



The
CENTER for
VICTIMS of
TORTURE

CVT Overview

Restoring the Dignity of the Human Spirit

The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) is dedicated to healing survivors and ending torture. By extending rehabilitative care to survivors, building the capacity of institutions and individuals and advocating against torture and in support of human rights, CVT works toward a future in which torture ceases to exist and its survivors have hope for a new life. CVT was founded in 1985 as the first torture survivor rehabilitation center in the United States and just the third internationally; we remain the largest organization of our kind in the U.S. and are one of the two largest in the world.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to heal the wounds of torture on individuals, their families and their communities and to end torture worldwide.

What is Torture?

Torture is the intentional and systematic infliction of physical or psychological pain and suffering in order to punish, intimidate or gather information. Torture is illegal, immoral, ineffective and makes us less safe. Torture is, however, a highly effective means of controlling populations. Torture destroys leaders, disintegrates opposition and terrorizes communities. It creates cultures based on apathy and fear.

Torture results in a complex set of physical and psychological problems for its survivors: Chronic pain in muscles and joints from being bound, hung, or confined to small places like cages. Balance and mobility problems, often from being beaten on the soles of the feet or lower legs. Sleep disorders including sleeplessness, sleep interruptions, and intense and incessant nightmares. Deep depression. Severe anxiety. Frequent thoughts of suicide. Fortunately, with sensitive and professional care, survivors can heal from their wounds and reclaim their lives.

CVT'S Work in the World

Over the course of the past 30 years, CVT's work has evolved to center in four primary areas:

Rebuilding Lives and Restoring Hope

In CVT's home state of Minnesota, a professional staff that includes physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers and interpreters, complemented by volunteer occupational, physical and massage therapists, touches the lives of about 1,500 people annually. We extend rehabilitative care to just over 300 individual survivors; assist hundreds of members of their families; provide training to mainstream health and human services professionals, as well as attorneys, refugee leaders, law enforcement officials, and others; and refer survivors we can't help to other care and service providers in the community. In a partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), CVT also extends rehabilitative care to refugee torture survivors in Atlanta, Georgia (24 clients plus 87 family members), and hopes to expand this work to other states in the coming years.

Internationally, CVT works in refugee camps and communities where there are large numbers of survivors, employing a model in which professional staff hire, train and supervise paraprofessional mental health counselors. Increasingly, physical therapy is a key component of CVT's international projects, which aim to build capacity that will endure beyond the duration of CVT's presence.

After working in West Africa (Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia) for more than a decade, and in Democratic Republic of Congo for nearly eight years, CVT now works in both Africa and the Middle East. We have a project in one of the world's largest refugee camps at Dadaab, Kenya, primarily with Somali but also with Congolese, South Sudanese, Ethiopian and Eritrean survivors. At our project in

Nairobi, Kenya, we extend care to urban refugee survivors from around the Great Lakes region (including large numbers of women who endured sexual violence in the Congo). We work in northern Uganda with victims of atrocities committed by the Lord's Resistance Army. In northern Ethiopia, we extend care to Eritrean survivors, many of whom have fled this repressive government's forced military conscription policies.

In Amman and Zarqa, Jordan, at CVT's largest international project, CVT staff extend life-changing and life-saving rehabilitative care to large numbers of Iraqi and Syrian survivors. We help almost 2,000 individual survivors each year and reach thousands of family and community members.

Building Capacity

CVT organizes technical assistance and training for 39 torture survivor centers and programs in the U.S. and nine other countries. The National Capacity Building and Partners in Trauma Healing projects build clinical skills and help to develop strong and financially stable organizations. Additionally, through CVT's Washington, DC office, we generate federal resources that sustain and expand the domestic and international networks of torture survivor centers. Because of CVT's work, the U.S. is the largest international donor to survivor rehabilitation. At \$29 million annually it's a small amount, but each year it helps tens of thousands of survivors get the help they urgently need.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Research

CVT is widely known for the quality of our program evaluation efforts, as we document significant improvements in our clients' mental health and functionality. Our Healing Hearts project, serving Karen survivors, is a four-year, \$3 million randomized controlled trial that is testing the proposition that the addition of specialized mental health and case management services to a primary care setting will produce improved patient health outcomes and/or reduced patient health costs. CVT's research team produced a study documenting a 44% prevalence rate among refugees arriving in the United States, translating into a torture survivor population of 1.3 million (or 1 in every 245 Americans), a figure that has become widely accepted as the best available information.

Policy and Human Rights Advocacy

CVT has been deeply engaged in efforts to solve problems associated with the United States' embrace of torture and cruelty in post-9/11 counterterrorism activities; we played a key role in securing release of the Senate Intelligence Committee's CIA Torture Report and continue work on related issues. Through our New Tactics in Human Rights Project (www.NewTactics.org) we promote enhanced strategic and tactical thinking among the international human rights community.

Annual Budget

The 2017 budget totals \$20.7 million, of which \$6.5 million will be contributed by individuals, foundations, corporate philanthropies and other institutions. \$14.2 million will be earned through government contracts and medical and case management billing.

Staff – CVT employs about 300 staff, including about 95 in the U.S. and 210 in Africa and Jordan.

Impact, Results

CVT is committed to rigorous evaluation of our work, and for the past four years has received a four-star rating (the highest) by Charity Navigator, the world's largest nonprofit rating organization. Only 9% of the nearly 8,000 organizations rated by Charity Navigator receive this designation.

How You Can Help – To make a tax-deductible contribution, or to join our email advocacy campaigns, please visit www.CVT.org.