



Fonds au Profit des Victimes The Trust Fund for Victims



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ICC's Trust Fund for Victims Launches Expression of Interest Supporting Victim Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in the Central African Republic

The Hague - On May 6, 2011, the Trust Fund for Victims (TFV) at the International Criminal Court (ICC) invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) to support the rehabilitation of victim survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in the Central African Republic (CAR). The TFV funds projects that provide physical and psychological rehabilitation and material support to victims of crimes under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, over 15% of women and girls in CAR's violence-ridden north have been victims of sexual violence.¹ Domestic violence is also of concern and remains linked to the conflict and the subsequent general breakdown of law and order. There also remains a high level of impunity for such crimes against children.² All parties to the conflict in CAR have been responsible for rapes and other grave forms of sexual violence. There were often aggravating aspects of cruelty such as rapes committed by multiple perpetrators, in front of third persons, and sometimes with relatives forced to participate. The violence has mainly affected women and girls, but men have also been targeted for rape, sexual torture, sexual slavery, sexual humiliation, and forced incest.³

Victim survivors of sexual violence often suffer from short-term and long-term consequences with regard to their health, psychological well-being, and social integration. In addition to physical injuries, potential health consequences include post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV/AIDS), miscarriages, forced pregnancy, and traumatic fistula—debilitating tears in the tissue of the vagina, bladder, and rectum. Years of crisis have left the healthcare system in Central African Republic in shambles. There is one doctor for every 3,000 people, a nurse for every 1,000, and 37 percent of the population have to walk an average 10km to reach the closest health centre.⁴

The overall goal of the TFV's programme under its rehabilitation mandate is to provide integrated rehabilitation assistance to victim survivors of SGBV, their families and affected communities so they are able to move from victim-hood to stability as survivors. In doing so, the TFV takes care to promote women and girls' empowerment and address the specific needs of victim survivors in different age groups – a fundamental requirement of any peace-building process. The TFV will target interventions in various provinces in the Central African Republic most affected by sexual and gender-based violence, and encourages international organisations to integrate local capacity strengthening in partnerships with women grassroots and victim survivor groups as part of the programme.

¹ UNOCHA IRIN Report 2008.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ World Health Organisation Country Profile – Central African Republic.

On 21 December 2004, the Government of CAR referred the situation to the ICC, which officially opened the *Situation in the Central African Republic* on 19 January 2005. In May 2007, the Prosecutor announced the opening of an investigation, stating that this is the first ICC investigation in which allegations of sexual crimes far outnumber alleged killings. The allegations of sexual crimes were detailed and substantiated, suggesting that the rape of civilians was committed in numbers that could not be ignored under international law.⁵ In November 2010, the first trial commenced against Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including murder, rape and pillaging.

The TFV's Expression of Interest (EOI) will stay open for three months from May 6 – August 5, 2011. This is the first of a two-stage process, and each EOI will be reviewed for eligibility and short listing. Those organisations shortlisted will be invited to submit a detailed technical and financial proposal following a TFV proposal development workshop in Bangui, Central African Republic. Final awards will be dependant on the approval of the TFV Board of Directors and the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber for the Central African Republic.

Background: The Trust Fund for Victims (TFV)

The Trust Fund for Victims (TFV) at the International Criminal Court (ICC) is the first of its kind in the global movement to end impunity and promote justice. At the end of one of the bloodiest centuries in human history, the international community made a commitment to end impunity, help prevent the gravest crimes known to humanity and bring justice to victims with the adoption of the Rome Statute. In 2002, the Rome Statute came into effect and the Assembly of States Parties established the TFV under article 79 of the Rome Statute, to benefit victims of crimes and their families within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC). These crimes are genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes – and in the future, crimes of aggression.

The TFV addresses and responds to the physical, psychological, or material needs of the most vulnerable victims. It raises public awareness and mobilizes people, ideas and resources. It funds innovative projects through intermediaries to relieve the suffering of the often forgotten survivors. The TFV works closely with NGOs, community groups, women's grassroots organisations, governments, and UN agencies at local, national, and international levels. By focusing on local ownership and leadership, the TFV empowers victims as main stakeholders in the process of rebuilding their lives.

With the unique roles of implementing both Court-ordered and general assistance to victims of crimes under the ICC's jurisdiction, the Trust Fund for Victims offers key advantages for promoting lasting peace, reconciliation, and wellbeing in war-torn societies. The TFV fulfils two mandates for victims of crimes under jurisdiction of the ICC:

1. **Reparations:** implementing Court-ordered reparations awards against a convicted person when directed by the Court to do so.
2. **General Assistance:** using voluntary contributions from donors to provide victims and their families in situations where the Court is active with physical rehabilitation, material support, and/or psychological rehabilitation.

Currently, the TFV is providing a broad range of support under its second mandate in northern Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo – including access to reproductive health services, vocational training, trauma-based counselling, reconciliation workshops, reconstructive surgery and more – to an estimated 75,000 victims of crimes under the ICC's jurisdiction. Most of our projects have incorporated both gender-specific and child-specific interventions to support the special vulnerability of women, girls, and boys.

The expression of interest will stay open for **three months from May 6 – August 5, 2011** and submissions will be due on August 5, 2011 and submitted electronically by email to: Kent.Foster@icc-cpi.int. For more information visit: <http://www.trustfundforvictims.org/homepage> and www.icc-cpi.int/Menus/ICC/About+the+Court/Procurement/.

⁵ Background, Situation in the Central African Republic, The Hague, 22 May 2007, ICC-OTP-BN-20070522-220-A_EN, Office of the Prosecutor.