

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime launches 5th edition of the Resilience Fellowship to support community responses in fragile contexts

Vienna, 30 April 2024

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) is pleased to announce the launch of the fifth edition of the Resilience Fellowship, which provides 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 was launched in 2020 to heighten the impact of the GI-TOC's Resilience Fund by identifying, incubating and amplifying community responses to organized crime that strengthen community resilience in regions affected by conflict, violence and criminal governance.

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 Fellows collaborated on projects to counter extortion in their communities and produced a video to amplify their message: [End extortion now](#). In 2022, the Fellowship took on the theme of [environmental crime](#), focusing on issues such as illegal logging, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and the effects of environmental crime on indigenous protected areas. The 2023 Fellowship focused on [human rights](#), recognizing that the existence of organized crime in any capacity often leads to violations of a wide range of human rights.

For the 2024 Fellowship, we are looking for civil society actors who support communities in contexts of fragility, particularly communities facing conflict. The results of the 2023 [Global Organized Crime Index](#) show that conflict zones are especially vulnerable to organized crime. High levels of conflict in a country not only affects its resilience to organized crime, but also allow illicit economies to flourish and create space for the involvement of domestic and foreign

criminal actors. States that have been embroiled in conflict and instability in recent decades, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, Ethiopia and Ukraine, rank high under the Index in terms of their criminality levels.

In fragile contexts, where state institutions are weak or lack legitimacy, civil society organizations play a critical role in countering the effects of criminality. Civil society actors often fill the gap left by the state by assisting victims of crime, implementing prevention programmes and initiating investigations. Civil society becomes a lifeline in fragile communities, as evidenced by ongoing armed conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, Yemen and Sudan.

The Fellowship will bring together a diverse cohort of civil society individuals working in various contexts of fragility. It will provide mentorship opportunities and capacity-building workshops as Fellows collaborate on exploring fragility and community resilience through a cross-cultural lens.

The Resilience Fellowship has become an important opportunity for journalists, activists and leaders committed to their communities to collaborate. It is a global platform to understand the local dynamics of organized crime and work together to build resilience to it.

– Siria Gastélum Félix, Resilience Director, GI-TOC

The Resilience Fellowship helped me enhance my skills and build my confidence, and facilitated the establishment of more resilient networks within my indigenous community affected by extortion.

– Nukila Evanty, 2021 Fellow

The call for applications was launched today, is open until 25 May 2024 and is available here: [open call for applications](#). The 2024 Fellowship will run from July 2024 to June 2025.

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 across 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 (more information can be found [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](#)).