

The Global Initiative promotes community-based responses to extortion and organized crime, through 2nd Resilience Fund Fellowship launch.

VIENNA, 7 December 2020

The Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) is pleased to announce the launch of the 2nd edition of the *Resilience Fund Fellowship*, which builds a platform for cross-sectoral, global and interdisciplinary collaboration to counter the effects of organized crime.

The call for applications is open until 4 January 2021. The Fellowship programme for 2021 will run from February to December 2021. The fellowship is part of the GI-TOC's flagship **Resilience Fund**, a grant mechanism funded by the governments of Norway and Germany providing support to civil society and communities working to counter the impacts of criminal governance and violence across the world.

'The damage caused by extortion is huge and widespread. It harms the economy of nations, the legitimacy of government and the social fabric of families and communities.'

GI-TOC report, [A Criminal Culture: Extortion in Central America, May 2019](#)

The Fellowship theme for 2021, '**Extortion and organized crime**', was selected because it is a long-standing core strategy and business model of organized criminal groups, but it is also an urgent and salient issue today, as it continues to violate human rights and fundamental freedoms. Extortion is frequently used as a strategy to spread terror within society. It is a motor of migration and displacement in many communities. For organized crime groups, it is a tool of control and fear.

'Extortion is prevalent globally and devastating locally. The Fellowship will allow a diverse cohort of individuals to come together to share perspectives and build a global community for change, while supporting initiatives to counter extortion at the local level. This kind of cross-cultural exchange, alongside capacity building, is what the Resilience Fund Fellowship is all about.'

Siria Gastelum Felix, Resilience Fund Director

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.

[The Resilience Fund's first edition in 2020](#) provided support and opportunities to a cohort of 10 individuals from around the world on the chosen theme, 'Disappearances related to organized crime'. During the past year, these

Fellows have collaborated on this global issue in their local communities. The virtual exchanges we held throughout the year have resulted in new projects, new narratives and new knowledge about disappearances related to organized crime around the world.

‘One of the main strengths of the Resilience Fund Fellowship is to feel accompanied in the execution of community projects. The Fellowship has helped me look at my work in a more global and transnational way, and has helped me exchange ideas with colleagues to solve problems or highlight expressions of resilience that were not previously recognized. In general, I feel guided, supported and safer doing my job. The 2021 Fellowship will help a new group of activists in the same way as they explore how to counter extortion.’

Clavel Rangel, beneficiary of the 2020 Resilience Fund Fellowship

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.

About the Global Initiative

The [Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime](#) (GI-TOC) is an independent civil-society organization, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, with a globally dispersed Secretariat and a [high-level advisory board](#). Its [network members](#) include prominent law-enforcement, governance and development practitioners who are dedicated to seeking new and innovative strategies and responses to organized crime. The GI-TOC’s work spans across a wide variety of areas. It encompasses all criminal markets – drugs, people, arms, environmental commodities, violence, and so forth – and their impacts.

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