



**JUSTICE
RAPID
RESPONSE**

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Credible and timely accountability is a proven way of bringing a sense of justice to victims, deterring future offenders and promoting reconciliation. If accountability is neglected, mass atrocity crimes are likely to continue unfettered and at immeasurable cost, not just to affected societies but also to the international community. Getting the accountability process right – be it a criminal prosecution, or another transitional justice mechanism (e.g. truth and reconciliation commission, reparations) – is highly dependent on having access to the right expertise where and when it is needed. Ensuring genuine accountability will depend on the quality of evidence. Yet for such evidence to be reliable, it must be gathered as swiftly and professionally as possible.

The way to achieve credible accountability starts by ensuring that the right experts can be sent rapidly where they are needed. These experts need to possess the experience and expertise required and bring linguistic and cultural affinity to the situations concerned. They must be able to be deployed at short notice when a window of opportunity arises, as well as already be fully trained and equipped for the complex tasks facing them. They must also understand the gender dimensions of crimes and be sensitive to the particular vulnerability of their victims. Only when such professionals are involved, can investigations give accountability processes a chance to hold perpetrators to account, while bringing a sense of justice to victims.

Justice Rapid Response seeks to address this need by providing rapidly available experts to ensure the quality and the timeliness of investigations of mass atrocities in every region of the world. Justice Rapid Response's work supports credible and timely accountability by ensuring that professionals with highly specialized expertise are available at the request of States and international institutions with the mandate and jurisdiction to document or investigate international crimes and serious human rights violations.

To strengthen the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms worldwide, Justice Rapid Response continuously works towards the following **key operational objectives**:

1. Expanding and enhancing the pool of highly specialized experts trained to participate in and lead investigations into international crimes and serious human rights violations, and who can also deploy rapidly;
2. Responding to requests for expertise and deploying experts to support international entities, States or civil society actors with jurisdiction, mandate or mission to conduct investigations and documenting activities of international crimes and serious human rights violations.

These operational objectives are linked to longer-term goals. Indeed, at the core of JRR's Theory of Change lies the conviction that credible and timely accountability for international crimes and serious human rights violations is crucial for rebuilding lasting peace in countries affected by conflict. This is because impunity for perpetrators of international crimes and human rights violations contributes to the recurrence of conflict and violence, and further weakens State institutions and the rule of law. Justice Rapid Response's objectives are in line with **Sustainable Development Goal 16**, which places peace, justice and strong, legitimate institutions at the core of all development efforts. As part of these objectives, strengthening accountability and justice mechanisms is essential to fighting impunity, ensuring that justice is achieved for victims, restoring faith in the rule of law, and breaking recurring cycles of violence.



CO-OPERATION PARTNERS

Justice Rapid Response continuously engages with partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholders in shaping and delivering its activities and achieving its goals. Recruiting and deploying expertise worldwide that is relevant to international criminal investigations involves working with States, international organizations, civil society organizations, as well as private sectors institutions. Justice Rapid Response as such bridges the traditional silos of international development and cooperation.

Key partners for Justice Rapid Response include the Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI) for recruitment training, and UN Women for recruitment and deployment activities under Justice Rapid Response's Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Programme.

- The **Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI)** is Justice Rapid Response's long-standing training partner. The IICI is an independent, not-for-profit NGO that provides criminal justice and human rights professionals with the training and knowledge necessary to investigate war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and serious human rights violations. Justice Rapid Response resorts to IICI's training courses as an integral part of its Roster recruitment process. In 2018, Justice Rapid Response maintained its close collaboration with IICI in planning and delivering two recruitment courses in Sarajevo and The Hague.
- **UN Women:** As in previous years, Justice Rapid Response has continued to work in close collaboration with UN Women to provide the international community with expertise to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as international crimes. The partnership was born out of the recognition that justice for SGBV crimes under international law has systematically been neglected and that there was a need for enhancing accountability for conflict-related SGBV. The partnership encompasses both training and recruitment of experts for the dedicated SGBV Justice Experts Roster, which is a sub-roster of the broader Justice Rapid Response Roster, as well as the deployment of SGBV experts. Justice Rapid Response and UN Women's partnership has been instrumental in raising the standards of international investigations for SGBV. Since the outset of this partnership in 2009, Commissions of Inquiry and Fact-Finding Missions mandated by the Human Rights Council systematically included an SGBV investigator in their core teams. This ensures that investigations incorporate a gender lens in all phases of the process. Justice Rapid Response and UN Women have also joined forces to organize and/or participate in high-level events and public outreach opportunities. A particular achievement for Justice Rapid Response and UN Women's partnership in 2018 was a two-day workshop that brought together 17 Gender Advisors and SGBV Investigators who have been deployed to support UN-mandated human rights investigations, Commissions of Inquiry and Fact-Finding Missions. The workshop served as a platform to capture and share best practice amongst experts. They identified common challenges among gender experts and discussed possible solutions, setting out a road map for Justice Rapid Response, UN Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to make further improvements in providing support to experts before, during and after future deployments.

Justice Rapid Response has also partnered with a number of other organisations and actors in the international justice sector. These can be grouped into three broad categories.

- **UN Agencies and other multilateral organisations:** In addition to the ongoing collaboration with UN Women, JRR has collaborated with an array of UN agencies, including OHCHR, UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN Department of Political Affairs (UNDP), and UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). JRR has also worked with other key

stakeholders in the international criminal justice sector, including the International Criminal Court (ICC).

- **States:** JRR has partnered with States that seek short-term technical assistance or longer-term capacity-strengthening mentoring support to conduct investigations and prosecutions themselves. Under the JRR National Justice Programme, JRR works very closely with these States to tailor the provision of such technical assistance and mentoring to the needs in that particular context. In 2018, these states included The Gambia, Uganda and Guatemala.
- **Civil Society Organisations:** JRR has collaborated closely with several civil society organizations, particularly in the MENA region. Under the JRR Civil Society Programme, JRR provides assistance to selected civil society organisations to strengthen their ability to effectively identify, collect and preserve information related to international crimes and serious violations of human rights in a victim-centred way.

BENEFICIARIES

Justice Rapid Response's work benefits a number of different groups and actors:

- **Victims and witnesses** of international crimes and serious human rights violations are the key beneficiary group. While not all accountability processes supported by Justice Rapid Response will result in the indictment of perpetrators, having the facts exposed and the crimes investigated is an important step towards post-conflict recovery and healing. For such processes to contribute to peace, it is essential that the experience of victims and witnesses is a positive one, where they feel treated in the most professional and respectful manner. For Justice Rapid Response experts this means causing no harm and ensuring that the interest and safety of victims and witnesses are placed at the forefront of investigations. This is particularly important when investigating the most sensitive crimes, such as SGBV or crimes involving children. In addition, having experts with the right cultural background and linguistic skills, who are deployed by an independent body, will contribute to increasing the chance of building trust between investigators and victims.
- Furthermore, the **entities that request expertise** from Justice Rapid Response's Roster (international, regional and national accountability mechanisms such as UN fact-finding missions and commissions of inquiry, national or international tribunals, truth and reconciliation commissions, civil society organizations, etc.) benefit from Justice Rapid Response's activities as direct beneficiaries. By adding an expert to a team in charge of investigating international crimes and human rights violations, such entities with jurisdiction, mandate or mission to investigate can more effectively achieve their objectives. Evidence collected and preserved by trained professionals will help ensure that the information is admissible in any kind of accountability process, thus contributing to justice being done. Lessons learned from past deployments have demonstrated that Justice Rapid Response experts working in a team build the capacity of other team members in their area of specialization. **In 2018, 19 requesting entities benefitted, at times more than once, from expertise identified from the Justice Rapid Response Roster, relating to situations in 19 different countries.**
- The **professionals** who take part in the recruitment courses offered by Justice Rapid Response as part of its Roster recruitment process are also direct beneficiaries. Through these courses, they gain valuable knowledge and skills that enable them to be certified to the Justice Rapid Response Roster and in turn, be deployed in support of a national or an international investigation, commission of inquiry, or other mechanisms designed to deliver accountability

for mass atrocity crimes. **In 2018, 50 professionals benefitted from Justice Rapid Response courses.**

- In addition, the **organizations that employ the experts** who attend a course offered by Justice Rapid Response, and who may be subsequently deployed, also avail of Justice Rapid Response's activities. After completing a Justice Rapid Response course, trained and deployed experts return to work in their government or organization, where they apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills, and can mobilize new networks with other practitioners, and thus better contribute to institutional development.

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The most tangible outcomes of accountability are related to the **criminal prosecution of perpetrators and reparations for victims**, which, inevitably, are long-term processes. Results can only be seen after many years. Nevertheless, since becoming operational in 2009, Justice Rapid Response has seen significant milestones of justice achieved within mechanisms for which it has contributed crucial expertise. Past achievements include the conviction of former Chad President Hissène Habré in the Senegal Extraordinary African Chambers; the conviction of Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea in the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia; and the conviction by the International Criminal Court Trial Chamber of Bosco Ntaganda – a former leader of armed militia groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – in relation to all charges brought against him, including SGBV as war crimes and as crimes against humanity. In 2018, there were signs of progress in accountability processes for which Justice Rapid Response provided crucial expertise.

In December 2018, a Congolese army colonel, Col. Jean de Dieu Mambweni, was arrested in connection with the killing of two UN sanctions monitors, becoming the first member of the security services to be detained over the case. No charges have been filed yet. Congolese authorities initially blamed the militia, and arrested about 24 alleged fighters and charged them with involvement in the killings. JRR provided three senior criminal investigators to the follow up mechanism to inquire into the killing.

In January 2018, the African Union adopted a statute to establish a Trust Fund for victims of the former Chadian president, Hissène Habré, who have waited three decades without receiving compensation. Between 2014 and 2016, Justice Rapid Response had deployed four experts to the Extraordinary African Chambers in the Senegalese Courts (EAC), inaugurated in 2013 and mandated to prosecute former



Protestors call for justice outside the court in Dakar, Senegal
(© Gallo Images)

Chadian dictator Hissène Habré. Justice Rapid Response's Forensic analyst appeared as an expert witness in the trial and was able to confirm Habré's handwriting on a document – a key piece of evidence proving Habré's personal involvement and knowledge of crimes that took place in Chad. A court in Senegal found Habré guilty of crimes against humanity in 2016, making him the first head of state ever to be convicted of that

crime by the courts of another country. After his conviction, he was ordered to pay \$153m to 7,396 of his victims.

While the criminal prosecution of perpetrators and reparations for victims remain the most tangible results of accountability processes, it is also important to keep track of intermediate results in the long march towards justice. This includes the establishment of new mechanisms and improvements in the quality of investigations and documentation efforts. The following are examples of progress in 2018 towards which Justice Rapid Response experts made key contributions.

MYANMAR – Establishment of the Independent Investigative Mechanism on Myanmar (IIMM)

The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar was established by the Human Rights Council in March 2017 to establish the facts and circumstances of the alleged recent human rights violations and abuses by military and security forces in Myanmar, particularly in Rakhine State. Justice Rapid Response, in collaboration with UN Women, was at the forefront of providing specialized expertise to this Fact-Finding Mission, by identifying and providing five experts. **The experts included two gender advisors/SGBV investigators, a forensic psychologist focusing on SGBV violations, a child psychologist to mentor the Fact-Finding Mission team on interviewing child victims and survivors, and a military analyst who analysed Myanmar’s military command structure.**

In August 2018, the Fact-Finding Mission released a report that documented patterns of gross human rights violations and abuses committed in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States that “undoubtedly amount to the gravest crimes under international law”, namely genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. In the report, the Fact-Finding Mission acknowledged that “specialist advice was sought on sexual and gender-based violence, psychology, military affairs and forensics”.

In September 2018, **following on conclusions and recommendations by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, the UN Human Rights Council decided to create an ‘independent investigative mechanism’ (IIMM)** to collect evidence of crimes. The creation of this mechanism was a significant step toward accountability for gross human rights violations in the country. At its core, it stems from the need to bolster investigations and trials of the most serious crimes – both at the national and international levels.

SYRIA – Release of first ever thematic report on SGBV by a Human Rights Council mandated investigation: the report “I lost my dignity” by the Commission of Inquiry on Syria in March 2018

In 2011, the Human Rights Council established the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate international human rights law violations committed in the country and, where possible, to identify those responsible. Since the establishment of the Commission in 2011, the Human Rights Council has extended the mandate of the Commission every year, most recently in March 2018. In the past seven years, 15 experts identified from the Justice Rapid Response Roster have been deployed in support of the commission, with 12 of those experts being deployed through UN Women as SGBV investigators, gender advisors, and interpreters. In addition to SGBV expertise, highly specialized experts included a forensic image expert, forensic pathologists, a child rights expert, an interpreter and military experts.

SGBV experts deployed to the Commission of Inquiry on Syria have highlighted the prominent role SGBV has played in the conflict. The Commission's findings on SGBV have been widely reported in the media and brought to the attention of the Human Rights Council and the Security Council. The contribution of the Justice Rapid Response experts was instrumental in the thematic report on SGBV titled "*I lost my dignity: Sexual and gender-based violence in the Syrian Arab Republic*" and released in March 2018. The report, which was the first of its kind, detailed SGBV against women, girls, men and boys committed in Syria since the uprising in 2011 and highlighted that parties to the conflict resort to sexual violence as a tool to instill fear, humiliate and punish or, in the case of terrorist groups, as part of their enforced social order.

The recognition of the work and contributions of Justice Rapid Response experts deployed to the Commission since 2011 in part contributed to requests for expertise to support the work of the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM). **Indeed, in early 2018, Justice Rapid Response and UN Women provided one Sexual and Gender Based Crimes (SGBC) analyst, one SGBC investigator and one SGBC legal advisor to provide legal analysis and advise on the collection of evidence to the work of the IIIM.**

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response's experts were engaged in investigations and accountability processes for countries affected by some of the world's most violent conflicts, including **Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria, Uganda and Yemen**. This contribution to accountability processes worldwide can only be made possible by continuously ensuring that Justice Rapid Response's Roster is up-to-date with the best experts available, as well as by responding swiftly and efficiently to requests for expertise that combine professional skill, language and relevant backgrounds for every single mission. In line with the organization's key operational objectives, Justice Rapid Response's activities in 2018 were focused on:

- Recruitment of Experts
- Roster Management
- Deployment of Experts
- Outreach and Communications

Recruitment of Experts

In order to be able to respond to an increasing number of requests for experts, Justice Rapid Response has both maintained and expanded the expertise available for deployments. In order to do so, Justice Rapid Response has recruited, trained and certified new experts to its Roster, paying particular attention to gender balance and regional diversity.

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response carried out **two recruitment courses**, in collaboration with the Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI), to add and refine the expertise on the Roster:

- **Expert Roster recruitment course on Investigating Cases of Sexual and Gender-based Violence as International Crimes, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (16-26 July 2018)**. This course, conducted in partnership with UN Women and IICI, sought to increase the pool of experts who

can be deployed rapidly to contribute to transitional justice processes and investigations of SGBV as international crimes. Specifically, the course focused on the unique sensitivities surrounding SGBV crimes and the vulnerability of its survivors. The 10-day Roster recruitment course was led by some of the most reputed practitioners in the field. Following the course, Justice Rapid Response, in consultation with UN Women, certified **23 of the expert participants for the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women SGBV Justice Experts Roster**.

- **Expert Roster Recruitment Course on International Criminal Investigations, The Hague, the Netherlands (10-15 December 2018)**. This advanced course, conducted in collaboration with the IICI, sought to enhance Justice Rapid Response's ability to respond to requests for highly specialized professionals for a broad range of missions. The six-day roster recruitment course



Participants take part in one of many course modules during the six-day Roster recruitment course

had a rich programme, including learning modules on critical and practical aspects of deployments for international criminal investigations. After a rigorous selection process, 25 highly qualified experts completed this general investigations course. Participants included 12 experts from the Global South, and two thirds were women. Selected participants represented the following areas of expertise: transitional justice, psychosocial counsel, human rights, prosecutions, investigations, SGBV, child rights, and various forensic specializations. **Justice Rapid Response certified 23 of these experts for the Roster.**

With these two courses, **Justice Rapid Response achieved its objective of increasing the availability of rapidly deployable criminal justice and related expertise** to States and the international community in investigating international crimes and serious human rights violations, including cases of conflict related SGBV. Through the courses, Justice Rapid Response also contributed to improving the standard of investigations for international crimes. By nominating professionals to participate in Justice Rapid Response courses, participating States and organizations contribute in a concrete way to the success of Justice Rapid Response. The number of nominations submitted for Justice Rapid Response courses has consistently exceeded the number of spaces available. **In 2018, Justice Rapid Response received approximately ten times as many nominations as spaces available¹.**

In 2018, **Justice Rapid Response recruited a total of 38² experts to its Roster**, further refining and strengthening the expertise on its Roster and increasing access of the international community to the professional expertise needed for international criminal investigations. This includes:

- 23 experts recruited through the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women SGBV Justice Roster
- 10 experts trained in December 2017 but certified in 2018
- 5 experts recruited through the IICI International Investigator course

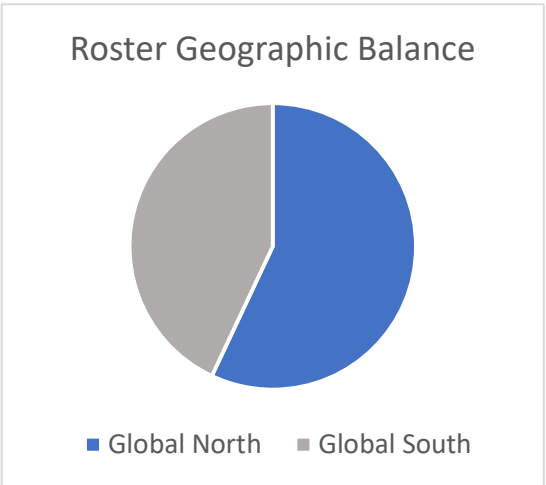
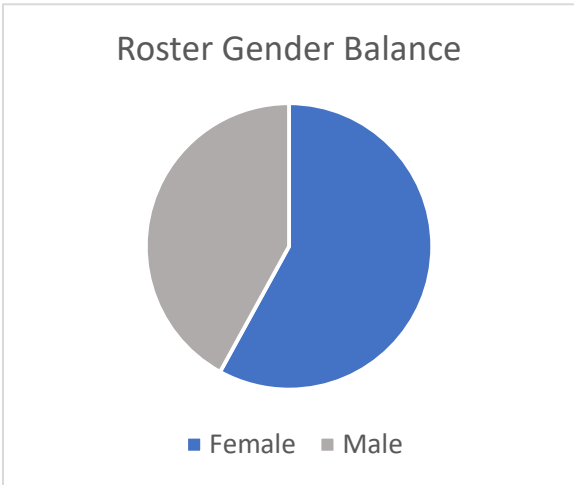
The 23 experts who successfully took part in the December 2018 course in The Hague were certified in early 2019 and as such will be included in the results reported for 2019.

Roster Management

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response ensured that new experts with specific expertise, language profile and regional experience, were certified onto the Roster, in line with the needs of the international community. At the end of 2018, the Roster comprised **710 specially trained, active duty, deployable**

¹ In total, 429 applications were received for the two training of 46 spaces.

experts from all regions of the world, more than half of them female, and over 40% from the Global South. Their expertise includes some 50 professional categories ranging from criminal and human rights investigators, legal experts, and forensic specialists, to SGBV investigators and interpreters.



Deployment of Experts

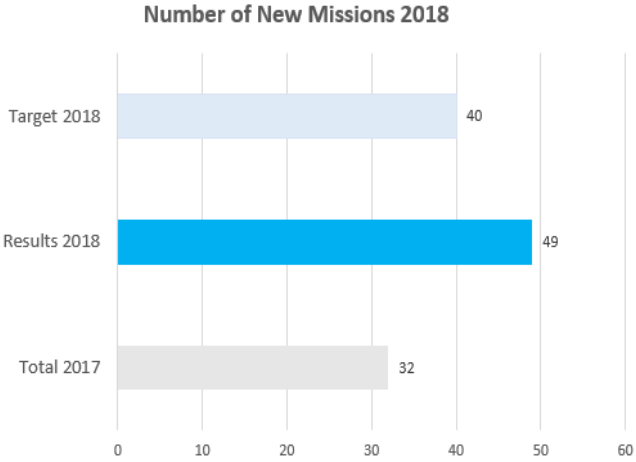
Deploying its Roster of experts to support accountability processes worldwide is at the centre of Justice Rapid Response’s operations.

In 2018, **Justice Rapid Response received 78 inquiries**. Compared to previous years, the organization was able to respond positively to a greater proportion of inquiries (62% in 2018 compared to 46% in 2017), partly due to the increased availability of funding for deployments.

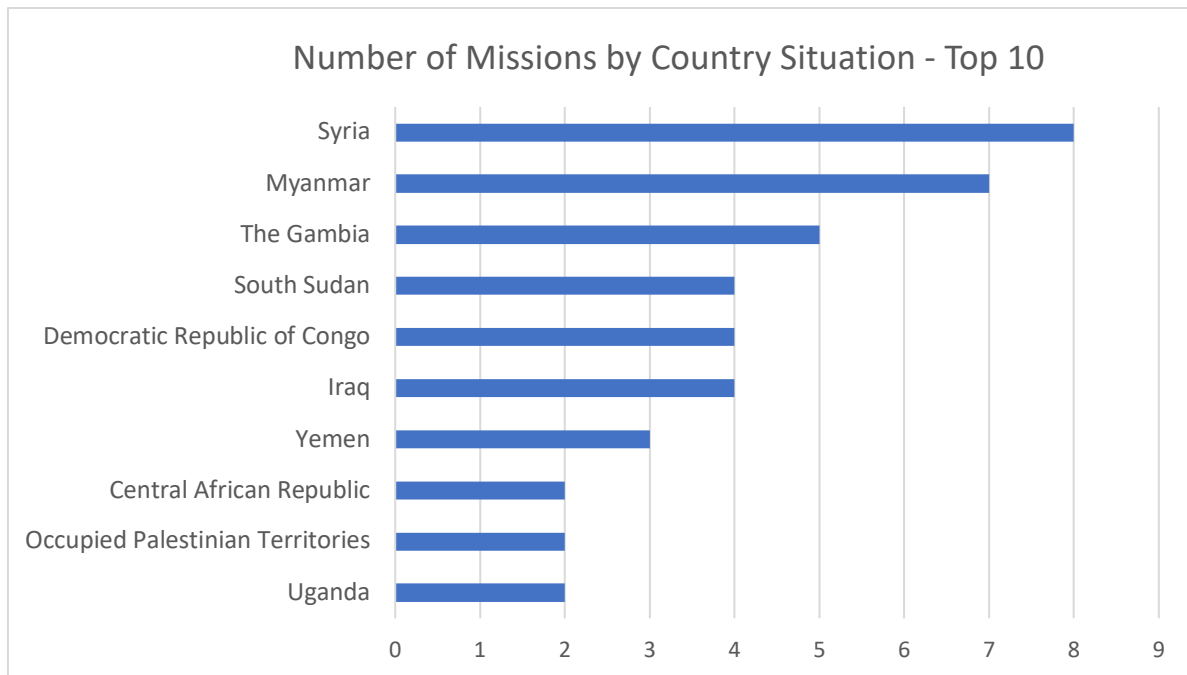
Justice Rapid Response facilitated **49 new missions worldwide by providing 71 qualified experts** to international organizations, national authorities and civil society organizations that requested expertise.

These results exceeded the targets set for 2018, which had been presented and approved by the Executive Board in 2017.

In total, **83 Justice Rapid Response experts were engaged in 57 distinct missions in 2018**. This includes 8 missions carried over from 2017, in addition to the 49 new missions.



Experts were deployed to support accountability processes for several countries affected by conflict or engaged in transitional justice processes:



Through the deployment of its experts, Justice Rapid Response supports **three main groups of actors** engaged in accountability processes for international crimes and human rights violations:

- The international community/multilateral organizations
- States/national authorities
- Civil society organizations

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response continued to support international institutions that have a mandate or jurisdiction to investigate or conduct fact-finding into international crimes and serious human rights violations. With the range of expertise on the Justice Rapid Response roster, Justice Rapid Response is able to identify and provide specific expertise such as on SGBV from the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women Justice Experts Roster, as well as expertise in monitoring and investigating crimes and violations involving children. Justice Rapid Response has also deployed a wide range of expertise including criminal investigators, prosecutions experts, military experts, forensic pathologist, transitional justice expert and SGBV experts. Demand for SGBV expertise from the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women SGBV Justice Experts Roster has continued to be high in 2018, illustrating yet again the importance and success of the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women partnership.

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response facilitated or supported 35 missions and 42 deployments for accountability efforts undertaken by the international community. International and multilateral organizations continue to represent the majority of Justice Rapid Response’s deployments.

In addition to identifying experts to the Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar and the Commission of Inquiry on Syria, Justice Rapid Response also identified experts to be recruited by the ongoing Human Rights Council-mandated mechanisms.

SUPPORTING STATES

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response continued to support States committed to investigating and prosecuting, or otherwise addressing, international crimes and serious human rights violations, but requiring some additional capacity to do so. In this context, Justice Rapid Response has pursued its work under the National Justice Programme (formerly called the Complementarity Programme) which aims to provide mentoring assistance to ensure longer-term strengthening of domestic justice capacities. This programme was created in 2013 in response to the increasing number of States with jurisdiction over acts that may constitute genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or serious human rights violations, that seek to exercise their primary responsibility under international law to investigate and prosecute such crimes. The programme seeks to identify necessary assistance to the given situation and ensure local ownership of accountability, as well as to strengthen the investigative and prosecutorial capacity of States in the long-term by providing experts to mentor national counterparts. Justice Rapid Response is thus providing a concrete means through which to achieve the implementation of the Principle of Complementarity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response facilitated 12 missions and 26 deployments to support accountability efforts undertaken by States. These states include the Central African Republic, Guatemala, The Gambia and Uganda. This represents a significant increase from previous years and demonstrates the need for expertise and capacity-building to enable this promising avenue for accountability.

UGANDA – Supporting and strengthening justice in Uganda to address international crimes, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)



The lead prosecutor in the Kwoyelo case addresses the Court in Gulu in March 2019

Background: In 2008, the Ugandan Government set up the International Crimes Division (ICD) to try perpetrators of war crimes. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) is in need of capacity to tackle complex cases before the ICD, especially with regards to SGBV. As it prepared for the trial phase in the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) Commander Thomas Kwoyelo case, with the indictment on 93 counts (including murder, rape, enslavement and kidnapping) confirmed in August 2018, the ODPP faced a number of challenges. In particular, it needed stronger evidence on SGBV counts.

Justice Rapid Response Expertise: By providing Ugandan prosecutors and police investigators with expertise in the areas in which they face challenges in the Kwoyelo case (SGBV investigation, witness protection, psychosocial support, analysis), Justice Rapid Response has ensured that the Ugandan prosecuting authorities are better equipped to prepare for a successful trial. After the first year of this two-year project, the mentorship provided by Justice Rapid Response's Roster experts had a concrete positive impact on the capacity of key stakeholders involved in the investigation and prosecution of the Kwoyelo case. The prosecution team in Uganda has stronger evidence relating to SGBV than it had initially and both prosecutors and investigators mentored have been using the skills and knowledge acquired during the mentoring missions.

Background: In January 2017, the Republic of The Gambia emerged from decades of dictatorship. The new government soon initiated a transitional justice process to deal with past human rights violations and crimes alleged to have been committed in the country under the regime of former President Yahya Jammeh. Realizing some of the challenges lying ahead, the Ministry of Justice quickly identified and engaged with a number of international partners, including Justice Rapid Response, to ensure that this transitional justice process could succeed. In early 2018, the Attorney General’s Chambers and Ministry of Justice invited Justice Rapid Response to identify areas where its Roster expertise, through a mentoring approach, could meaningfully contribute to the work of various accountability actors.



A forensic expert deployed by Justice Rapid Response examines victim remains

Justice Rapid Response Expertise: In April 2018, Justice Rapid Response carried out extensive consultations to shape its engagement in support of locally-led accountability and transitional justice processes. Later in the year, Justice Rapid Response deployed three missions involving three forensic experts, a psychosocial expert, a prosecutions expert and an investigations expert to support criminal justice actors in The Gambia with both ongoing cases (NIA 9 case) and developing an investigations and prosecutions strategy for future cases. Justice Rapid Response has also begun supporting the work of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) in The Gambia. In 2018,

Justice Rapid Response deployed two experts to support the TRRC shortly after it was launched on 15 October 2018. JRR’s collaboration with The Gambia has already produce concrete results in the on-going NIA 9 case, including with the prosecution team now having critical physical evidence in relation to the identity and cause of death of the victim in the case, and in other cases with the return of the remains of three victims to their respective families, providing some form of closure until justice can be done.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Civil society organizations often find themselves de facto at the start of the accountability chain, where they are in a position to document and safeguard potential evidence of atrocity crimes, and to channel such information to future accountability mechanisms. Many of these organizations lack the necessary skills to carry out these functions and have requested assistance from the Justice Rapid Response Roster to acquire these skills. Civil society organizations are increasingly involved in the documentation of international crimes and serious violations of human rights. In the absence of credible accountability mechanisms or the rule of law, civil society organizations and affected communities work to collect and preserve information about international crimes and serious violations of human rights for the purpose of investigations, prosecution and other justice processes.

Against this backdrop, Justice Rapid Response developed the Civil Society Programme to promote justice for international crimes and serious human rights violations by strengthening the capacity of select civil society organizations to effectively identify, collect and preserve information related to international crimes and serious violations of human rights in a victim-centered way for the purpose of investigations, prosecutions or other justice processes. Through the Civil Society Programme, Justice Rapid Response deploys experts to provide tailored capacity-building and mentoring to select civil society organizations on strategies for documentation, and on methods to safely interview survivors and witnesses.

In 2018, Justice Rapid Response deployed 15 experts to 10 missions to support four civil society organizations in four different countries. As a result of Justice Rapid Response’s work under this programme, civil society organizations have increased capacity to effectively identify, collect, and preserve information in a victim-centered way for the purpose of investigations, prosecutions or other justice processes.

“Promoting Justice and Accountability in the MENA Region: What Role Can Non-State and Civil Society Actors Play?” In September 2018, a roundtable with partners, experts and practitioners was hosted in Beirut, Lebanon. The roundtable gathered 20 participants and provided a unique opportunity to bring together civil society organizations that Justice Rapid Response has worked with, experts from the Justice Rapid Response Roster, representatives of international mechanisms, such as the IIIM for Syria, and other relevant stakeholders. The roundtable centered on discussions on the evolving context in the field of international justice, potential challenges and new opportunities to promote justice and accountability in the MENA region. It resulted in the participants outlining a number of concrete proposed actions.

Outreach and Communications

Strategic and sustained outreach efforts have been instrumental to Justice Rapid Response’s ability to identify and pursue opportunities to assist with international investigations, which have resulted in an increased number of requests for investigative assistance, and to secure continued support for its activities. Specifically, efforts undertaken in these areas have served to increase awareness among government organizations and other stakeholders that could benefit from using Justice Rapid Response’s services, pursue collaboration with key partners, and advance resource mobilization objectives. Justice Rapid Response continues to actively create and pursue opportunities to conduct its strategic outreach efforts. In 2018, Justice Rapid Response made communications one of its priorities. Objectives included improving its communications material, creating new forms of media to promote its work, producing editorial pieces and making more sustained use of social media. Based on its strengthened and results-based communications strategy, Justice Rapid Response has been able to showcase the impact of its work to a broader public, while also aligning communications efforts with operational priorities.

Justice Rapid Response and its activities were given visibility among relevant circles through a number of outreach events. These included:

“Investigating Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-based Violence: The Case of Syria and Iraq”, 23 April 2018, Geneva, Switzerland. Justice Rapid Response and UN Women held an expert discussion and film screening on the topic of “Investigating Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-based Violence: The Case of Syria and Iraq”. The event, co-hosted by the Permanent Missions of Canada, Sierra Leone and Switzerland to the UN in Geneva, brought together high-level representatives of States, bodies of the United Nations, international organizations and civil society. The discussion was an opportunity to examine the importance of specialized expertise in the investigation and documentation of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and in particular to learn about the work of experts deployed from the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women SGBV Justice Experts Roster. The expert panel was composed of: Kate Gilmore, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights; Michelle Jarvis, Deputy Head of the Syria International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria (IIIM); Rabiaa El Garani, a SGBV investigator on the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women Justice Experts Roster; and Andras Vamos-Goldman, then-Executive Director of Justice Rapid Response. The panel was moderated by Ms. Patricia Sellers, Gender Advisor to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and expert on the Justice Rapid Response-UN Women Justice Experts Roster.

“Securing Accountability for International Crimes at the National Level: The Case of The Gambia”, 1 November 2018, New York, USA. Co-hosted by Justice Rapid Response, The Permanent Mission of Canada, the Permanent Mission of The the Gambia, this event at the United Nations was an occasion to illuminate the critical contributions of Justice Rapid Response forensic experts during their mission in The Gambia. The panel sought to engage UN Member States, civil society, justice practitioners and the UN community in a dialogue about the impact of tailored support to national authorities as part of an effort to end impunity, build strong institutions and foster peace. Speakers included H.E. Mr. Marc-André Blanchard, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations; H.E. Mr. Lang Yabou, Permanent Representative of The Gambian Mission to the United Nations; H.E. Mr. Abubacarr M. Tambadou, Attorney General of The Gambia; Ms. Nina Suomalainen, Executive Director, Justice Rapid Response; Dr. Samuel Ferreira, Forensic Expert deployed to The Gambia by Justice Rapid Response; Ms. Nana-Jo N’Dow, Executive Director, African Network against Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances (ANEKED).

“Investigating and Prosecuting International Crimes at the National Level: Realizing the Promise of Complementarity in The Gambia and The Case for Specialized Expertise”, 6 December 2018, The Hague, the Netherlands. This side event to the seventeenth session of the ICC Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, co-hosted by Canada, the Netherlands and The Gambia, provided a forum to discuss the challenges States can be faced with when seeking to achieve accountability for international crimes and serious human rights violations and the importance of supporting national mechanisms in such efforts. Speakers included Minister Abubacarr M. Tambadou, Attorney General and Minister of Justice of The Gambia; Mr. Muhammed Sandeng, activist representing the victim community and son of the late Solo Sandeng; Dr. Steve Naidoo, Forensic Pathologist and member of the Justice Rapid Response Expert Roster who was recently deployed to The Gambia and featured in the short film; Mr. Amady Ba, Head of International Cooperation, Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court (ICC).

These events provided visibility for Justice Rapid Response, contributing to strengthening the support for the organization both in the short and longer term. Justice Rapid Response also engaged actively in relevant discussions and conferences and explored opportunities to build collaborative relations with States and organizations that can benefit from Justice Rapid Response experts, participate in its activities, advocate for the use of its Roster, or support expert deployments in partner countries.

In 2018, other outreach activities included:

- Participation in a meeting of Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC)
- Participation in the Drexel Symposium
- Participation at the *Conférence sur le renforcement des relations de confiance entre la Force conjointe du G5 et les populations locales au Sahel*. (Conference on strengthening the relationship between G5 Sahel Joint Forces and the local communities of G5 Sahel countries - Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger).

In addition, Justice Rapid Response’s Executive Director spoke to a range of audiences, including:

- An event at the UN entitled *“Prevention, accountability and gender – international responses and fighting impunity by investigating and prosecuting sexual and gender-based violence,”* co-hosted by the Permanent Mission of Finland and the Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein;
- A panel entitled *“Promoting accountability for conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence as a key aspect of conflict prevention”* at the 2018 meeting of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network in Berlin.

GOVERNANCE

Justice Rapid Response's Executive Board is composed of the following States, organizations and individuals: the Netherlands (current Chair as of December 2018), Argentina, Canada (Observer), Colombia, Finland (outgoing Chair in 2018), Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Switzerland (Vice-Chair), Uganda (interim Chair in 2018), UN Women, Ms. Athalia Molokomme and Ms. Yasmin Sooka. Its Secretariat carries out operations through two legal entities, JRR Association in Switzerland, and Justice Rapid Response USA in the United States. The Secretariat is headed by an Executive Director, who is selected by the Executive Board. Ms. Nina Suomalainen was appointed to this position in May 2018, seconded by Finland. The Justice Rapid Response Executive Board meets twice a year, providing oversight and guidance to the Secretariat.

FINANCIALS

Justice Rapid Response would like to thank our donors for 2018:

- Australia – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Canada – Global Affairs Canada, Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs)
- Denmark – Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Permanent Mission of Denmark to the UN in Geneva
- Finland – Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI)
- Ireland – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Liechtenstein – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Culture
- Luxembourg – Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
- Netherlands – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Switzerland – Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
- United Kingdom – Foreign & Commonwealth Office
- UNICEF
- UN Women

Justice Rapid Response USA would also like to thank:

- Draper Richards Kaplan
- Forensic DNA Research Institute, IPDNA, Brasilia, Brazil

An audit of Justice Rapid Response's Financial Statements for 2018 has been completed.



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Report of the independent auditor
to the Executive Board of
JRR Association,
Geneva

We have audited the financial statements of JRR Association, Geneva, which comprise the balance sheet, statement of receipts and expenses and notes for the year-ended December 31, 2018.

Executive Director's Responsibility

The Executive Director's is responsible for the preparation of these financial statements prepared in accordance with the accounting principles prescribed by the Swiss Code of Obligations and those disclosed in the accompanying notes, and JRR Association's by-laws. This responsibility includes designing, implementing and maintaining an internal control system relevant to the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. The Executive Director is further responsible for selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Swiss law and Swiss Auditing Standards. These standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making these risk assessments, the auditor considers the internal control system relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control system. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2018 comply with the accounting principles prescribed by the Swiss Code of Obligations and those disclosed in the accompanying notes, and JRR Association's by-laws.

RSM Audit Switzerland SA

JR Howarth
Audit expert
Auditor in charge

O Bétrisey
Audit expert

Carouge, May 8, 2019

Enclosures: Financial statements (balance sheet, statement of receipts and expenses and notes)

THE POWER OF BEING UNDERSTOOD

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RSM Audit Switzerland SA is a member of the RSM network and trades as RSM. RSM is the trading name used by the members of the RSM network. Each member of the RSM network is an independent accounting and consulting firm which practices in its own right. The RSM network is not itself a separate legal entity in any jurisdiction.



JUSTICE RAPID RESPONSE ASSOCIATION, GENEVA

Balance sheet, as at 31 December		
	(in CHF)	
	2018	2017
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash ³ and cash equivalents and current assets with a stock exchange price	1,531,374.38	1,119,581.31
Prepaid expenses and accrued income	221,251.68	32,121.19
Total current assets	1,752,626.06	1,151,702.50
Total assets	1,752,626.06	1,151,702.50
Liabilities and funds⁴		
Current liabilities		
Trade accounts payable	110,330.24	8,772.81
Deferred income and accrued expenses	23,453.94	31,459.76
<i>Accrued expenses</i>	<i>23,453.94</i>	<i>31,459.76</i>
Total current liabilities	133,784.18	40,232.57
Total liabilities	133,784.18	40,232.57
Funds		
Donor funds	706,185.39	331,288.56
JRR fund	912,656.49	780,181.37
<i>JRR fund</i>	<i>715,856.64</i>	<i>570,579.41</i>
<i>Roster management and deployment coordination fee fund</i>	<i>229,768.73</i>	<i>221,374.96</i>
<i>Foreign exchange differences</i>	<i>(32,968.88)</i>	<i>(11,773.00)</i>
Total funds	1,618,841.88	1,111,469.93
Total liabilities and funds	1,752,626.06	1,151,702.50

Statement of receipts and expenses for the year ended 31 December		
	(in CHF)	
	2018	2017
Receipts		
Revenue from donors	3,638,557.82	2,288,810.96
Total operating income	3,638,557.82	2,288,810.96
Operating expenses		
Personnel expenses	1,022,466.96	761,576.85
Rent and utilities	110,500.00	110,500.00
General and administration expenses	197,517.59	103,379.17
Consultant fees	160,238.06	118,458.10
Outreach expenses	69,787.71	54,133.29
Professional fees	35,458.80	28,230.80
Executive Board and Group expenses	21,945.32	17,885.40
Other operating expenses	1,443,649.23	925,207.30
<i>Deployments</i>	<i>675,491.07</i>	<i>380,334.27</i>
<i>Recruitment expenses, including sponsorships</i>	<i>320,717.63</i>	<i>295,133.95</i>
<i>JRR USA</i>	<i>447,440.53</i>	<i>249,739.08</i>
Total operating expenses	3,061,563.67	2,119,370.91
Operating result	576,994.15	169,440.05
Financial expenses	(48,501.68)	(5,418.30)
<i>Interest expense</i>	<i>(503.24)</i>	<i>(467.69)</i>
<i>Other financial expenses</i>	<i>(4,326.40)</i>	<i>(4,950.61)</i>
<i>Foreign exchange loss – net</i>	<i>(43,672.04)</i>	<i>-</i>
Financial income	75.53	5,659.25
<i>Foreign exchange gain – net</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5,425.90</i>
<i>Interest income</i>	<i>75.53</i>	<i>233.35</i>
Total non-operating income / (expenses)	(48,426.15)	240.95
Excess / (shortage) of receipts over expenses	528,568.00	169,681.00
Total release of funds	641,164.00	517,510.00
Total allocation to funds	(1,169,732.00)	(687,191.00)
Net surplus or (deficit) for the period⁵	-	-

³ Includes cash allocated to Temporarily Restricted Funds.

⁴ Temporarily Restricted Funds are subject to donor-imposed stipulations & restrictions. These funds are limited in both substance and time. They cannot be used for any other purpose than the donor intent. Please refer to the JRR Association audit for a full description.

⁵ As a Swiss non-profit association, we are restricted from showing either a profit or a loss on our statement of receipts and expenses.