

New fellowship aims to strengthen women's resilience to environmental crime

Vienna, 3 June 2024

Women environmental defenders are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, which is used to drive them away from the movements they lead and discourage them from activism. To address this, the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), through its Resilience Fund, launched today a new fellowship aimed at empowering women leaders to enhance community resilience to environmental crime.

The initiative, titled 'Strengthening women's resilience to organized environmental crime', and produced in partnership with the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), seeks to address the critical intersection of gender and environmental crime by championing the voices of women working to protect the environment, thus ensuring a more inclusive approach that promotes gender equality.

The initiative invites applications from women around the world who are involved in local environmental protection efforts. It will provide five selected individuals with financial support, capacity-building opportunities and platforms for networking and collaboration.

Each fellow will receive £12 000 to support an initiative focused on mitigating environmental crime and empowering women in their communities. They will also have access to tailored training sessions and mentorship to help them navigate and overcome project-specific challenges.

The selected fellows will participate in international forums in Vienna, Austria, and join a global platform for ongoing support and opportunities beyond the fellowship period.

'The Women's Fellowship will provide a vital platform for women leaders to address the unique challenges posed by environmental crime. It aims to bring together fellows from different places and cultures to share their experiences, develop innovative solutions, and strengthen community resilience to the threats faced by the women working to protect the environment,' said **Siria Gastélum Félix, Director of Resilience at the GI-TOC.**

Beyond the threat of violence against women environmental defenders, environmental crime itself disproportionately affects women living in communities in or near ecologically important areas. This initiative aims to identify and address the gendered impacts of illicit natural resource economies, and promote policies that incorporate women's perspectives and experiences. It also focuses on the need for gender-responsive approaches to environmental protection and community resilience.

Who should apply?

The fellowship is open to women working in various fields, including journalism, activism, advocacy, community mobilization, the creative arts, academia and human rights. Applicants should be able to demonstrate a clear link between their work and organized environmental crime or the illegal trade in natural resources.

Applications open today, 3 June 2024, and close on 14 June 2024. Interested candidates should submit their applications [online](#).

About the Resilience Fund

The [Resilience Fellowship](#) is part of the GI-TOC's flagship Resilience Fund, which provides grants and support to civil society individuals and organizations working to counter the impacts of criminal governance and violence around the world. Established with a grant from the Government of Norway, the Resilience Fund is also supported by the governments of Germany, the Netherlands and New Zealand, and works in partnership with international organizations and NGOs worldwide.

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.