

PRACTICE NOTE 11

**A SURVIVOR-CENTRED  
APPROACH TO  
SEEKING  
REPARATION  
FOR TORTURE**

February 2024

**REDRESS**

Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors

This guide is part of a series of Practice Notes designed to support those seeking to obtain reparation awards on behalf of survivors and victims of torture and other grave human rights violations. The series is aimed at practitioners who assist survivors in their journeys to reparation. Other REDRESS Practice Notes complementary to this one include Holistic Strategic Litigation Against Torture, Implementation of Decisions, and Reparation for Torture Survivors.

This Practice Note aims to facilitate the understanding and practice of a survivor-centred approach to strategic human rights litigation and reparation claims. It is based on REDRESS' experience, desktop research, and consultations carried out with 12 practitioners from international and national organisations with vast experience in supporting survivors in obtaining reparation in different regions. While this Practice Note provides useful guidance based on experience to date, it is important to acknowledge that practices in this area are constantly evolving.

REDRESS would like to express its gratitude to the following organisations for sharing their experience and expertise: **Advocacy Forum Nepal**, **Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)**, **Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)**, the **Global Survivors Fund (GSF)**, the **Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa (IHRDA)**, the **Initiative for Strategic Litigation in Africa (ISLA)**, the **National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (NGLHRC)**, **Centro de Derechos Humanos Paso del Norte**, and the **Southern Africa Litigation Centre (SALC)**. We acknowledge the vital work that these and many other organisations in the Global South carry out with survivors. Their experiences have been a significant source of inspiration in progressing our own survivor-centred strategic litigation and reparation practice.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACommHPR</b>	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
<b>CAT</b>	UN Committee Against Torture
<b>CEDAW</b>	UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
<b>CRC</b>	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRSV</b>	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>HRC</b>	UN Human Rights Committee
<b>IACtHR</b>	Inter-American Court of Human Rights
<b>LGBTIQ+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Intersex, Queer, and other sexual and gender identities
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

# INTRODUCTION

Under international law, survivors of torture and other human rights violations have a right to reparation and States have an obligation to fulfil this right. Reparation measures can take the form of restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition (see REDRESS Practice Note on [Reparation for Torture Survivors](#)).

Over the years, human rights bodies and courts have developed minimum standards on reparation for torture, including that reparation must be survivor-centred (see [CAT General Comment No. 3, para. 4](#)). Reparation should consider the unique harm suffered by survivors and reflect their needs, wishes, priorities, and expectations. Survivors should be able to claim reparation in an accessible, informed, and safe manner, and to participate in reparative processes.

Reparation processes, whether at a national or international level, are typically long and complex, involving various stages: filing and litigating a claim, and implementing any orders made. This long-time frame has multiple implications and requires that the practices discussed in this guide are reviewed throughout the entire process.

This Practice Note sets out the concepts and principles of a survivor-centred approach, provides practical guidance for their implementation, and explores lessons learned to enhance best practices.

It is primarily aimed at NGOs and lawyers who represent survivors of torture in strategic human rights litigation and reparation claims before international, regional, or national courts and mechanisms. It will also be useful for anyone who is supporting survivors of torture in other ways, and for practitioners bringing other types of legal action at national level including civil claims and criminal complaints.

While most of the principles and considerations included in this Practice Note are also applicable to other reparation processes, such as national administrative reparation schemes and mass claims (involving a large number of survivors), additional considerations are required in such cases, which are not covered in detail in this guide.

### A note on terminology

Survivors: In this Practice Note we use the term “survivor” to refer to both individuals who have survived human rights violations as well as their families and communities, and to the families of those who died as a result of violations. Our use of the word “survivor” rather than “victim” is in no way intended to diminish the legal status of persons as victims of crimes and violations under domestic and international law, either individually or collectively. We use the term “survivor” to reinforce the self-determination, dignity, and strength of individual victims and emphasise the possibility of healing and rehabilitation.

Survivor-centred approach: In this Practice Note we adopt the term “survivor-centred approach” for clarity and convenience. It is essential to emphasise that there is no singular, universally applicable approach, and that practices in this area are constantly evolving. The relevance and methods of implementing the principles and practices detailed in this guide can also differ based on the specific context and circumstances. The use of the term “approach” is not meant to exclude alternative approaches created with the shared objective of centring survivors in reparation processes.

# IMPLEMENTING A SURVIVOR-CENTRED APPROACH

A survivor-centred approach is one that puts the rights, needs and dignity of survivors, including their well-being and safety, at the forefront of efforts to prevent and respond to human rights violations. The purpose of a survivor-centred approach to human rights litigation for reparation is to ensure participation, reduce the risk of further harm and re-traumatisation to the survivor, and to reinforce their agency and self-determination.

A survivor-centred approach is important for all NGOs and practitioners working with survivors of torture. REDRESS has identified nine key principles to be considered when working with survivors of torture.

## Relationship with Survivors

- ▶ **Responsive**
- ▶ **Do No Harm**
- ▶ **Non-Discrimination**

## Representing Survivors

- ▶ **Confidentiality and Informed Consent**
- ▶ **Managing Expectations**
- ▶ **Accountability of Practitioners**

## Accompanying Survivors

- ▶ **Holistic Accompaniment**
- ▶ **Survivor Participation and Empowerment**
- ▶ **Sustainability**

## Responsive

A survivor-centred approach in human rights litigation for reparation requires that practitioners consult with survivors and are responsive to their needs and priorities. To do this effectively requires practitioners to be fully aware of the circumstances of the survivor and of any actual or potential trauma.

Instructions and advice. Practitioners must act on behalf of the survivor and on their instructions. This means consulting with the survivor to obtain a full understanding of what they want and providing them with sufficient information and advice to allow them to effectively make informed choices and decisions.

### Initial Points for Discussion with Survivors

- Background and vulnerabilities: Where does the survivor live and is it a safe environment for them? Do they have specific needs due to any circumstance of vulnerability (economic, social, gender identity, disabilities, etc.)?
- Violations: What are the facts, when did they take place, and how have the events impacted the survivor? Can the survivor identify the alleged perpetrators and institutions involved?
- Goals and potential remedies: What are the survivor's goals and expected outcomes from the process?
- Support: What support is the survivor seeking? Is the survivor in contact with other trusted practitioners or NGOs related to this issue?
- Reparation: What reparation is the survivor seeking, what are their priority measures, and how do they expect it to be implemented? If compensation is sought, what amount do they consider reasonable?
- Legal avenues: Is the survivor willing to pursue litigation and offer evidence in court if necessary? Are there any legal avenues for reparation that they are unwilling to pursue?



Agency. Practitioners must respect survivors' agency, including their decisions on the extent and level of their own involvement in the legal process. Practitioners should facilitate survivor involvement in strategy design and development where they wish to be involved (see [Survivor Participation and Empowerment]).

Referrals. Where the goals of the supporting NGO and the survivor's needs do not align, the survivor's desires should be prioritised. If it is not possible to do so, practitioners should refer the survivor to another NGO that might respond better to their needs and expectations. Open and transparent communication is key in this respect.

### CASE STUDY

In a case involving a female survivor trafficked from Kenya to Namibia and enslaved for sexual purposes, the survivor declined a number of possible reparative efforts, including filing a case against the government, because they were likely to result in protracted proceedings. The supporting NGO respected the survivor's wishes and dropped the proposed legal actions.

Client care letter. To mitigate the risk of potential conflicts between the survivor's goals and the practitioners' legal and ethical duties, practitioners should clearly establish and outline their duties, obligations, and boundaries to survivors at the outset. Engagement terms should be set out in writing where possible (see Annex D: Client Care Letter of REDRESS Practice Note on Case Management & Digital Security).

### PRACTICE

Where survivors have expressed the desire to advocate for unlawful penalties for the accused in their pursuit for reparative justice, practitioners stressed the importance of holding pre-emptive and ongoing discussions to establish clear boundaries to their work and mandate.

## Do No Harm

A survivor-centred approach requires practitioners to work in a compassionate and culturally sensitive manner and to adhere to the principle of “do no harm”. This means not to jeopardise the physical and psychological safety and well-being of survivors and those who interact with them. It also requires awareness of the impact of trauma and how it might manifest itself (a “trauma-sensitive approach”; see REDRESS [Training Module: Working with Survivors of Trauma](#)).

Re-traumatisation. Practitioners must be aware of the potential risk of re-traumatisation and make every effort to avoid causing harm. This may involve planning carefully so that the survivor only needs to describe what happened to them once, conducting trauma-sensitive interviews, facilitating psychological support where needed, and anticipating situations that might re-traumatise the survivor to be able to intervene in good time.

Trauma-sensitive interviews. Practitioners should interview survivors in a trauma-sensitive manner to prevent re-traumatisation, preserve their trust, and accurately document their experiences and violations of their rights. This requires skill and practice.

### PRACTICE

Practitioners highlighted the importance of seeking training and enhancing trauma-sensitive practices, particularly when working with survivors in situations of vulnerability. Some practitioners noted the value of involving an inter-disciplinary team in interviews, as professionals from various fields may employ different techniques and provide unique insights based on their expertise and the purpose of the interview. Importantly, practitioners emphasised the need to focus both on adopting a trauma-sensitive approach and on understanding the legal procedures of the relevant jurisdiction or international mechanism to prevent rendering the testimony inadmissible as evidence. This includes maintaining objectivity, using open-ended questions to allow survivors to describe their experiences, and separating investigatory and emotional lines of questioning.

Risk analysis. Comprehensive contextual risk assessments are vital to ensure the physical safety of survivors. It is recommended that practitioners work with survivors, national partners, and other experts to analyse the social, political, and security risks associated with their work. This requires an active and continuous process, often using a checklist approach.

### Tips for Risk Assessments

- Evaluate the context of the survivor and the relevant country, the alleged violations, and the parties involved (e.g. alleged perpetrators).
- Conduct periodic risk assessments.
- Remain vigilant and responsive to changes that may impact the existence or level of risk.
- Collaborate with partner NGOs and experts, especially if direct assessments are not possible.

Mitigation. Once risks are identified, practitioners should implement mitigating measures. This may include steps to protect against retaliation, re-victimisation and re-traumatisation, and taking additional precautions when necessary. Secure, encrypted channels of communication should be used. If necessary, local actors should be identified who can serve as focal points and first responders to enable prompt action to address risks.

### CASE STUDY

In a case litigated in the Inter-American system of human rights where the survivor had been threatened for 20 years by State officials, the representing NGO requested precautionary measures to ensure the survivor's protection. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) granted the measures on the same day.

## Tips for Safe Communication and Information Sharing

- Use encrypted platforms (e.g. Tresorit, Proton mail) or digital systems to share documents.
- Adopt information-sharing agreements when involving external parties (e.g. confidentiality agreements).
- Use code names for projects and survivors when involving external parties.
- Prioritise in-person meetings when possible and safer, without mobile phones in the room when sharing sensitive information.
- Use a Microsoft document inspector to remove metadata from documents when the author's safety is at risk.
- Avoid unnecessary communication with survivors where safe methods cannot be secured in States where hostility towards and surveillance of human rights defenders and survivors is common.

See also REDRESS Practice Note: [Case Management and Digital Security for Strategic Litigation against Torture](#).

## Non-Discrimination

A survivor-centred approach is based on non-discrimination. Every survivor, irrespective of their race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, language, religion, political beliefs, or any other characteristic, must be treated in a fair, dignified, and compassionate manner.

Respect. Practitioners must respect a survivor's choice and expression of identity and empathise with survivors from marginalised communities. Practitioners should always avoid replicating structural discrimination and inequalities.

## PRACTICE

When working with LGBTIQ+ survivors in Kenya, a group which is structurally discriminated against by both State officials and private actors, one NGO conducts initial trainings for all new community paralegals to accelerate access to justice. This training encompasses aspects of client engagement, basic legal procedures, handling confidential cases, and strategies to mitigate safety risks.

Cultural awareness. At times, cultural sensitivities may not be immediately obvious. Some topics may be difficult for survivors to talk about or there may be cultural and language differences when discussing specific issues. Practitioners should be prepared to take alternative, respectful measures, such as involving individuals who survivors trust in conversations, or allowing more time to address cultural gaps, where needed.

## CASE STUDY

During empirical research on sexual violence in South Africa, elderly female survivors were reluctant to share their experiences with the practitioner due to the cultural and age differences. To address this, the interviews were conducted with community workers who had built strong relationships with these survivors over time. The community workers served as counsellors and guides during interviews, assisting the survivors to articulate their experiences, thus ensuring their comfort and respect throughout the process.

Context awareness. In some cases, practitioners may appoint other lawyers or practitioners to represent the survivor in reparation processes. A careful selection should be based on the lawyer's legal and technical expertise, and their ability to work with survivors with care and understanding. Also, the importance of having lawyers who understand the context of violations relevant to the survivor should not be underestimated.

## PRACTICE

One organisation working with LGBTIQ+ survivors in Kenya finds it valuable to collaborate with lawyers from within the LGBTIQ+ community who possess a deep understanding of the legal and reparation needs and concerns of LGBTIQ+ survivors.

## Confidentiality and Informed Consent

A survivor-centred approach respects confidentiality and informed consent. Practitioners should honour survivors' right to privacy, which includes control and autonomy over their testimony, identity, and image.

Informed consent. Practitioners must obtain explicit and specific consent to represent and support survivors in human rights litigation or other reparation work. The survivor's information cannot be used or shared without such consent. Consent may need to be obtained for various purposes, including litigation, communications, fundraising, and advocacy. In long procedures, periodic reconfirmation of consent is recommended, especially at key moments such as before a judicial appeal or the start of the implementation phase.

See Annex E: Authority to Act of REDRESS Practice Note on Case Management & Digital Security; and Annex A to this Practice Note for a Communications and Fundraising Consent Form.

## CASE STUDY

During the litigation of a case involving a Libyan women's human rights defender before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the survivor initially consented to public advocacy, recognising her case as emblematic of the violence against women and women's human rights defenders in Libya. However, after the Committee held Libya responsible for her torture and ordered a number of reparation measures in 2021, the survivor expressed concerns about information regarding her and the case being portrayed in Libyan media and instructed REDRESS, as her representatives, to refrain from doing public advocacy based on the decision. This case highlights the importance of renewing consent, as survivors' wishes may change over time, and adapting the case strategy accordingly.

### Tips for Consent Protocols

- Specify the purpose of the consent (e.g. litigation, communications, advocacy).
- Provide consent forms in the survivor's native language if possible.
- Emphasise that any changes to agreed terms require further explicit consent.
- Ensure that the survivor is voluntarily participating in interviews with practitioners, understands their purpose, and has the right to refuse any questions.
- Confirm that the survivor understands how information they provide will be used (based on their consent) and who may access it.
- Inform the survivor that interviews may be recorded (by video, audio, or in writing), and highlight options such as audio or video distortion to maintain confidentiality if necessary.
- Inform the survivor of their right to withdraw consent but also the challenges of withdrawing information once it is in the public domain.

Exception. It is important to recognise situations where obtaining consent from survivors to claim reparation is not possible, such as when the survivor is in detention or has been forcibly disappeared. Practitioners may want to consider whether it is appropriate to approach a close family member or representative where seeking direct consent from the survivor is not possible. Once these circumstances change, practitioners should seek to obtain explicit consent.

### **PRACTICE**

The UN treaty bodies provide an exception to the consent requirement for individual communications in cases where the survivor is detained, without access to the outside world, or in cases of enforced disappearance. In these cases, the representative must clarify why the consent cannot be provided by the survivor (read more [here](#)).

Confidentiality. Maintaining confidentiality and security of information when representing and supporting survivors of torture is paramount. Practitioners must securely store information to prevent potential hacking or security breaches that could jeopardize survivors' safety. These considerations should also guide the selection of locations and online platforms to be used for interviews and for sharing information (see [Tips for Safe Communication and Information Sharing] and REDRESS [Practice Note on Case Management & Digital Security](#)).

Anonymity. Special attention is required when survivors wish to remain anonymous. It is essential to clarify what measures can or cannot be taken to ensure anonymity in the relevant reparation processes, recognising that some human rights proceedings may not allow anonymous litigation. In any case, practitioners should inform the survivor of the available measures to protect their identity.



## CASE STUDY

In a case involving an asylum seeker who suffered torture in Libya, the survivor expressed their desire to keep their identity confidential, if possible. Specifically, they requested that REDRESS, acting as their representative, refrain from using their full name in advocacy and communication efforts, which has been implemented. REDRESS informed the survivor that the rules of procedure for individual communications to the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) do not allow anonymous submissions. However, REDRESS clarified that it was possible to request the Committee to exclude the survivor's name from the final decision, which is typically made public. In this case, the survivor confirmed their intention to proceed with the HRC case with the request to omit their name from the final decision.

## Managing Expectations

A survivor-centred approach requires adequate and sensitive management of the expectations of survivors. As mentioned previously, strategic human rights litigation for reparation is often a long and complex process that can be very difficult to predict. Even when reparation measures are ordered, these may not be implemented, or only partially, and the whole process can take many years. This requires open communication with survivors to preserve trust and support their active participation.

## PRACTICE

Practitioners unanimously identified managing expectations as a significant challenge in supporting survivors to obtain reparation. Many emphasised the importance of reassuring survivors of their commitment to support them, while clearly communicating limitations and obstacles to reparation from the outset and throughout the process to avoid unrealistic expectations and mitigate survivor-fatigue (see [Sustainability]). In this regard, it is key to provide realistic estimates of the likely duration of the process and outcomes, as well as clarifying the impact of political circumstances, and of legal and procedural issues, on its progress. Practitioners also highlighted the need to act promptly when opportunities to advance the process do arise.

Transparent communication. Practitioners should discuss with survivors the length, challenges, limitations, costs, and potential outcomes of litigation and implementation processes and the potential influence of external factors (in addition to the [Initial Points for Discussion with Survivors]). These conversations should take place at key points in the process, such as before filing a claim or an appeal, after a judgment has been issued, or at any phase of the proceeding when these considerations may change.

### **Additional points that should be discussed with survivors**

- The estimated duration of proceedings, how the process works in practice, and associated challenges.
- Any financial implications for the survivor; even if they are not expected to pay legal fees and expenses, there could be expenses such as travel or work leave required.
- Possible outcomes of both a successful and an unsuccessful case and the next steps.
- What is likely to be required of survivors, such as taking part in a detailed interview or giving evidence in court.
- The survivor's commitment to a likely protracted process, and the kind of support required to make this sustainable (see also [Sustainability]).
- The form and frequency of interaction with practitioners they can expect and prefer, even when there are no progress-updates.
- The survivor's interest in engaging in public advocacy and their preferred level and form of exposure (e.g. in person, via video, or written statements).
- Potential risks involved in the process.

## CASE STUDY

Two Sudanese human rights defenders, Dr. Medani and Mr. Eissa, represented by REDRESS and partner NGOs, successfully litigated their case before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACommHPR). In 2023, the Commission held Sudan responsible for their arbitrary detention and torture, ordering several reparation measures.

As both clients have passed away, REDRESS informed their families about this important decision which broke the cycle of impunity for attacks on human rights defenders in the country. However, given the armed conflict in Sudan, REDRESS had to emphasise to the families that the likelihood of implementation, including compensation and legal reforms, remains extremely low.

This was key in order not to raise their expectations. The discussions also addressed the families' current needs, risks, and interest in public advocacy and communications (read about the case [here](#)).

Capacities and limitations. Practitioners should be realistic and inform survivors of their own capacities and constraints, including what is beyond their control. It is important to be aware that some survivors may perceive practitioners or NGOs as “gatekeepers” to obtaining reparation or may have an overstated understanding of the role and influence of their representatives in the process. Practitioners should be aware of potential misunderstandings, pre-empt situations that can unrealistically raise the survivor's expectations, and address these concerns in a prompt and sensitive manner.

## Addressing expectations about the reparation process and possible outcomes

- Explain the different mechanisms available to seek reparation, how each of these work in practice, including their advantages and disadvantages.
- Transparently communicate the legal, procedural, and practical obstacles.
- Explain what reparation measures the survivor is likely or not likely to obtain. Where there is no precedent for actual compensation payments being made, that must be made clear to the survivor.
- Inform the survivor if they are unlikely to receive all forms of reparation claimed and stress the challenges of implementation.

## CASE STUDY

In Chad, international NGOs and practitioners avoided discussing reparation measures with survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) to avoid raising their expectations during the early stages of the legal process against Hissène Habré.

It was only after many years of litigation in various courts, when reparation became a possibility, that these matters were addressed. Even at that point, NGOs and practitioners tried to emphasise the unlikelihood of survivors receiving reparation in practice (see REDRESS' and The Global Survivors Fund's [Chad Study](#)).

## Addressing expectations about survivor interaction with practitioners

- Make the practitioner's and NGO's contact details available to the survivor.
- Clarify the survivor's preferred forms of contact and any associated risks.
- Discuss the frequency, nature, and purposes of interactions with the survivor to mitigate the risk of them feeling abandoned by those assisting them.
- Agree upon realistic timeframes for providing updates, including during times when there are no significant developments to report. This will vary on the context.
- Understand whether there are any issues which the survivor does not want to be updated on unless there is an explicit request.

(See also [Survivor Participation and Empowerment]).

## CASE STUDY

During a visit to Guatemala to engage with survivors of CRSV, one organisation proactively informed facilitators and interpreters that the dialogue would not lead to reparation for the survivors. Instead, it was purely intended to inform an advocacy project. However, during the dialogue, survivors became increasingly anxious, fearing that they had forgotten important details about their violations and that other known survivors who were not present would be excluded from potential reparation. As a result, facilitators interrupted the dialogue to clarify its purpose with the assistance of national partners.

## Professional Accountability

A survivor-centred approach promotes the accountability of practitioners to the survivors they are representing or supporting, as well as to partner NGOs. This means that practitioners should ensure that their services reflect the survivor's needs and wishes. Practitioners must also seek to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms recognised by national and international law, and act independently and diligently in accordance with the law and recognised standards and ethics of their profession in their jurisdiction.

Open communication and feedback. Practitioners should promote open and transparent communication and set in place processes designed to ensure they can receive feedback from survivors and partner NGOs. This involves striving to create an environment where survivors and partners feel comfortable expressing their views and concerns, as well as taking steps to address any issues that do arise sensitively and promptly. Many practices highlighted in this guide will be useful in preventing and addressing problems and misunderstandings (see, for example, [Tips for Survivor Engagement Discussions]).

Complaints. Some problems in representation may be particularly grave or may escalate to a point where the survivor wishes to make a complaint. Survivors should be informed from the outset, upon engagement, about the internal mechanisms to use if they wish to make a complaint or raise any concerns, grievances, or deficiencies in the representation or support provided.

### Tips for Practitioner Accountability Mechanisms

- Survivors should be clearly informed of any complaint mechanisms available.
- Complaint mechanisms should be easily accessible and contain clear and simple language.
- Complaints should be handled by independent staff who are not involved in the alleged issues.
- Complaints should be dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner.

## Holistic Accompaniment

A survivor-centred approach must consider the holistic needs of survivors so as to ensure that human rights litigation for reparation has an intrinsic reparative value. Practitioners should understand the survivor's story and circumstances in order to support them in the most healing way possible.

Preliminary assessment. In many cases, survivors require inter-disciplinary expertise and support involving legal, psychosocial, medical, and social aspects. Practitioners can conduct preliminary assessments to identify the survivor's needs, while remaining vigilant about the need to consult other experts on a case-by-case basis (see Annex C: Individual Needs Assessment Form of REDRESS Practice Note on Case Management & Digital Security).

### Tips for Preliminary Support Assessment

- Ask if the survivor is currently receiving any form of support.
- Ask if the survivor has identified any additional support needs, and if they require financial assistance in order to fulfil these needs.
- Assess the likely legal, social, economic and health impacts of the litigation process (or other reparation work) on the survivor.
- Clarify whose perspectives have been considered in evaluating the impact of the litigation process on the survivor, assess whether others should be consulted, and consider the outcomes of further consultation.

Integrated services and referrals. Practitioners should seek to support survivors by either providing services in-house or through referrals, in order to ensure their overall wellbeing. For example, NGOs can map service providers, build partnerships, and establish referral pathways. International NGOs can collaborate with national partners to facilitate provision of such support. Community-based groups and support services can also be valuable in supporting survivor rehabilitation.

## PRACTICE

All consulted practitioners emphasised the importance of offering psychosocial and medical care to survivors. NGOs that could not offer these services themselves formed partnerships with others capable of delivering such care to survivors. Some NGOs integrated trauma-sensitive and psychosocial elements into their work, whilst offering financial support to address medical and psychosocial needs.

Limitations. Survivors have holistic needs and may be concerned about livelihood, household, personal safety, relocation due to risk of violence, childcare or travel costs for court appearances, asylum claims, and more. While practitioners and NGOs should try to address the holistic needs of survivors, they will rarely have the capacity to address all the needs of each survivor they assist. It is important to provide clear information from the outset of interactions about what kind of support practitioners can and cannot offer and what referrals they are and are not able to facilitate.

## CASE STUDY

In a case involving mob violence against two LGBTIQ+ survivors who were publicly assaulted in Kenya, the supporting NGO not only offered mental health care, but was also able to provide food packages and assistance with rent and household needs. The NGO further facilitated the survivors' relocation, addressing the risk of recurring violence and ongoing community exclusion and isolation.



## PRACTICE

Acknowledging the holistic needs of survivors of torture and recognising REDRESS' legal expertise, REDRESS tends to collaborate with other specialist NGOs and practitioners to support its clients in accessing other services, such as psychosocial and medical treatment. REDRESS assesses the holistic needs of all its clients and its capacity to provide additional support on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, REDRESS provides information on "Help for UK-based survivors of torture". This includes initial guidance on (i) justice, accountability, and reparation; (ii) health, trauma, medical support and treatment; (iii) finances, housing, and employment; (iv) asylum, immigration, and detention, and more.

## Survivor Participation and Empowerment

A survivor-centred approach aims to facilitate survivor empowerment and active participation in strategic human rights litigation and reparation claims, particularly where the process includes additional activities beyond the litigation, such as communications or advocacy. These processes can be reparative and empowering for survivors, especially when carried out meaningfully, appropriately, and promptly.

Survivor autonomy and participation. Practitioners should promote survivor autonomy and work with survivors to identify their strengths, needs, and preferences in relation to the relevant process. They should also facilitate decision-making, ensure that survivors are not overly dependent on those assisting them, and take measures to minimise existing power imbalances.

## CASE STUDY

Azul Rojas Marín, a Peruvian transgender woman, successfully litigated her case of torture in the Inter-American system of human rights, with the assistance of REDRESS and partner NGOs. After a long and challenging litigation process, the IACtHR found Peru responsible for torturing Azul and ordered a comprehensive list of reparation measures.

During the process, Azul's personal circumstances evolved, and she is no longer in the same state of vulnerability and exclusion as before. In 2021, Azul shared her experiences and the obstacles she faced in her reparation journey as a speaker at an event dedicated to combatting violence against women and girls organised by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

In 2022, she made a compelling statement during the public apology ceremony conducted by the Peruvian State. Azul also actively participated in hearings related to her case and other events, granted interviews to the media, and started her legal studies.

Today, Azul stands as a prominent LGBTIQ+ activist in Peru, fighting against discriminatory torture. Her case exemplifies how reparation processes can be empowering and underscores the role of practitioners and NGOs in supporting the survivor, understanding and addressing their needs, and facilitating their participation in legal procedures. Azul of course remains the principal architect of her empowerment and resilience (read about the case [here](#)).

Survivor participation. Practitioners should understand and facilitate the survivor's preferred level of participation in the reparation process and clarify the rules of the relevant legal procedure in this regard. These conversations can consider the survivor's priorities and circumstances, the practitioners' resources and limitations, and the length of proceedings, among other factors.

### Tips for discussions about survivor participation in the process

- Explore the kind of engagement and participation that the survivor envisages in the reparation process.
- Clarify that the form and level of survivor participation in the reparation process might be limited to the rules of procedure of the court or body considering the claim.
- Explain the rules of the legal procedure regarding survivor participation and how the NGO or practitioner can facilitate their participation.
- Explain that the survivor can raise any concerns about their participation, the process, or the assisting practitioner or NGO at any stage.

See also [Tips to Address Major Areas of Expectations] and [Do no harm].

Mutual learning and information sharing. Survivors are experts by experience and interactions between them and practitioners should promote mutual learning. For instance, when survivors are not familiar with legal concepts or procedures, practitioners can play an important role in facilitating their understanding. Practitioners can also learn from the survivor's perspective and expertise on justice and reparation. Such interactions can expand beyond the legal issues to contextual, cultural, and other aspects.

### CASE STUDY

In Nepal, reparation has been mostly understood by both the State and survivors as monetary compensation only. Practitioners have taken legal and non-legal steps, including litigation and training, to broaden the understanding of reparation. They also continue to inform survivors about their rights and available reparation measures while being cautious not to raise unrealistic expectations. These efforts have led survivors in Nepal to show an increasing interest in seeking guarantees of non-repetition and additional forms of individual reparation, such as rehabilitation.

Supporting survivor-leaders. While it is important to support survivors in becoming survivor-leaders if they so wish, it is equally important to recognise that not all survivors want this. Practitioners should respect and reflect the survivor's preferences.

## PRACTICE

When supporting survivors who are interested in becoming advocates or leaders, practitioners emphasised their role in sharing their own expertise on the right to reparation and States' obligations to prevent and address human rights violations. Some practitioners also found it valuable to train survivors from rural communities and poor economic backgrounds on oral and written advocacy and lobbying skills, including how to present proposals to government officials, law and policymakers. Other practitioners have facilitated the creation of survivor platforms and networks. Finally, practitioners emphasised the need to understand survivors' preferences and to tailor specific activities and support to their needs.

## Sustainability

Securing reparation for survivors can take many years. To adopt a survivor-centred approach, practitioners, including those working with NGOs, should ensure that their efforts to support survivors through reparation processes are sustainable. This includes adopting measures to pre-empt and address survivor or community fatigue, as well as efforts to secure financial support for the work.

Initial assessment. Before committing themselves to support survivors in their pursuit of reparation, practitioners should assess what will be required to take on the case, manage it effectively and sustain their involvement through what could be a long process. This includes obtaining a full understanding of the survivor's needs, as well as of the financial, human, and other resources that would be needed.

Survivor fatigue with the legal process. Practitioners should be aware that survivors may become disillusioned and lose interest in the litigation or reparation process,

especially if it takes a long time or seems unlikely to succeed. While it is important to reassure survivors about their ongoing support and explain the steps taken to advance their case, practitioners should also provide clear information about the legal, political, and practical obstacles that may prevent or delay reparation. Reparation processes often require creative legal strategies and a strong commitment but it is crucial that those supporting survivors do not overpromise on matters beyond their control. Practitioners can adopt other strategies to advance cases or to draw attention to the issues involved, such as community organising, communications, and advocacy (see REDRESS [Practice Note on Holistic Strategic Litigation against Torture](#)), but should always be clear about likely outcomes and mindful of the need to respect survivors' agency and manage expectations.

Financial considerations. All practitioners and NGOs should carefully assess the financial costs of human rights litigation and plan accordingly. Where time-limited project funding is used to support strategic litigation (e.g. a three-year grant) then consider how the work will be continued when that funding comes to an end. This could be with a follow-on project, through a different project, or by using unrestricted funding. Those reliant on donor grants to conduct this work should consider the following issues:

### **Tips for NGOs on Funding the Work**

- Consider the estimated length of the litigation or reparation process and assess its costs, including staff time, legal fees, and support to the survivor.
- Plan how the work will be funded (e.g. if funds are available for this specific case) and be alert to any other funding opportunities.
- Assess and mitigate any financial risks.
- If litigation is funded through specific grants, check the conditions of the grants and whether they are aligned with the needs of the case.
- Consider establishing collaborations with other NGOs, law firms, or experts and practitioners who could support the case and/or the survivor.

## ADDITIONAL STEPS TO IMPROVE PRACTICE IN REPRESENTING SURVIVORS

This section outlines additional practices that can be adopted by practitioners and NGOs to ensure the effective implementation of a survivor-centred approach.

Internal policies and frameworks. NGOs can adopt policies, processes, and practices on how they engage with survivors. These can cover things like client care, ethical considerations, legal representation, trauma-sensitive interviews, safeguarding survivors in circumstances of vulnerability, confidentiality, and risk assessment procedures.

Training. Practitioners representing or supporting survivors can seek training to enhance their skills on issues such as reparation, strategic litigation, trauma-sensitive interviews, oral and written advocacy, and working with survivors in circumstances of vulnerability.

Staff handover. Practitioners should prioritise well-structured and timely handovers to ensure that survivor representation remains uninterrupted when there is a change in staff. Having clear handover procedures helps to introduce new staff to survivors while preserving positive relationships.

Conflict-awareness. Practitioners should be aware that conflicts can arise, for instance within survivor groups or between partner NGOs, and that survivors may be concerned that claims for reparation made by others are not well founded. Practitioners should be prepared to address these situations sensitively to maintain a supportive environment.

Due diligence. When collaborating with a partner NGO, practitioners can assess whether that NGO's objectives, procedures, processes, and practices align with a survivor-centred approach. NGOs can consider sharing best practices with others and conducting joint training to ensure consistency in implementation.

Collaborative approach. Practitioners should acknowledge and leverage each other's expertise and work collaboratively to foster strong relationships based on mutual sharing of experience and expertise while recognising each other's strengths and limitations. International NGOs should avoid pursuing strategies through a "top-down" approach.

# WORKING WITH SURVIVORS IN SITUATIONS OF VULNERABILITY

When representing or supporting survivors who are in situations of vulnerability, practitioners should implement enhanced or specific survivor-centred practices. This Practice Note does not seek to address all the different situations of vulnerability or to provide detailed advice. It aims to set out some general considerations for practitioners, and provide initial guidance for those working with survivors of SGBV.

Practitioners should be aware of the wide array of factors that could affect the impact of violations on survivors, hinder their access to reparation, introduce specific legal and procedural requirements in litigation and reparation processes, or impose specific duties on States (see REDRESS Practice Note on Reparation for Torture Survivors). These factors can be personal, legal, cultural, economic, or geographic in nature. They may include the survivor's sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, displacement, migration status, or social, cultural, and linguistic isolation.

## CASE STUDY

In a case involving a child survivor of torture from Cameroon, after a decision by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the State tried to contact the survivor to implement the reparation measures ordered by the CRC. The child survivor in this case was young and could not attend the implementation hearings. However, an NGO represented the survivor and after the follow-up hearings with State representatives, the perpetrator was arrested and brought to justice. This NGO highlighted the importance of working with other specialists and decided to introduce a new internal policy for working with child survivors. See also REDRESS' Practice Note on Working with Child Victims of Trauma.



### General considerations when supporting vulnerable survivors:

- Understand the nature of the vulnerability and the survivor's context.
- Assess and mitigate additional risks to the survivor that may arise because of their vulnerability.
- Identify if there are any specific legal, procedural, or practical requirements or procedures related to the vulnerability.
- Seek advice from and collaborate with qualified experts from relevant fields, and seek specific training to improve own practices where needed.
- Implement additional measures to prevent re-traumatisation and risks of further harm, such as trauma-sensitive interviews by particular experts.
- Implement additional measures to ensure effective survivor participation, such as tackling structural discrimination, or providing interpretation or other mechanisms to facilitate communication.

## Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at individuals or groups on the basis of their gender. Sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence. The term “SGBV” acknowledges the dual aspect of the violence as both sexual and a form of discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, or identity (see REDRESS [Training Module: SGBV as Torture](#)).

SGBV originates from gender norms and stereotypes, gender disparities and unequal power dynamics. The primary victims of SGBV often include women, girls, LGBTIQ+ persons, and those who do not conform to traditional gender norms. However, it can also affect men and boys. SGBV can include sexual violence and other forms of physical violence and mental torment (see CAT [General Comment No. 2](#)). It can include rape, forced abortion, forced sterilisation, forced pregnancy and domestic violence, as well as other forms (see CEDAW [General Recommendation No. 35](#)).

This section provides initial, non-exhaustive guidance on survivor-centred practices for those working with SGBV survivors, mainly by pointing to relevant international survivor declarations where survivors themselves have set out these practices. Further steps and expertise may be required and sought by practitioners.

Survivor declarations. Practitioners should be aware that SGBV survivors have explicitly emphasised the need for reparation measures, processes, and practices to be survivor-centred:

### **Nairobi Declaration on Women’s and Girls’ Right to a Remedy and Reparation**

In 2007, women’s rights advocates and activists, as well as survivors of SGBV in situations of conflict from Africa, Asia, Europe, Central, North and South America, adopted the Nairobi Declaration.

The Nairobi Declaration states, amongst other things, that the particular circumstances of human rights violations against women and girls in conflict “require approaches specially adapted to their needs, interests and priorities, as defined by them”.

It highlights the principle of non-discrimination, and “support of women’s and girls’ empowerment by taking into consideration their autonomy and participation in decision-making. Processes must empower women and girls, or those acting in the best interests of girls, to determine for themselves what forms of reparation are best suited to their situation”.

It also stresses that “male and female staff who are sensitive to specific issues related to gender, age, cultural diversity and human rights, and who are committed to international and regional human rights standards must be involved at every stage of the reparation process”.

Read the Nairobi Declaration [here](#).

## **Kinshasa Declaration on the Rights to Reparation and Co-creation of Survivors and Victims of Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**

In 2021, during a survivors' hearing on reparation in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, survivors and victims of CRSV and GBV from 12 African countries issued the Kinshasa Principles which have been developed into the Kinshasa Declaration.

The Declaration notes that CRSV and GBV survivors “are entitled to survivor/victim-centred, transformative and gender responsive reparations, justice, peace and guarantees of non-repetition”.

It emphasises that “survivors and victims should be involved in their capacity as co-creators and actively participate in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all the reparation programmes, institutions, policies, strategies and practices that will impact their lives and livelihood”, and that reparation should be “holistic, sustainable, durable and adequately resourced.”

Read the Kinshasa Declaration [here](#).

Mitigating risks. Practitioners should recognise that SGBV survivors are at greater risk of secondary re-victimisation and adopt measures to mitigate such risks. This includes conducting contextual and gendered analysis aimed at understanding the nature and impact of harms and trauma on the survivor, working with specialised staff, and seeking specific training to develop skills such as how to take a gender-centred approach and conduct trauma-sensitive interviews.

Enhanced confidentiality. Practitioners may need to adopt enhanced practices to protect confidentiality in order to prevent the survivor's identification and re-victimisation in their family and community. In some contexts SGBV can lead to further violence and reprisals.

Challenging structural discrimination and social barriers. Practitioners should seek to challenge structural discrimination and social barriers which may impact the survivor's access to reparation and participation in litigation, and/or subsequent

implementation of reparation. This may include community-wide advocacy to counter social exclusion and stigma, or advocating for changes in legal and policy frameworks that hinder SGBV survivors' access to support and services.

Sensitising legal actors. Where possible, practitioners should sensitise judges, prosecutors, and other actors involved in reparation processes about the broader structural discrimination that underlies SGBV, and how to work with SGBV survivors sensitively. Practitioners should identify, document, and challenge inappropriate and biased lines of questioning and practices employed by legal actors.

Transformative reparation. Practitioners supporting SGBV survivors should familiarise themselves with the concept and practice of transformative reparation, which proposes measures and reforms designed to address unequal structures and root causes of violations, to ultimately combat gender-based discrimination (see REDRESS Practice Note on Reparation for Torture Survivors).

## KEY CASE STUDIES

This section presents two case studies to illustrate in further detail how practitioners have implemented a survivor-centred approach in practice.

### **Tariku Asefa v. Libya**

In his migrant journey from Eritrea to Europe, Tariku was abducted and held captive in Libya by unidentified armed men from May 2014 to June 2015. He was tortured and subjected to forced labour. Tariku now resides in the UK as a refugee and is seeking reparation for the violations he suffered, with the support of REDRESS and Lawyers for Justice in Libya (more details available [here](#)).

Understanding Tariku’s needs. During the initial consultation, REDRESS worked with Tariku to define the scope of their engagement. The discussions aimed to clearly identify Tariku’s needs, wishes, and priorities. REDRESS also considered whether seeking assistance from other professionals was necessary to make informed decisions about Tariku’s well-being and address his holistic needs through a long litigation process.

Explaining Tariku’s rights and reparation. The REDRESS team dedicated time to explaining the concepts of “human rights” and Tariku’s right to reparation, including the reparation measures which could be claimed. REDRESS also clarified the challenges involved in seeking reparation and the probability of receiving each reparation measure in practice. A professional interpreter was involved to ensure accurate communication of legal concepts.

Litigation avenues. REDRESS carefully evaluated litigation and non-litigation alternatives with Tariku. Discussions addressed the pros and cons of taking his case to the UN HRC or the ACommHPR. These discussions led to a recommended course of action that formed the basis of further conversations with Tariku.

Holistic accompaniment. REDRESS commissioned two medico-legal reports for the human rights claim. These reports not only served as evidence for this litigation but were also shared with Tariku’s immigration solicitors for his asylum claim in the UK. Further, these reports were instrumental in helping Tariku access publicly funded treatment for the harms he suffered.

Collaborative approach. The submission to the UN HRC was a collaborative effort between REDRESS and Lawyers for Justice in Libya. This collaboration was essential to enhance the visibility and potential impact of Tariku’s complaint. In addition, Tariku had a lay advocate who provided him with significant support, addressing various case-related issues and his broader needs.

Continued communication. REDRESS continues to be in regular contact with Tariku and provides updates on the case as required and agreed with him. REDRESS established a positive relationship of trust with Tariku and continues to review and address his needs.

### **The Sepur Zarco Case**

In 1982-1983, the indigenous community of Sepur Zarco was attacked by the Guatemalan military during the conflict there. Many Maya Q’eqchi’ women, known as the Abuelas, were subjected to sexual slavery. In 2011, 15 surviving Abuelas filed a domestic criminal complaint against former military officers for crimes against humanity, with the support of two NGOs, ECAP and the “Union Nacional de Mujeres Guatemaltecas”. The perpetrators were convicted and the national court granted extensive transformative reparation measures, including orders to search for disappeared persons, to establish a health centre and cultural projects in Sepur Zarco, and to translate the judgment into 24 Mayan languages. While this case involves a reparation claim in the context of criminal complaints against perpetrators of international crimes, the case is included in this Practice Note as it has since become a model for reparation awards and for developing policy, training, and guidance on reparation.

Centring the Abuelas' experience. The NGOs considered the pivotal role of the Abuelas in the case and worked closely with them. Before initiating legal action, they supported the creation of a collective support group that included survivors, psychologists, and lawyers. Significant preparatory work was done over several years before the Abuelas felt ready to take legal action. In June 2014, the collective were officially recognised as civil claimants in the trial, which allowed the Abuelas to actively participate in proceedings.

Empowering the Abuelas. In 2009, an alliance of feminist NGOs held a public mock trial known as the Tribunal of Conscience. The aim was to break the public silence surrounding the abuses suffered by indigenous women and to encourage the judiciary to address SGBV cases. In the year leading up to the Tribunal, the NGOs supported the Abuelas by conducting preparatory workshops and consultations to collectively define their objectives. The Abuelas decided who would speak at the Tribunal, while others took on roles as companions and witnesses.

Supporting the Abuelas' participation in the proceedings. Involving the Abuelas in the legal proceedings in a culturally-sensitive way required innovative approaches. For instance, one of the supporting NGOs held a meeting with the Abuelas, where they explained the phases of the criminal trial using animals as symbols. Interpreters facilitated communication, to ensure the Abuelas could understand actively and participate in the proceedings.

Protecting confidentiality. To safeguard the Abuelas' security, all information about the case was kept confidential, including from family and community members. The Abuelas pretended that case meetings were additional psychosocial support group gatherings. The Public Prosecutor's Office also adopted numerous internal security measures, including vetting procedures, using secure routes, and ensuring the Abuelas' accompaniment during hearings.

Avoiding re-traumatisation. A key strategy used to reduce the risk of re-traumatisation was recording the Abuelas' testimony during pre-trial hearings. This approach allowed them the opportunity to share their stories without constant interruptions from defence attorneys. Separating evidentiary hearings from the trial created a less confrontational and aggressive atmosphere.

Holistic accompaniment. *Psychosocial support was critical in helping the Abuelas break their silence and empower them to pursue legal action. The pre-trial process fostered deep trust between the Abuelas and the supporting NGOs. Survivor networks also offered essential emotional support to the Abuelas. Their time spent together before the trial allowed them to establish patterns of responsibility, representation, and inclusion, ensuring that members of the group continued to feel represented throughout the litigation process.*

Collaborative approach. Collaboration between NGOs with diverse expertise and objectives was key throughout the litigation process. It required willingness to engage and collaborate while respecting each other's strengths and sharing resources for effective coordination.

Building alliances with prosecutors. The relationship between all parties involved was also crucial. Although prosecutors were initially hesitant to pursue charges against the accused for international and SGBV crimes, they eventually did so following sustained engagement and efforts on the part of the supporting NGOs to strengthen relationships with them.



## FURTHER READING

### UN documents

- Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading>
- Committee Against Torture General Comment No. 2 on the Implementation of Article 2 by States Parties, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/catcgc2-general-comment-no-2-2007-implementation>
- Committee Against Torture General Comment No. 3 on the Implementation of Article 14 by States Parties, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/catcgc3-general-comment-no-3-2012-implementation>
- UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/basic-principles-and-guidelines-right-remedy-and-reparation>

### REDRESS materials and work

- REDRESS Practice Notes and Training Modules, <https://redress.org/resources/training/>
- REDRESS work on Reparation, <https://redress.org/our-work/reparation/>

- REDRESS work on Discrimination, <https://redress.org/our-work/discrimination/>
- REDRESS Information for UK-based survivors of torture, <https://redress.org/help-for-survivors/help-for-uk-survivors-of-torture/>

## Other

- Kinshasa Declaration on the Rights to Reparation and Co-creation of Survivors and Victims of Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ff7d9f4dd4cdc650b24f9a4/t/636246a2adbfb56af69e28d8/1667384998765/Kinshasa+declaration\\_October+2022\\_WEB+%281%29.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ff7d9f4dd4cdc650b24f9a4/t/636246a2adbfb56af69e28d8/1667384998765/Kinshasa+declaration_October+2022_WEB+%281%29.pdf)
- Nairobi Declaration on Women's and Girls' Right to a Remedy and Reparation, [https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/NAIROBI\\_DECLARATIONeng.pdf](https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/NAIROBI_DECLARATIONeng.pdf)
- UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office's International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/598335/International\\_Protocol\\_2017\\_2nd\\_Edition.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/598335/International_Protocol_2017_2nd_Edition.pdf)

## ANNEX A – COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDRAISING CONSENT FORM

We, [*name of the NGO*], produce a range of communications materials to raise awareness about our work and secure the financial support we need to achieve our mission to end torture and seek justice and reparation for survivors. We like to share the experiences of clients who are using our services in our communications as it helps to demonstrate the difference our work can make. Since your privacy and well-being are a priority for [*name of the NGO*], by completing this form we seek to have your permission to use your story in our fundraising and communications.

If you are not comfortable with reading this consent form in [*English or relevant language*], please let a member of our staff know and adjustments will be made where possible.

Please fill in the form, tick the options you are happy with and sign it.

<b>Full name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	

### Where will my story be used?

Please tick the options you are happy with:

**Presentations:** Our external presentations, such as conferences and exhibitions

**Websites:** Our website

**Social media:** Our social media pages (*[insert the relevant platforms]*)

**Publications:** Our reports, leaflets, newsletters and other institutional materials

**Fundraising:** Fundraising and other marketing materials

**Print and online media:** International, national and local media; magazines and news sites

**Television and radio:** International, national and local television and radio

**Donors:** To provide updates about our work to donors and seek funding for our work

Please let us know if there are any ways in which you do not wish your story to be used:

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### Can I remain anonymous?

You can choose to have your real name published with your story or remain anonymous (in which case, we will use a false name). Please tick the options you are happy with:

I am happy for my real name to be used

I do not want my real name to be used

Please tick this box if you are happy for photos or a video of you to be used

I prefer to be consulted before the information is published

Please let us know if there are any ways in which you do not wish to be represented or described:

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**Your rights and how to contact us:**

[Name of the NGO] is committed to protecting your privacy and will only use the information that we collect about you lawfully and in strict accordance with your instructions as provided by this consent form. We will not pass the details recorded on this form on to any other organisation without your permission. For further information, please see our full [insert the NGO's privacy policy].

If you are unhappy about the way we use the information you have provided to us, you can raise your concern with the [insert name of staff, job title, contact details of the NGO, including e-mail address, telephone number, and postal address].

1. If you are not satisfied with their response, you should raise your concern with our Director, [insert name and contact details].
2. If you are not satisfied with their response, a member of our Board of Trustees will be designated to consider the complaint.

Alternatively, if you are unhappy with the way in which your personal data has been handled you are entitled to make a complaint to the [include relevant body; e.g., in the UK: Information Commissioner's Office].

If you want to update your informed consent or information provided at any time, please contact [name of the NGO] in writing by emailing your request to [insert e-mail address].

**I am happy to give my permission**

Please sign this form to show you are happy to give permission for your story to be used by [*name of the NGO*] for the purposes outlined above. I understand that, once my story is used in certain media, it could remain in circulation indefinitely.

By signing this statement, both parties agree that they have read and understood this form and agree to the terms:

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Client's full name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**[*Name of the NGO*] staff full name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Client's signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

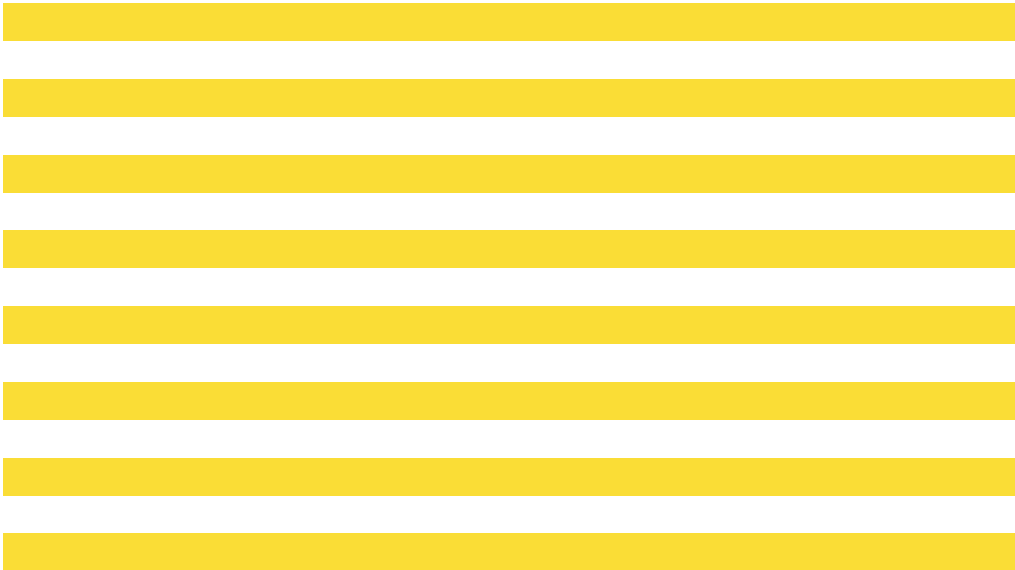
**[*Name of the NGO*] signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_






**REDRESS** is an international human rights organisation that delivers justice and reparation for survivors of torture, challenges impunity for perpetrators, and advocates for legal and policy reforms to combat torture. Our cases respond to torture as an individual crime in domestic and international law, as a civil wrong with individual responsibility, and as a human rights violation with state responsibility.



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**REDRESS**

Ending torture, seeking justice for survivors

