

Annual Report 2019-2020



**TAKING
PRIDE IN
COMMITMENT.**

OVERVIEW



This annual report was produced under somewhat unusual circumstances. As the time has come to look back on our work and achievements between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2020, we're still managing the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on our activities. On March 11, 2019—the day the World Health Organization declared the pandemic—we were just reaching the end of a record 2019–2020 financial year in terms of the scope of our activities, the results we achieved, and the budgets involved. We had just started planning the organization's funding for 2020–2021, and then everything changed.

LWBC's Actions During the Pandemic

We too have had to abide by exceptional measures to protect those working with us or close to us. A large portion of the work we do in the field with victims of human rights violations involves collective gatherings. These events have had to be cancelled or postponed, as have our trips abroad, inside the country or in the region. Most of our volunteers abroad have had to be repatriated to their country of origin, where lockdowns, working from home, and physical distancing has become the new normal. In spite of it all, Lawyers Without Borders Canada (LWBC) has continued to invest energy into fulfilling its commitments to solidarity and international cooperation.

Progress, Results, Victories

Like previous years, in 2019–2020 we witnessed many steps in the right direction for human rights—improving the lives of people in situations of vulnerability—and victories that will have a lasting change in society. This report presents some of these advances; you can read more about our accomplishments online. Among these achievements, here are a few we thought were particularly worth mentioning:

- Women are participating directly in the implementation of peace agreements, thanks to support from LWBC and its partners in Colombia.
- As the pandemic continues to take its toll, the spotlight must more than ever be on the rights to health and reparation of the victims of the cholera epidemic in Haiti—caused by the United Nations, infecting nearly one million people, and resulting in 10,000–50,000 deaths. On the subject, LWBC published a study that showed the feasibility of providing assistance on an individual basis to the victims affected by the epidemic.
- In the area of sexual and reproductive rights, LWBC helped partners in Honduras win court cases against the criminalization of abortion.
- In the fight against human trafficking, LWBC facilitated cross-border cooperation in Central America to respond to the problem, which affects countries as far as Canada. Thanks to these joint efforts, victims were able to escape the clutches of criminal groups and return to their family in their home country.
- LWBC continued to support Indigenous students pursue a career as a lawyer to ultimately achieve better protection and more respect for the rights of indigenous communities in Guatemala.

Mission Complete for Two Major Projects

This year also saw the end of two five-year-long LWBC projects.

The first of these is the JUPREC project on justice, prevention and reconciliation in Mali, implemented by LWBC in partnership with Canada-based Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) and the University of Public Administration (ENAP).

The final assessment of the project showed that it had effectively contributed to reconciliation and peace in Mali. Through social dialogue, activities allowing beneficiaries to embrace human rights and gender equality, heightened access to justice, and support for the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms, the project contributed to preventing violence, reducing tensions, and fighting the spread of terrorism in Mali, regionally, and globally.

Over time, the JUPREC project took on a prominent position in Mali, where it will leave a tangible and durable legacy. In addition, for the second edition of the Paris Peace Forum in November 2019, the JUPREC project was chosen among 700 other submissions from 115 countries as an example of innovative solutions for advancing peace and security. LWBC has a long-term commitment to progress in Mali and will therefore continue its work through other projects.

The second project, PRODEF, on the Protection of the Rights of Children, Women, and Other Vulnerable Communities, implemented by LWBC in partnership with the International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR), ended on March 31, 2020.

LWBC volunteers actively contributed to obtaining impactful rulings, sometimes even historic, in emblematic cases on war crimes and crimes against humanity, civilian massacres, sexual and gender-based violence, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, torture, discrimination, and corruption.

Voluntary cooperation is part of LWBC's DNA. This means that despite PRODEF coming to an end, voluntary cooperation is still part of each and every one of our projects, providing assistance to our partners in all of our countries of intervention.

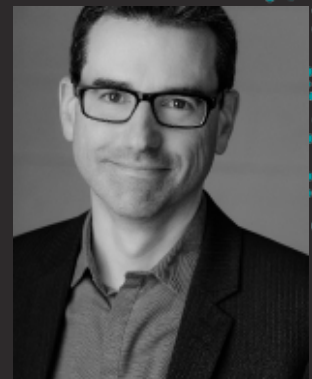
Working Together on Meaningful Commitments

It is thanks to the support of hundreds of people and organizations—staff members, partners, volunteers, allies—that we were able to achieve such remarkable results throughout 2019–2020. We extend our warmest thanks to all those involved. It is also thanks to these people and organizations that we'll be continuing to strive to uphold the rule of law, promote justice, protect human rights and individual freedoms, defend equality, and develop international cooperation. We demonstrated commitment before the pandemic, stayed committed during the pandemic, and will remain committed after the pandemic.

No crisis can undermine the fundamental nature of any human right. For that reason, our work is and will always be “without borders”.



Miguel Baz
*Chair of LWBC's
Board of Directors*



Pascal Paradis
Executive Director

LWBC IN FIGURES

10

**international
cooperation
projects**

3 500

**victims
supported,**

including through legal aid
and judicial assistance,
from LWBC or
LWBC partners

+200

**emblematic
projects
supported**

7

**offices around
the world**

(Bamako, Bogota, Guatemala City,
Quebec City, Port-au-Prince,
San Salvador and Tegucigalpa)
and 4 regional offices (Medellin,
Bucaramanga and Pasto
in Colombia, and Montreal)

116

**employees,
interns and
65 volunteers
deployed,**

including 118 women
and 63 men

8

**countries of
intervention**

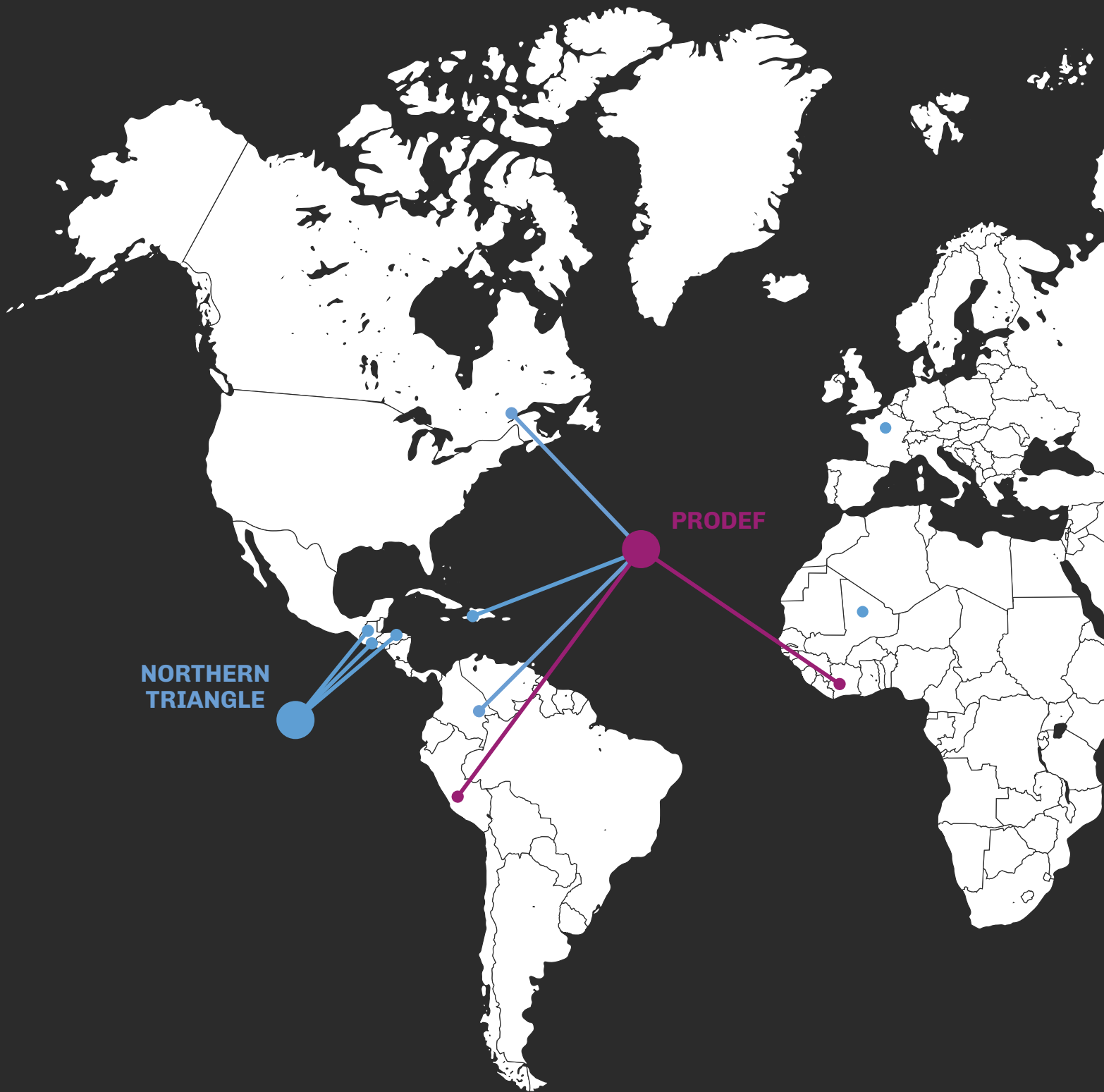
(Colombia, Ivory Coast,
Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras,
Mali, Peru, El Salvador)

19

nationalities on our team

(American, Australian, Bolivian, Belgian,
Brazilian, Canadian, Cameroonian,
Colombian, Congolese, Spanish, French,
Guatemalan, Haitian, Honduran,
Malian, Mexican, Peruvian,
Salvadorian and Serbian)

LWBC AROUND THE WORLD



COLOMBIA



Projects :

- Transitional Justice for Women – Global Affairs Canada, bilateral program
- Strengthening the capacities of demobilized women – Ministry of International Relations and Francophonie, Québec International Development Program (PQDI)

Partnerships with Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the Truth Commission contributed to increasing the participation of women, Indigenous communities, and LGBTI individuals in transitional justice mechanisms provided in the peace agreement, and improving the application of international standards on women's rights.

Women in eight regions of the country are improving their security and increasing their participation in peacebuilding efforts by submitting recommendations to the international community, to judges of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and to commissioners of the Truth Commission.

Women are sharing with other women the knowledge and skills they acquired during awareness-raising and training workshops provided by LWBC on mechanisms for participating in peace-building efforts. They have further strengthened their involvement by founding their own organization, Sobrevivientes Victoriosas ("victorious survivors").



Thanks to quality legal representation provided free of charge, a number of emblematic cases of serious crimes were brought before the courts, some involving human rights violations against 30 women.

Four partner organizations, with backing from LWBC, have been putting together high-profile regional cases of sexual violence and extrajudicial killings with a view to submitting them to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.

Partner law firms now have a strategic litigation guide at their disposal to help them make progress on important cases involving sexual violence, and provide better support to the women involved.

LWBC helped set up a dialogue between State authorities and demobilized women which led to the development of a joint work plan between the demobilized women and regional institutions of Putumayo—proof that raising awareness among civil servants does yield positive results. Governmental departments are now open to work with women engaged in reintegration processes.

Obstacles to access to justice and cases of gender-based violence against demobilized women that were documented by LWBC, provided the foundations for the international committee in charge of the verification of the peace agreements to draw up recommendations to submit to the Colombian government in favour of women's rights and the adoption of gender-sensitive measures.

Partners :

- Colectiva Justicia y Mujer
- Corporación 8 de marzo
- Corporación Guasimí
- Corporación Humanas,
- Corporación Justicia y Dignidad
- Corporación Mujeres que Crean
- Defensoría del Pueblo
- Equipo Jurídico Pueblos
- Fondo de Solidaridad con los Jueces colombianos
- Universidad Industrial de Santander

Publications :

- [Guía para fortalecer el acompañamiento y representación judicial de las víctimas del conflicto, en especial mujeres sobrevivientes de violencia basada en género](#)
- [La voz de las mujeres: recomendaciones a la institucionalidad en el marco del proceso de implementación de la justicia transicional](#)
- Amicus curiae sur la Loi de sécurité

Videos:

- Retejiendo Saberes - Mujeres de Colombia bordando caminos de paz
- Colombie et Covid-19



GUATEMALA



Projects :

- Rights and Justice for Indigenous Women and Girls in Guatemala (DEMUJERES) in partnership with the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) – Global Affairs Canada, bilateral program
- “Strengthening the protection of Indigenous women’s rights” – Ministry of International Relations and Francophonie, Québec International Development Program (PQDI)

Indigenous women who suffered violence now have better access to justice thanks to support from five organizations working on the frontline with indigenous communities. These organizations now offer a larger range of legal services that are better suited to the needs of indigenous women victims of violence. Among other things, the services are now provided in their own language.

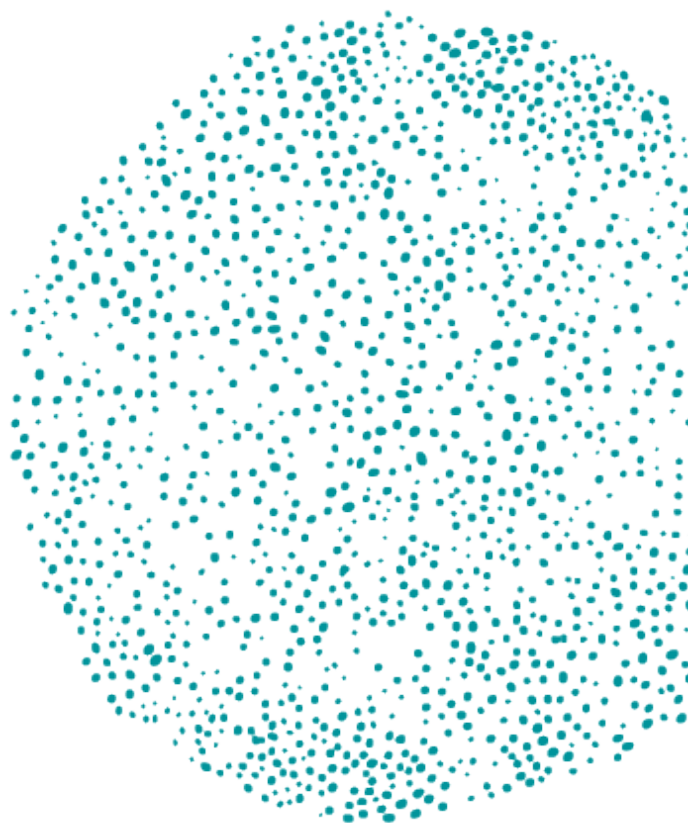
Thanks to training and technical support provided in the field of strategic litigation, four partner organizations have been leading the fight against impunity, bringing landmark cases before the courts. These cases include matters involving acts of sexual abuse against Indigenous children at school, the denial of the right to therapeutic abortion, and the sexual assault of an Indigenous woman in the workplace.

Indigenous women are exercising their rights more and more, thanks to support from 295 women stakeholders in the judicial sector in three rural areas, who are undertaking professional training on gender-based violence against Indigenous women—a training program organized by LWBC in partnership with, and recognized by, the Bar and school for magistrates and legal training of Guatemala.

Access to the legal profession by Indigenous women has progressed, as nine law students from Indigenous communities received support throughout their academic career and acquired professional experience in defending the rights of Indigenous individuals and peoples.

Partners:

- Asociación Bufete Jurídico Popular de Rabinal
- Asociación de Abogadas Indígenas Chomija'
- Asociación de Justicia de Alta Verapaz
- Asociación Generando Equidad
- Liderazgo y Oportunidades
- Bufete Jurídico de Derechos Humanos con Enfoque Feminista
- Consorcio de Asociaciones del Municipio de Santiago Atitlán
- Equipo de Estudios comunitarios y acción psicosocial
- La Asociación de Abogados y Notarios Mayas de Guatemala
- Nim Ajpú
- Red Departamental de Mujeres Sololotecas con Visión Integral
- Unidad de Protección a defensoras y defensores de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala



NORTHERN TRIANGLE OF CENTRAL AMERICA



Project:

- Strengthening Capacities for the Criminal Prevention of Cross-Border Crimes against Women, Girls and Other Vulnerable Persons – Global Affairs Canada, Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program (ACCBP)

Capacities regarding the prosecution of cross-border crimes against women and girls were strengthened thanks to LWBC's support in establishing a court specialized in human trafficking cases, located in Guatemala City—one of the first specialized tribunals in the region. LWBC also helped train specialized judges and public prosecutors. To date, 60 ongoing cases are currently under consideration at the special tribunal.

Access to justice for victims of human trafficking has improved thanks to the adoption of new practices, including victims directly participating in the exercise of their rights as LWBC partners represent them as civil parties to legal proceedings to ensure that their rights are enforced and that they obtain reparation.

The interinstitutional cooperation LWBC has been supporting has started to yield results. So far, it has empowered the network of prosecutors specialized in cases of human trafficking to put together its first transnational case, uniting efforts from prosecutors in Guatemala, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia to lead investigations into a particular trafficking network.

More than 1,200 lawyers, judges, and other stakeholders in the justice sector of the region have been strengthening their capacities with regard to investigating, prosecuting, and punishing crimes involving trafficking in persons, through training and seminars provided by LWBC. These activities have also led to new partnerships between institutions who hadn't worked together before. LWBC has helped establish collaborations between, for example, police officers and labour inspectors and between prosecutors specialized in human trafficking and in money laundering.

The judicial system in Guatemala is renewing its reparations policy for victims of trafficking in human beings, in accordance with international standards. The policy takes into account LWBC's recommendations on full and effective reparation for victims.

Partners in Guatemala :

- Asociación La Alianza
- Corte Suprema de Justicia
- Fundación Sobrevivientes
- Ministerio Público
- Refugio de la Niñez
- Secretaría contra la violencia sexual, explotación y trata de personas

Partners in Honduras :

- Asociación Calidad de Vida
- Casa Alianza Honduras
- Comisión Interinstitucional contra la Explotación Sexual Comercial y Trata de Personas
- Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras
- Unidad contra la Trata de Personas, Explotación Sexual Comercial y Tráfico Ilícito de Personas del Ministerio Público

Partners in El Salvador :

- Consejo Nacional contra la trata de personas del Ministerio de Justicia y de Seguridad Pública
- Fiscalía General de la República.

Regional partners :

- Coalición Regional Contra la Trata de Personas y Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes
- Red Regional de Fiscales Especializados contra la Trata de Personas.

HAITI



Project :

- Access to Justice and the Fight Against Impunity in Haiti (AJULIH) – Global Affairs Canada, bilateral program

The Office de protection du citoyen et de la citoyenne (OPC, equivalent to a Human Rights Ombudsman or Commission) is now more efficient in protecting citizens' rights thanks to better-documented human rights violations (with, among other things, thematic reporting on the rights of persons with disabilities) and thanks to the harmonization of processes for handling complaints filed by citizens regarding the violation of their rights.

Access to justice has increased for women, minors, and persons living in vulnerable situations: 1,189 people received legal aid provided by agents of the OPC's regional services with support from LWBC, and 593 people benefited from judicial assistance, resulting among other things in the release of 326 people in wrongful detention, including 19 women and 26 minors.

Fifty women detainees received psychological assistance, and 35 of those 50 were provided with professional training with a view to reintegrating society.

The capacity of women, minors, and persons with disabilities to lead their own fight against impunity regarding the violations of their rights was also strengthened, in part thanks to support from the human rights law firm Cabinet d'avocat.e.s spécialisé.e.s en litige stratégique de droits humains (CALSDH, "law firm specialized in strategic litigation for human rights"). Despite only being operational for a year, the firm has already succeeded in documenting and presenting 21 emblematic human rights violation cases before the courts, 10 involving women's rights. These cases included matters of sexual assault by high officials who, until recently, had been enjoying full impunity.

Civil society organizations and the OPC are now able to better protect the rights of LGBTI individuals, thanks to a capacity-building workshop on non-discrimination, organized in collaboration with two organizations specialized in defending LGBTI rights: KOURAJ – LGBT Rights in Haiti, and Femmes en action contre la stigmatisation et la discrimination sexuelle ("women fighting sexual stigmatization and discrimination").

The voices of the victims of the cholera epidemic in Haiti are finally being heard, thanks to a study released by LWBC on the feasibility of adopting an individualized approach to assistance. The study was drawn up in partnership with the Interuniversity Institute for Research and Development and was presented to the UN in New York in June 2019. During an international conference held in Haiti in January 2020, awareness was raised among decision-makers from Haiti and within the UN and civil society organizations about the plea of the victims of the disease.

875 people, including 517 girls and women now know more about their rights after visiting the exhibition *Où en sont les femmes ?* ("where do women stand?"), on the role of women in decision-making and their fight for equality.

Awareness was raised among the population in four localities through radio broadcasting, and nationwide via the Internet about the impact of the Duvalier dictatorship. This communication campaign was set up by Devoir de mémoire - Haïti (“duty of remembrance - Haiti”) with the support of LWBC.

33 members of civil society organizations and OPC employees, including 22 women and 11 men, were trained on how to communicate effectively the law, in partnership with Éducaloi.

Partners in Haiti :

- Asosyasyon Fanm Solèy Dayiti (AFASDA)
- Barreau de Port-au-Prince
- Barreau des Gonaïves
- Cabinet d’avocat.e.s spécialisé.e.s en litige stratégique de droits humains
- Collectif contre l’impunité
- Collectif Défenseurs Plus
- Combite pour la paix et le développement
- Ensemble contre la corruption
- Fanm Deside
- Fédération des Barreaux d’Haïti
- Femmes en action contre la stigmatisation et la discrimination sexuelle (FACSDIS)
- Fondasyon Konesans Ak Libète (Fokal)
- Fondasyon Zanmi Timoun
- Fondation Devoir de Mémoire
- Groupe d’appui aux rapatriés et réfugiés (GARR)
- Héritage pour la protection des Droits Humains
- Kouraj Pou Pwoteje Dwa Moun
- Kri Fanm Ayiti (KRIFA)
- Mouvement des Femmes Haïtiennes pour l’Éducation et le Développement (MOUFHED)
- Office de protection du citoyen (OPC)
- Réseau national de défense des droits humains (RNDDH)
- Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn (SOFA)
- The Interuniversity Institute for Research and Development

Canadian partners :

- Protectrice du citoyen du Québec
- Éducaloi
- Cabinet McCarthy Tétrault
- Cabinet Larochelle Avocats
- Barreau du Québec
- École du Barreau du Québec

Publications :

- Manuel de procédures et de traitement des plaintes (OPC)
- [Comment répondre aux besoins des victimes du choléra en Haïti](#)
- [Meeting the needs of victims of cholera in Haiti](#)

Videos :

- Awareness was raised among the wider population on the impact of unlawful and arbitrary detention (Haiti authorities use the term “extended pre-trial detention”) with a [video produced by Ayibo Post](#).
- [10 films](#) for educating citizens about diversity and tolerance, produced in collaboration with Fokal.
- [Final episode of “Lakou Kajou” on justice](#)

HONDURAS



Project :

- Justice, Governance and the Fight Against Impunity in Haiti (AJULIH) – Global Affairs Canada, bilateral program

Access to justice and specialized legal representation services for women and persons in situations of vulnerability has been strengthened thanks to the establishment of three strategic litigation collectives in the northern, central and southern parts of the country. Twelve lawyers, including 9 women, are now involved on a daily basis in protecting human rights and fighting impunity and corruption.

Major progress was achieved in relation to abortion rights as the criminalization of a young woman for getting an abortion was dismissed—an emblematic case driven by partner organization Red de Abogadas del Sur (“network of women lawyers from the South”). This decision contributes to establishing jurisprudence in favour of women’s rights and allows for defence strategies to be developed in response to persistent criminalization of women who resorting to abortion.

Thanks to LWBC partner Red de Abogadas del Sur who ensured representation for the victims, a case involving acts of torture committed by military forces against protesters in the post-electoral crisis in 2017 was brought before the courts, significantly weakening rampant impunity with regard to events that year and sparking further debate on the criteria for the use of force.

The Supreme Court of Honduras upheld an unconstitutionality claim against the country's law on intelligence, a law which opened the door to abuse by restricting people's right of access to information. The action was led by LWBC partner C-Libre, with support from LWBC. The decision creates a positive precedent for the protection of human rights in that it upholds international law and paves the way for the development of new legislation that complies with international standards.

Joint legal actions involving civil society organizations specialized in sexual and reproductive rights were launched following a forum organized by LWBC on the right to health without discrimination, in an effort to encourage and enrich experience sharing.

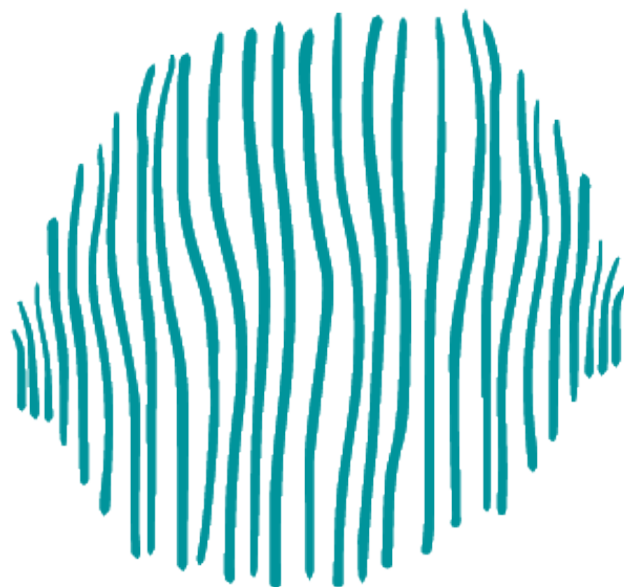
The participation of civil society in improving the governance and cleansing of the justice system was strengthened as the Centro de estudio para la democracia ("centre for the study of democracy"), backed by LWBC, released a study on the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH). The study was shared throughout the country, sparking a much unwanted debate on the public perception of corruption and ways to put an end to it.

A draft bill for a comprehensive response towards violence against women was drawn up by Centro de Derechos de Mujeres ("women's rights centre") with support from LWBC, and was presented publicly following a participatory process involving women from all across the country.

The protection of women's and LGBTI individuals' rights has made headway thanks to support from civil society organizations who have voiced their needs both on a national and international scale, including by reporting on issues and making recommendations as part of the Universal Periodic Review process of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Partners :

- Bufete Estudios por la Dignidad
- Centro de Derechos de Mujeres
- Centro de Estudios para la Democracia
- Centro de Promoción en Salud y Asistencia Familiar
- Centro para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación LGBTI - Somos CDC
- Colectiva Hondureña de Mujeres
- Comité por la Libre Expresión
- Equipo Jurídico de Derechos Humanos
- Red de Abogadas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos
- Red de Respuesta Lésbica Cattrachas



MALI



Projects :

- Justice, prévention et réconciliation pour les femmes, mineurs et autres personnes affectées par la crise au Mali, en consortium avec le Centre d'étude et de coopération internationale et l'École nationale d'administration publique – Affaires mondiales Canada – Programme bilatéral
- Stabilisation du Mali grâce à la Commission vérité, justice et réconciliation (SCVJR) – Affaires mondiales - Programme pour la stabilisation et les opérations de paix (PSOPs)

The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) strongly contributed to peace and reconciliation by establishing the truth surrounding conflicts and other episodes of armed violence that have shaken Mali. With the support of LWBC:

- The TJRC examined 1,243 complaints filed by victims, including 758 women, 422 men and 36 children;
- An investigation unit was set up and deployed to establish the facts in emblematic cases of human rights violations;
- For the first time in Mali's history, victims were given the chance to tell their story freely before the State, in the Commission's first public hearing on December 8, 2019

For the first time, victims were able to testify before an international court and relate their experience of the sexual violence they suffered during the armed conflict in 2012. With support from LWBC's partners in Mali, during a hearing before the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court of Justice, victims of rape, sequestration and forced marriage from the region of Gao were able to tell their story.

After five years of work, the JUPREC project came to a close in 2020, leaving the communities of Mali with visible and durable results:

- Thousands of Malians have a better understanding of their rights, and how to enforce them.
- Myths surrounding negative practices with regard to gender equality were laid to rest.
- A network of actors able to assist victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) by referring them to the right services (psychosocial, medical, legal, judicial) was consolidated.
- More than 80 cases involving SGBV against women have been or are being determined before various national courts or regional and international jurisdictions.
- A new generation of young Malian legal practitioners is emerging, competent and ready to engage in the fight against impunity and corruption by pursuing legal and judicial careers—including as judges—and by becoming involved in the work of civil society organizations and other organizations that promote
 - and defend human rights.
- Knowledge of the widespread corruption in Malian institutions is increasing, and a community of practice to fight corruption has been set up and comprises around 30 young members of the civil society.
- Consultations with victims on their views, expectations and needs following the armed conflict in Mali have had an impact on the work being carried out by the TJRC and on policy making with regard to the reparation of victims' suffering as a result of human rights violations.
- Peace committees on the prevention and management of conflicts within or between communities have been set up in the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Tombouctou, and Gao.
- Several networks of human rights defenders were established, including a group of mediators, a group of young transitional justice experts, and an advocacy committee made up of civil society organizations who all aim to make sure the rights of victims are upheld.
- Through the On est ensemble photography exhibition set up in several cities in Canada, thousands of Canadians learned about the courage of Malian women and girls who survived sexual violence and are now contributing to rebuilding their country.

As part of its legacy to Mali, the JUPREC project also leaves partners with over forty instruments they can use to make sure the project's impact is long lasting. The tools were developed with civil society organizations to allow them to continue raising awareness among communities and providing assistance to victims, according to the highest standards. Among these instruments are picture boxes, practical guides, databases, radio broadcasting messages, brochures, glossaries, etc.

The JUPREC project also brought together a large community of trained individuals who have become fully engaged in public debate through a variety of channels:

- 22,175 people received training, including 10,790 women—a total of 1,400 days of free workshops provided over the past five years.
- 294,740 people, among whom 55% were women, learned to take ownership of their rights, over 3,050 days of awareness raising (sessions, workshops, events, etc.).
- 24 volunteers, including 20 women, completed 44 six-month-long assignments, totaling 7,359 days of work invested in the JUPREC project.
- 16 volunteers undertook short-term assignments, covering 163 days of sharing experiences and best practices.

According to several technical and financial partners we consulted, this project demonstrated the aptness of the strategy we adopted, which, in addition to involving close collaboration with State institutions, focused on the capacity of women and vulnerable groups to take action for themselves. In strengthening the capacity of these rights holders to exercise their rights, these women and vulnerable groups have shown that they are not only the main protagonists, but also the best protagonists for effecting change regarding their situation, through seeking justice.

Partners :

- Association des femmes africaines pour la recherche et le développement
- Association des juristes maliennes
- Association de lutte contre l'esclavage par ascendance au Mali
- Association pour le progrès et la défense des droits des femmes
- Association du Sahel d'aide à la femme et à l'enfance
- Association Malienne pour le Développement de l'Environnement au Sahel
- Association Subaahi Gumo
- AZHAR
- Avocats Coulibaly et Diakite
- Cabinets d'avocats (Diop-Diallo, Me AT. Diarra, Me T. Diarra, Me Karembé, Me Koita)
- Coalition malienne des défenseurs des droits humains
- Collectif Cri de Cœur
- Commission vérité, justice et réconciliation
- Éduquer, former les femmes un appui au développement
- Environnement et développement Tiers-Monde
- Groupe de recherche d'étude de formation femme-action
- Observatoire des droits de la femme et de l'enfant
- Tribune des jeunes pour le droit au Mali
- Université des sciences juridiques et politiques de Bamako
- Women in Law and Development in Africa

Publications :

- Vers un accès à la justice au Mali?
Avancées et défis
- Guide de litige stratégique au Mali
- Guide pratique pour l'accompagnement
des victimes de violences sexuelles
et de violences basées sur le genre
- The Malian National Accord Law: A Threat
to Peace, Reconciliation and Victim's Rights
(Executive Summary)
- La Loi d'entente nationale: une menace pour la paix,
la réconciliation et les droits des victimes au Mali
- La réparation des victimes de la crise malienne :
une obligation et une nécessité

Video :

- Alassane, l'homme qui défend
les droits des femmes au Mali

PRODEF

Project:

Protection of the Rights of Children, Women, and Other Vulnerable Communities (PRODEF), implemented in partnership with the International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR) – Global Affairs Canada, bilateral program

Peru

- A dialogue was established between the State of Peru and civil society organizations to secure better protection for the rights of girl victims of sexual violence, following a thematic hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, with the help of LWBC.
- After following several training workshops provided by the project, 32 members of civil society and 18 civil servants from four different regions committed to carrying out concrete actions to combat violence against children.

Ivory Coast

- 224 stakeholders in the justice sector increased their knowledge on the prevention of gender-based violence by completing training workshops organized in eight regions of Ivory Coast.

Guatemala

- A judge was disqualified in the so-called "genocide" case, on grounds that she lacked impartiality and independence with regard to cases relating to the armed conflict. Her disqualification will now allow for a fair and just trial to take place, with better representation for the families of the victims.

Colombia

- Two reports containing the stories of women survivors of sexual violence committed during the armed conflict were published to support the advocacy work these women intend to keep up in order to convince the government to invest more efforts in ensuring their economic and social well-being.



After five years of hard work, the PRODEF project came to a close in 2020, leaving visible and durable results:

- A total of 110 voluntary cooperation assignments were carried out by 74 volunteers, half of whom completed more than one assignment. These included 13 articling students who qualified as lawyers shortly after their assignment.
- 28 local partners were trained on 43 different topics and received support in 264 cases. They provided judicial assistance or legal representation to 4,186 victims and raised awareness among 9,207 people, mostly women and girls, about their rights.
- 31 legislative proposals were drafted or are currently being drafted, and partners implemented 35 policies or practices, for the most part on promoting the rights of women and girls.

The PRODEF project was also about supporting partners and providing volunteers with an opportunity to contribute to historic achievements:

- The Inter-American Court of Human Rights concluded that the State of Honduras was responsible for violating the rights to a fair trial and to judicial protection, and the right to personal integrity in the case of the political assassination of Ángel Pacheco León.
- Following a long struggle led by the Molina Theissen family to obtain justice, high military officials were pronounced guilty of crimes against humanity, enforced disappearances, and sexual violence, topped with aggravating factors, and were sentenced to 33 and 58 years of imprisonment respectively—thirty-seven years after the crimes were committed.

- The pardon of Peru's former President Fujimori was annulled. An LWBC volunteer had helped draft arguments and implement legal strategies in view of the thematic hearing on the pardon that had initially been granted to the ex-President.
- The Inter-American Court of Human Rights recognized the responsibility of the State of Peru in the violation of the rights to a fair trial and of access to justice in the case of Alfredo Lagos del Campo, an emblematic case of unlawful dismissal.
- A former soldier was sentenced to 5,160 years of imprisonment for crimes against humanity over the massacre of at least 200 people in 1982 during the Guatemalan Civil War, in the “Las Dos Erres” case. Several volunteers also worked on this case outside of the scope of the PRODEF project.
- In its 174th session held in Ecuador, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights indicated that the State of Peru had an obligation to invest more resources into tackling sexual violence against children, and commit further to providing State actors and civil society stakeholders with relevant technical support. A dialogue between State representatives and civil society organizations commenced shortly after.

Partners :

Peru

- Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos
- Instituto Promoviendo Desarrollo Social

Ivory Coast

- Actions pour la Protection des Droits de l'Homme
- Association des Femmes Juristes de Côte d'Ivoire
- Mouvement Ivoirien des Droits Humains

Guatemala

- Bufete Jurídico de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala
- Bufete para Pueblos Indígenas
- Centro para la Acción Legal en Derechos Humanos
- Fundación Myrna Mack,
- Mujeres Transformando el Mundo
- Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado de Guatemala

Publications :

- Récits de coopération volontaire

Colombia

- Corporación Humanas

Honduras

- Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
- Comité Familiares de Detenidos y Desaparecidos en Honduras

Haiti

- Collectif contre l'impunité
- Kay Fanm
- Mouvement des Femmes Haïtiennes pour l'Éducation et le Développement (MOUFHED)
- Office de la Protection du Citoyen d'Haïti
- Solidarité des femmes haïtiennes

Videos (with English subtitle) :

- En action : Accès à la justice en Haïti - Cas choléra
- En action : Autonomisation des femmes par le droit
- En action : Lutte à la détention abusive en Haïti



LWBC IN ACTION

The following quotes are translations by LWBC.

Colombia



"[LWBC's] support was essential, without a doubt. [...] There are no other projects like this one in the country that are able to support us like this in our strategic litigation on transitional justice."

Sofía López

Lawyer – Lawyer at Corporación Justicia y Dignidad, LWBC partner in Colombia on the JUSTRAM project



"We shared knowledge on transitional justice, the participation of women, and gender equality with other people in the region to enable them to exercise their rights too and tell them who to turn to in order to file a claim [and obtain reparation]."

A woman community leader and victim of gender-based violence in the region of Urabá, during the National Women's Gathering where women participated in workshops organized by the JUSTRAM project on transitional justice and the role of women in peacebuilding



"We didn't know how to approach the victims of the armed conflict. Training helped us to better understand their story and what they had been through. The agents of the Prosecutor's office in Pasto now have a better understanding of violence and its ties with armed conflict, and are more capable of demonstrating empathy towards victims, including towards women who were forcibly recruited by armed groups. All these things are important in helping us improve the services we offer our citizens. Another important topic was 'femicides', and the protocols to respond to cases. We succeeded in shifting the legal classification of some cases of murder to officially being recognized as femicides. This is a significant step forward because no murder case had ever been characterized under this relatively new concept before."

Employee at the Prosecutor's Office in Pasto, Nariño



Guatemala



"My internship played an important role in helping me grow professionally and personally. The reading materials my supervisor recommended helped me acquire crucial knowledge on women's rights and feminist approaches. I developed a more objective perspective on the activities I carried out and was able to put into practice what I had learned, and adopt new working methods. Participating firsthand in litigation cases on criminal matters is really helping me successfully complete the final phase of my university career."

Habby Ajú

Legal intern of Indigenous origins, serving with Bufete Jurídico de Derechos Humanos con Enfoque Feminista



"My experience as a volunteer helped me explore new opportunities. I was able to work on cases I wouldn't have had the chance to participate in back in Quebec, especially as a freshly qualified lawyer. I also worked on cases involving enforced disappearances, especially high-profile cases. I feel privileged to have had the chance to address these cases."

Fanny Dagenais-Dion

Volunteer legal adviser in Guatemala at the CALDH as part of the PRODEF (Protection of Children, Women, and Other Vulnerable Communities) project.



Northern Triangle



"This new beginning [reference to the first transnational case of trafficking in human beings] has a lot to do with the assistance provided by LWBC. What we especially appreciated [from LWBC] was that we received support in the way we needed it and when we needed it, in order to address these transnational human trafficking cases. We're looking forward to developing strategies to strengthen the capacity of prosecutors to take on such matters."

Mynor Pinto

Deputy Prosecutor of the Office of the Prosecutor's section on human trafficking



Haiti



"Thanks to the support I received, I have started to return to a normal life and regain the joy of living."

A Haitian woman victim of wrongful pre-trial detention who received reintegration support upon her release from a prison in Haiti following a habeas corpus petition filed by an LWBC partner



Honduras



"Until now we had been carrying out so much work with no support nor visibility whatsoever. This partnership with LWBC brings hope to our teams but also to victims. I remember the moment we told K* that we weren't going to drop his case, that we were going to use it for strategic litigation, and that he could count on our team, other institutions and support from LWBC. For K*, [...] this support was a source of hope and joy."

Nidia Castillo

Lawyer at Red de Abogadas del Sur, about LWBC's help in an emblematic case involving torture



"We hadn't received much support, so we're extremely grateful for everything LWBC has been doing. [...] The assistance we received from LWBC made us feel supported, less alone, stronger, and hopeful in seeking justice."

Mother of a victim of sexual violence



Mali



"[...] Younger, I imagined myself becoming a decision-maker, contributing actively to development efforts in the community and even nationwide, especially on matters regarding the enforcement of women's rights in Mali. Little by little, this desire started to fade into a dream, something I could only reach in my sleep. In the depths of my despair, one day I was called in for an interview for an internship within the JUPREC program on building the 'next generation'. That day was certainly one of the happiest days of my life." Since, new opportunities have opened up. I completed training and received coaching to unleash the leader in me. I had no idea I was capable of leading; my leadership skills were there deep down, and maybe I had suppressed them. We completed intensive training courses [...] and discovered some hidden talents. [...] Thanks to the JUPREC project, I went from being a housewife to becoming involved in defending women victims of gender-based violence. And I'm now fulfilling my dream of living as an independent, active woman."

Hawoye Maïga

Former JUPREC project intern, now a researcher at the TJRC





"I had the privilege of working with colleagues and partners who taught and inspired me so much. I collaborated directly with five legal aid and judicial assistance officers, with women and men who reach out to the women in their community in Tombouctou, Gao, Mopti, Ségou and Koulikoro. These partners showed me the cultural, linguistic, and musical diversity of Mali—a country all I knew of was its capital city, Bamako. I think this collaboration was an experience of shared learning for all of us. [...] My experience working on the JUPREC project was extremely valuable from a professional perspective [...]. After a year of volunteering with the JUPREC project, I am now confident that I want to pursue a career in the field of international cooperation."

Claudia Goncalves

Volunteer legal adviser at LWBC's office in Bamako as part of the Justice, Prevention, and Reconciliation for Women, Minors, and Other Persons Affected by the Crisis in Mali (JUPREC) project

Voluntary Cooperation



"Before, I didn't really understand why child marriages should be banned. But thanks to the training courses we received, I've become one of the most fervent campaigners against child marriage."

An imam from a community in Western Côte d'Ivoire, after completing a training workshop provided by an LWBC partner and LWBC volunteer



"I am a victim of genital mutilation. They left me on the bed, sitting in my own blood. These training sessions have given me the strength to share my experience and prevent the same thing happening in my community."

A participant in a workshop delivered by a volunteer deployed to an LWBC partner organization in Korhogo, Ivory Coast

LWBC DURING THE PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 crisis has shaken up the world as we know it. It represents both a huge challenge to overcome and an unprecedented opportunity, forcing us to rethink our values, priorities, lifestyle, and relationships. Our ability to demonstrate solidarity and commitment will allow us, in a joint effort, to surmount the crisis and seize the opportunity for change. All of our programs are still running. We reviewed them closely with our partners in order to identify innovative ways that would allow us to continue advancing our work despite the pandemic.

As such, on April 2, 2020, we released a statement on the importance of upholding the rule of law and human rights in times of crisis. In that statement, we recalled that while it is legitimate for States to implement restrictive measures to contain the effects of the pandemic on public health, States are not relieved of their obligation to respect and guarantee respect for human rights on their territory. We are delighted to see that our statement resonated with the Canadian ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Development who released their own statement on April 8, 2020 on, the Human rights implications of COVID-19.

We're continuing our work with our partners on the field to ensure continued access to justice and protection of human rights during the pandemic: the right to health, gender equality, the fight against gender-based violence, the rights of LGBTI persons, the right to private life, the rights of detainees, freedom of expression, the fight against human trafficking, and the protection of human rights defenders. LWBC's action and the principles that underpin it are described in our Alert state series, available on our website.

Solidarity at the Forefront

It is uplifting to see that human rights defenders all over the world are demonstrating resilience and continuing to strive for various causes: peace, reconciliation, equality, fighting impunity and poverty—all of which are fundamental at all times, even during a pandemic. Human rights defenders have also spoken out against injustices and inequality resulting from the health crisis.

If there ever was a moment in modern history in which we have come to realize the importance of global interconnection, that moment has got to be the one we are witnessing right now. The pandemic is reminding us of the impact of our actions, wherever we may be, and of the importance of solidarity on a local, national, and international scale.

A Challenge and an Opportunity

LWBC hopes to redefine a world in which the primacy of the law and justice provide a basis for inclusive and equitable development—a world in which justice stakeholders unite beyond borders to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable individuals, the most marginalized, the poorest, the most discriminated against, and the victims of the most serious human rights violations. A world where the law is an instrument to defeat impunity and make justice a reality, with and for people in situations of vulnerability.

LWBC's teams, volunteers, partners and other allies have been committed to this vision for 18 years now. And the results LWBC has yielded over 2019–2021 are a resounding example of this commitment.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

EXCERPT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDITED BY MALETTE

Statement of operations

For the year ended March 31, 2020

	2020	2019
INCOME		
<i>Donor contributions to programs</i>	14 065 201\$	11 478 020\$
<i>Contributions in the form of services provided</i>	1 978 683	2 158 433
<i>Private funding</i>	165 434	277 158
<i>Public funding</i>	15 915	-
<i>Other</i>	43 069	24 519
	16 268 302	13 938 130
EXPENSES		
<i>Programs</i>	12 622 905	10 202 161
<i>Contributions</i>	1 978 683	2 158 433
<i>Other projects and activities (development, awareness-raising and communication, administration)</i>	1 218 276	742 878
<i>Financing activities</i>	23 165	39 046
<i>Depreciation</i>	9 422	4 273
	15 852 451	13 146 791
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	415 851\$	791 339\$

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

EXCERPT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDITED BY MALETTE

Balance sheet

at March 31, 2020

	2020	2019
ASSETS		
Current assets		
<i>Cash and cash equivalents</i>	6 564 669\$	5 056 274\$
<i>Debtors</i>	847 702	190 905
<i>Prepaid partner (project) expenses</i>	547 996	0
<i>Prepaid expenses</i>	26 435	67 139
	7 986 802	5 314 318
Fixed tangible assets	50 730	50 730
	8 037 532	5 365 048
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
<i>Operating liabilities</i>	443 859	438 999
<i>Deferred contributions</i>	5 491 191	3 572 493
	5 935 050	4 011 492
NET ASSETS	2 102 482	1 686 631
	8 037 532\$	5 698 123\$

Program partners



Partners without borders



Major partners



Associate partners



Sponsoring partners



Service partners

Work relations



Intellectual property



Legal information



Strategic planning



Brand identity



Collaborative management



Communications and public relations



