of human trafficking.

### About the Resilience Fellowship

The Fellowship is part of the GI-TOC's flagship Resilience Fund, a grant mechanism funded by the governments of Norway, New Zealand, the Netherlands and Germany, which provides support to civil society and communities working to counter the effects of criminal governance and violence across the world (more information [here](#)).

The theme for the Fellowship's first edition, in 2020, was disappearances, which resulted in a final collaborative project: [A place called disappeared: The landscapes and stories of those who are #StillMissing](#). In 2021, the theme was extortion. Aside from their projects

and workshops, the Fellows collaborated on a statement against extortion and produced a video to amplify their message: [End extortion now](#). Last year's Fellowship took the theme of environmental crime, focusing on areas such as illegal logging; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; and the environmental effects on indigenous protected areas.

The Resilience Fellowship is based on a three-pronged approach:

- **Sponsorship:** Providing financial support so that Fellows will have the time and resources for their individual work and a collaborative project during the Fellowship year. Grants of US\$15 000 per Fellow are awarded for one year.
- **Networking:** Offering mentorship opportunities with experts from the GI-TOC, as well as bringing Fellows together to begin a collaborative project to be undertaken during their Fellowship year.
- **Dissemination:** Creating a platform for Fellows to publicly share their work and ideas, via conferences, civil society forums and national and international publications. This is intended to widen public discourse, deepen engagement with society and invite the support and participation of the general public and, ultimately, policymakers.

The Resilience Fellowship is not designed to be a standalone grant application procedure to develop individual projects, but a support mechanism for collaborative processes with other committed individuals who are already developing creative perspectives on community resilience and organized crime through dialogue, commitment and action. Thus, the Fund gives preference to those applicants with the incentives and means to collaborate on sustainable projects.

### **About the Fellowship theme for 2023: Human rights and organized crime**

The theme for 2023 was selected because the presence of organized crime in any form leads to violations of a range of human rights, from the right to life, liberty, security of person and property to freedom of movement and freedom of speech. As criminal forces continue to expand their activities and control, communities the world over suffer immense harms to their people, lands and livelihoods.

Examples of projects that we seek to develop include:

- Rights of youth and children threatened by forced labour, modern slavery or human trafficking.

- Rights of youth and children threatened by the activities of criminal groups, including recruitment by gangs, or their involvement in criminal activity such as extortion, micro-trafficking or murder-for-hire.
- Women's rights as violated by manifestations of criminal governance and exploitation, including sexual exploitation, human smuggling and trafficking, and forced labour in the mining, manufacturing or agricultural sectors.
- Indigenous rights endangered by the presence of criminal markets, including land grabbing, illegal logging, illegal mining or illegal crop plantations in protected territories.
- Gender rights, including the harassment of or systematic attacks on LGBTQ+ communities by criminal actors.
- Migrants' rights jeopardized by criminal organizations controlling routes or mobility.
- Protection of freedom of speech, especially regarding independent media houses and journalists, from harassment or attacks by criminal actors.
- Protection of digital rights, including instances in which organized criminal groups exploit vulnerable communities through digital threats, or where anti-cybercrime legislation is used by authorities to crack down on protests, freedom of speech or information sharing.

### **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](#)).

### **About the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime**

The GI-TOC is a non-profit international organization comprising a network of over 600 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](#)).