



**JUSTICE
RAPID
RESPONSE**



Realizing Justice, Close to Home

NATIONAL EFFORTS TO SECURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CRIMES OF MASS ATROCITY

The Issue

When war crimes, crimes against humanity, or acts of genocide occur, the international community has agreed: perpetrators must be punished. Victims have the right to see accountability realized, ideally, by their own justice system. International courts should only be a last resort: under international law, countries hold the primary responsibility to investigate and prosecute international crimes under their jurisdiction.

Making justice happen close to where mass atrocities have been committed, however, is hard to achieve. Undertaking investigations is especially daunting when the scale of conflict has been massive, the patterns of crimes complex, and the nature of violence horrific. Many countries, and particularly those coming out of conflict, are unlikely to possess the needed expertise for such large-scale and complex accountability.

Sweeping mass atrocities under the rug is dangerous: if perpetrators are never brought to justice and national rule of law is not seen to be exercised, history is only doomed to repeat itself. And the more accountability can be enacted locally, the more justice will be seen to be done, and the rule of law - not of the gun - will be reinforced. For this reason, countries around the world have identified the critical importance of ensuring these crimes are addressed by national authorities.

Our Solution

Justice Rapid Response (JRR) has developed the Complementarity Programme to provide, flexible, rapid and cost-effective assistance to countries wishing to hold perpetrators accountable, but needing the support of professional expertise from the international community. JRR offers tailored mentoring assistance from its international roster of over 560 experts that enables countries to maintain local ownership of accountability, performed at an international standard. Individuals available for deployment include legal advisors, prosecutors, child and witness protection specialists, military analysts, and experts in conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

JRR's Complementarity Programme empowers national actors to design and implement credible, thorough investigations. Mentoring received by national authorities builds confidence of these increasing the odds for justice to be done for crimes of the past. This helps to reassert the rule of law and contributes to breaking cycles of conflict.



Photo: Members of the Ixil community in Guatemala, 2012 (Flickr)
 Below: Guatemalan woman creates Mayan alter outside of the Supreme Court, 2013 (Trocaire)

Our Approach

In response to inquiries from such countries, JRR first sends a small team of experts for a consultation mission in order to map the needs of national authorities. Working with local authorities and the international community not to duplicate assistance already being provided, JRR will propose where our experts would be best placed to assist. JRR provides expertise in a wide range of specializations, including:

- ❖ International Criminal Law
- ❖ Criminal Investigations
- ❖ Sexual and Gender-based Violence
- ❖ Child Protection
- ❖ Forensic Analysis
- ❖ Case Management
- ❖ Witness Safety and Management
- ❖ Storing of Evidence and Data Security

About JRR

Justice Rapid Response (JRR) is a multi-stakeholder mechanism that manages the rapid deployment of human rights and criminal justice professionals from a stand-by roster. We deploy our experts upon the request of the international community to investigate, analyze and report on situations where serious human rights violations and international crimes have been reported.

Since we began operations in 2009, JRR has built a growing roster from all corners of the globe, currently numbering over 600 strong. These experts have been specifically trained to carry out investigations under international conditions in courses held all over the world. Today over 100 countries, institutions and organizations participate in JRR's work. This has already enabled us to provide experts for more than 100 missions. JRR's goal is to ensure that through timely, professional, and impartial investigations of mass atrocities, victims receive justice and would be perpetrators are deterred. It is with these tools that post-conflict societies can best avoid relapsing into conflict.

Contact Us

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Our Impact

As a result of JRR's Complementarity Programme, countries dealing with the aftermath of mass atrocities are better able to meet their obligations under international law. From evidence-gathering in the field to presenting it in the courtroom, JRR experts have ensured national authorities on the ground have the knowledge and tools they need. When justice for crimes of the past is seen to be done, rule of law is strengthened and societies become more resilient to future conflict.

At a Glance

Guatemala continues to deal with the legacy of serious crimes committed during its decades-long internal armed conflict. JRR has been working with prosecutors on a number of cases, further strengthening capacity to bring justice for victims of conflict-related violence.

Mali is working to ensure accountability for crimes committed in the internal armed conflict in the north of the country. JRR is providing mentoring to prosecutors and investigating judges on international criminal as well as on case management, ensuring authorities have the tools they need.

