



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

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### **Center for Victims of Torture Marks 10 Years of Healing in Jordan**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.**—The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) is marking 10 years of healing in Jordan, where the organization has cared for thousands of refugee survivors of torture and war, beginning with Iraqi clients and expanding over the years as conflicts and crises emerged in the region and beyond. CVT Jordan has steadily worked over these years to meet increasing demand for holistic, rehabilitative care for refugee torture survivors, especially as the Syrian conflict began and continues to devastate communities today. Since 2008, CVT Jordan has extended rehabilitative care to more than 7,400 refugee survivors of torture and war. See our CVT Jordan Client Infographic [here](#).

CVT Jordan was established in 2008 to address the mental health needs of severely traumatized Iraqi refugees—a programming gap broadly recognized at the time by the international humanitarian community in Jordan—while also training local mental health and social service providers to serve survivors of torture and other critical traumas over the long term. From its locations in Amman and Zarqa today, CVT Jordan rebuilds the lives and restores the hope of individuals and families from seven nations facing crises, including Eritrea, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. CVT Jordan also continues to partner with and provide training for other organizations to increase understanding of the effects of torture and war trauma and the benefits of holistic rehabilitative care.

“CVT’s work over the past 10 years in Jordan has had an incredible impact on the lives of so many people, including my own,” said Simone van der Kaaden, longtime country director for CVT Jordan. “To see the profound changes in the lives of our clients, how CVT Jordan team members have grown professionally and how CVT has been part of building a local cadre of trauma rehabilitation specialists in Jordan and beyond is incredible. CVT’s work and partner network continue to expand in the Middle East, and that growth is a strong motivator to continue to strengthen the network of professionals, create opportunities to share experiences and increase access to rehabilitation services in Jordan and the region.”

At its inception, the CVT Jordan team included a small team of expatriates and national Jordanian staff on-site, in addition to staff based at CVT’s Minnesota headquarters. Today, under the leadership of our Jordanian colleagues, CVT Jordan includes about 70 staff members

on-site, with an emphasis on professional development and growth opportunities for all members of the Jordan team. See our CVT Jordan Staff Infographic [here](#).

“The occasion of this milestone is the right time to remind the world that we continue to bear witness to the immense suffering and scale of human rights atrocities still committed today in Syria and parts of Iraq,” said Neal Porter, CVT director of international services. “CVT will continue to do what we can to restore hope, trust, dignity and purpose to our clients in Jordan, for as long as we can, because we know healing is possible for survivors even under the worst of circumstances.”

“Through the dedication, hard work and pioneering efforts of our staff, CVT is privileged to have played an important role in enabling thousands of refugee survivors of torture and the trauma of war to rebuild their lives—lives filled with purpose, promise and new hope for the future,” said Curt Goering, CVT executive director. “Although it’s been 10 years, the need remains dire in the region. Therefore, our work continues.”

CVT’s [New Tactics in Human Rights](#) program also has a presence in Jordan, via its [Middle East and North Africa \(MENA\) Initiative](#). Launched in 2009 out of CVT’s U.S. headquarters and transferred to an Amman office in 2011, the initiative supports Middle Eastern and North African human rights defenders to advance human rights through training, Arabic-language tools and networks, providing subgrants and creating online communities to share new tactics, exchange information and encourage collaboration.

Established in 1985 and now one of the largest organizations of its kind, CVT extends care to torture survivors and their families at healing centers in Atlanta and St. Paul in the U.S., and overseas in Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya and Uganda. The organization also provides training to torture survivor rehabilitation centers in the U.S. and internationally, as well as engaging in policy initiatives to end torture and advance human rights. In 2017, the organization rebuilt the lives and restored the hope of nearly 22,000 survivors and family members. And through policy advocacy that generates federal funding for survivor rehabilitation, last year CVT touched the lives of 50,000 survivors and 200,000 family members.

Funding for CVT’s work in Jordan is provided by the United States Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. A number of government and foundation donors support CVT’s New Tactics in Human Rights Middle East and North Africa work.

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*The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; and healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East. Visit [www.cvt.org](http://www.cvt.org)*