



TRIAL
International

ACTIVITY REPORT 2018

**Short
version**



15 YEARS OF ACTIVISM

Dear friends,

20 years ago, in October 1998, Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet was arrested in London for mass atrocities. Like many human rights activists, I remember this episode as a turning point for international justice. Suddenly, abstract legal concepts had teeth and could bring a once-powerful ruler to account.

Since then, the fight against impunity has evolved and expanded. It has been a rocky road with many drawbacks. But justice and accountability are undeniably gaining momentum: The awarding of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize to Dr Mukwege and Nadia Murad for their fight against conflict-related sexual violence bears witness to unprecedented international attention.

I founded TRIAL International shortly after Pinochet's arrest. Just like the fight itself, our organization has grown and matured. Since its creation, it has supported over 2'300 victims and helped secure numerous decisions and judgments in their favor. This year, it finished second at the Financial Times Innovative Lawyers Awards. Our organization also kickstarted an ambitious cooperative project to fight impunity for conflict-related sexual violence worldwide.

We have already come a long way, yet I am convinced that this is just the beginning! With your help we can go further and, just like we were inspired 20 years ago by Pinochet's arrest, inspire others that justice is within reach.

Philip Grant, Director



Read our full activity report online at
trialinternational.org/2018

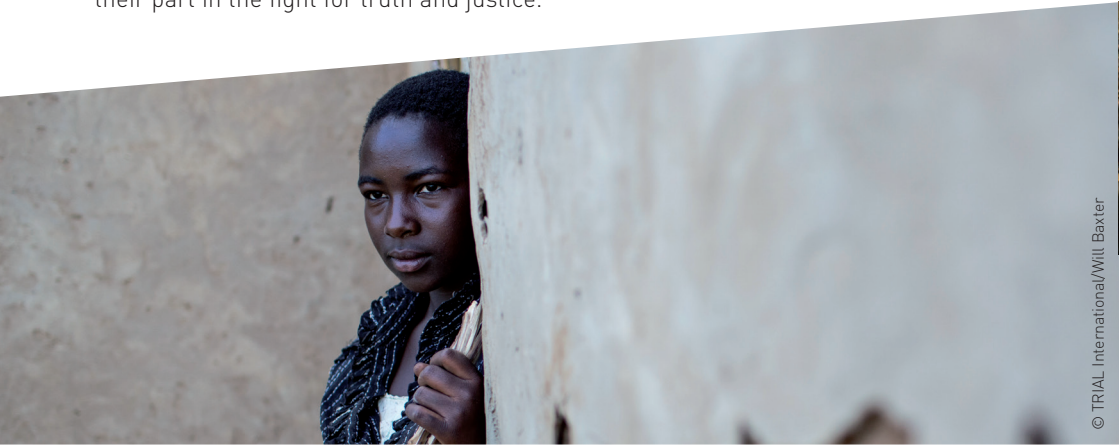
INVESTIGATIONS AND CRIMINAL LAW

Despite political reluctance, some of TRIAL International's most iconic cases have experienced positive developments — in Switzerland and elsewhere.

In a historic judgment in the case against Khaled Nezzar, the Swiss Federal Criminal Court ordered the resumption of an investigation the Office of the Attorney General had closed. The latter's "apparent lack of political will" was noted even by the United Nations.

In April 2018, the Court of Justice in Geneva confirmed the guilt of the former head of the Guatemalan Police, Erwin Sperisen. The decision is now pending appeal before the Swiss Supreme Court. Another suspect of international crimes, former Gambian Minister Ousman Sonko, remained behind bars this year while the Office of the Attorney General investigated his alleged crimes against humanity.

In The Gambia, TRIAL International joined forces with Human Rights Watch to investigate the crimes of former head of State Yahya Jammeh. As part of an international civil society coalition, it called on Western African countries to play their part in the fight for truth and justice.



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TRIAL International provided me with legal aid, but also gave me a lot of courage. I needed both to testify before the court.



"Destiny" (pseudonym), victim of torture in The Gambia

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In 2018, TRIAL International secured individual victories as well as structural improvements for survivors, keeping the hopes of many alive.

To ensure the wellbeing of sexual violence survivors seeking justice, TRIAL International advocated for stricter control of intimate questions during trials, and a reinforcement of identity protection. It also published a report deconstructing myths around wartime sexual violence.

In a case brought by TRIAL International, the Constitutional Court recognized that disproportionate court fees had been imposed on the victim, and overturned the decision.

Finally, two victims supported by TRIAL International saw the long-awaited conviction of their attackers in 2018. Both men were given prison sentences for crimes against humanity.



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NEPAL

Investigating in remote regions and litigating taboo sexual crimes, TRIAL International paved the way to justice for even the most vulnerable victims.

Addressing the deafening silence around sexual violence in the country, TRIAL International conducted several documentation missions in western regions, and brought three new cases before domestic and international bodies. It also campaigned for structural improvements in Nepalese laws relating to gross human rights violations.

At an international level, the United Nations delivered three decisions in favor of survivors supported by TRIAL International, recognizing the authorities' failure to protect their rights. Locally, the newly-opened Human Rights and Justice Centre thrived in 2018, thanks to its unique system of collaboration with local lawyers.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Major victories in the courtroom brought closure to hundreds of victims, reinforced TRIAL International's recognition in Eastern DRC, and led to an expansion of its geographical span.

TRIAL International and its partners within the Task Force for International Justice secured several judicial victories in 2018, including the confirmation of the Kavumu verdict, and the conviction of two warlords and a high-ranking army officer for crimes against humanity. Since the beginning of TRIAL International's activities in 2015, over 1'000 Congolese victims of mass crimes benefitted from its support.

This increased visibility led to new collaborations, and in May 2018, TRIAL International was invited to join the MONUSCO-led network against impunity in North Kivu. A partnership with the newly created Great Lakes Association Bar also laid the foundations for the organization's cross-border strategy in the African Great Lakes region.



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BURUNDI

As many international NGOs disengage from the country, TRIAL International played a major role in bringing victims' suffering to the attention of international bodies.

Because it is not registered as a Burundian organization, TRIAL International was able to follow through with its activities in 2018 despite the crisis. Documenting and recording present abuse remains the only way victims could one day uphold their rights, be it at the domestic or supranational level.

Executing its strategy of building local autonomy, TRIAL International coached two Burundian lawyers to deliver legal training to their peers. Local capacity-building also took a regional turn with the first cross-border training for Burundian, Congolese and Rwandan lawyers. This was conducted in partnership with the Great Lakes Association Bar and kick-started TRIAL International's regional strategy in the African Great Lakes.

2018 AT A GLANCE



724

new victims
supported



31

new cases



325

legal practitioners
trained



2'891'189 CHF

annual income



37

staff
members



36

field
missions



TRIAL International is a non-governmental organization fighting impunity for international crimes and supporting victims in their quest for justice.

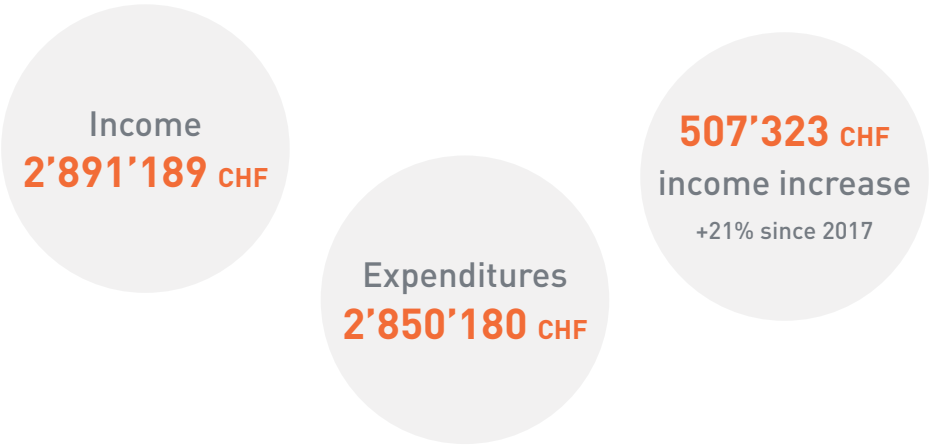
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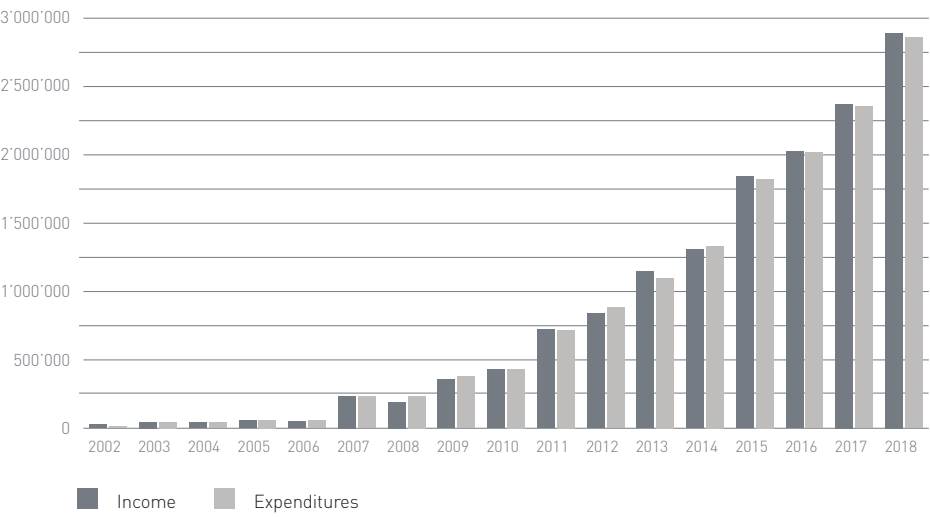
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FINANCES

Thanks to the loyal support of our donors and the establishment of new partnerships, TRIAL International's income has quadrupled since 2011.



TRIAL International's activities have been continuously increasing since its creation, and 2018 was no exception. This rapid development is reflected in the organization's expenditures, reaching 2'850'180 CHF this year.



All figures are subject to validation by TRIAL International's General Assembly.

DONORS' SUPPORT



315

members and private donors



39

institutional partners



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**Thank you for your trust
and commitment!**