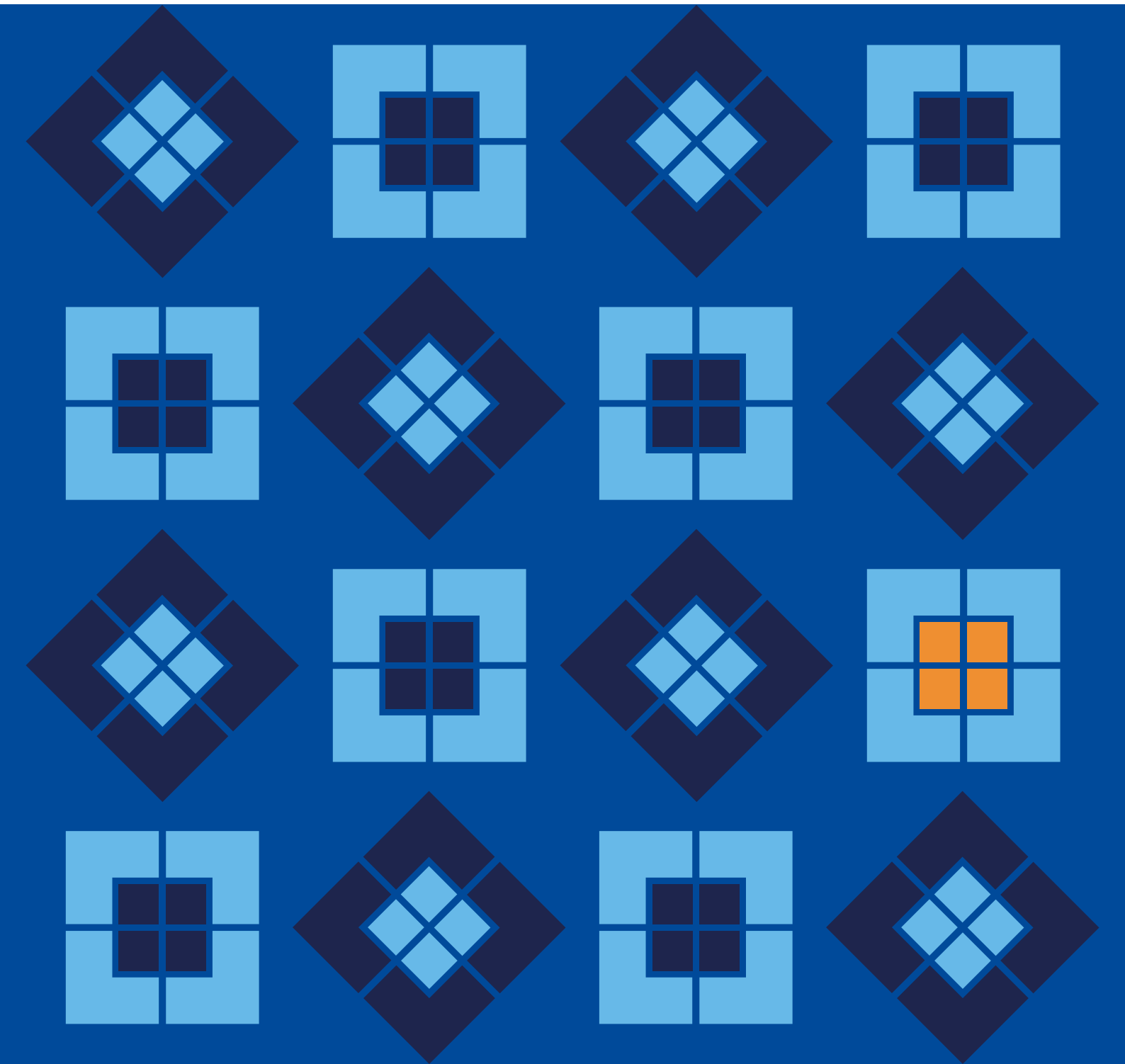


# Program and Budget 2024-2029





**Kathryne Bomberger**  
Director-General

A handwritten signature in purple ink, reading "Kathryne Bomberger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

## DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S FOREWORD

The International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) has more than a quarter of a century of experience in addressing the global challenge of persons who go missing as a result of war, human rights abuses, migration, man-made and natural disasters and other causes. The challenge has evolved in recent decades and the tools to address it have evolved too.

Around the world today, ICMP is reinforcing efforts by governments, international organizations, and associations of families of the missing to develop and deploy effective and sustainable programs to account for missing persons.

ICMP's mandate is to secure the cooperation of governments and others in locating missing persons from conflict, human rights abuses, disasters, organized crime, irregular migration and other causes and to assist them in doing so.

Since it was founded in 1996, ICMP has worked with governments and organizations in more than 40 countries. This has included helping to create legislation and establish institutions to support the process of accounting for the missing, applying the latest forensic genetic science in conjunction with customized informatics and data systems, and helping families of the missing to play an effective role at the heart of the process. Today, ICMP maintains geographic programs related to Albania, Canada, Mexico, the Caucasus, Iraq, Libya, Syria/MENA, Ukraine, Vietnam, and the Western Balkans.

ICMP's programs reflect an international consensus that the issue of missing persons cuts across judicial and national jurisdictions and can only be tackled effectively by applying dedicated techniques as part of a coordinated multinational approach that respects human rights. International cooperation ensures effective investigations, as the missing and their relatives are often not located in the same country.

This Program and Budget offers a clear picture of how ICMP is implementing its mandate and what it needs in order to sustain existing programs and launch new ones.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has generated an upsurge in missing persons cases, from combat, occupation, and mass displacement. The war, which has dominated headlines since 2022, has added to the long list of countries facing major conflict-related missing persons challenges, including the Western Balkans, Syria, and Iraq, where ICMP has well-established programs.

Fighting in the Southern Caucasus, which has been intermittent for decades, erupted again in 2023. ICMP has completed an extensive assessment of the impact of conflict in the region, including the latest fighting, and proposed measures that will make it possible to account for those who are missing.

Since the beginning of 2022, ICMP has launched new programs in Ukraine and Vietnam, and resumed its decade-long program in Libya. The Libya Program extended its remit to cover the large number of people who went missing as a result of flooding caused by the collapse of dams near the city of Derna in eastern Libya in September 2023.

In Canada, ICMP is working with partners to address the issue of indigenous children who from the 1880s until the end of the 20th century were removed from their families and placed in often remote state-supported boarding schools, ostensibly to assimilate them in the dominant Canadian culture. Estimates of school-related deaths over the system's existence range from 3,200 to more than 30,000.

These programs require different resources and different strategic approaches, applied in ways that are consistent with legal and ethical principles. Accounting for the missing is fundamental to upholding and reinforcing the rule of law, and

governments have legal obligations to help survivors access their rights to truth, justice and reparations. ICMP plays a unique role, working with governments and civil society to develop and maintain effective missing persons programs based on the rule of law.

ICMP's operations benefit from continuous development. For example, Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) tools and techniques are being integrated in ICMP's data flow processes, the organization has already observed that using OSINT techniques in the context of Ukraine, and Syria for example, can assist in finding information on the potential whereabouts of missing people. Likewise, geolocation intelligence (GEOINT) and image intelligence (IMAGEINT) can provide information on clandestine sites of forensic interest.

ICMP's capacity to help partners depends on functional legal frameworks within which it can act in-country. The example of Ukraine is also instructive in this respect. In April 2022, the General Prosecutor's Office requested urgent ICMP assistance. ICMP responded immediately, launching a program to help Ukraine in the wake of the Russian invasion. In August 2023, ICMP and the National Police of Ukraine (NPU) signed a [Protocol](#) enabling the Main Investigation Department of the NPU to use ICMP's Integrated Data Management System (iDMS). The signing of the Protocol marked the beginning of an ICMP campaign to collect data from Ukrainian families residing outside the country who have missing relatives from the war. In October 2023, ICMP signed a Memorandum on Scientific, Technical and Research Cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine and a Memorandum on Cooperation with the Ministry of Health of Ukraine. The agreement with the Ministry of Justice supports efforts to enhance investigations into missing persons cases, including a DNA-led identification process and other techniques used to locate missing persons in cooperation with the relevant domestic institutions. The agreement with the

Ministry of Health creates a framework for ICMP to assist the Ministry with capacity building and to provide support in the field of forensic science, particularly, in regard to forensic anthropology, forensic odontology, data collection and processing, and effective case management.

These agreements, and similar agreements signed by ICMP with partners in other countries where it maintains programs enable the organization to provide effective assistance by supporting and expanding the capacity of domestic partners through training and the transfer of knowledge and technology, as well as providing direct support.

ICMP is voluntarily funded. In 2021, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) approved the inclusion of ICMP in the list of multilateral organizations eligible to receive funding reportable as Official Development Assistance (ODA). ODA-eligible multilateral organizations such as ICMP that promote development and welfare in developing countries can receive contributions towards their core requirements from DAC member states. Funding for ICMP, including its Main Program, counts towards donors' overall targets for annual official government aid. ODA eligibility removes a significant impediment to making ICMP's Main Program – which includes core capabilities that are essential to carrying out the work of its geographic programs – financially sustainable. ICMP asks that donor states explore opportunities to secure ICMP's sustainability, and in particular that of its Main Program, taking into account ICMP's eligibility for ODA funding.

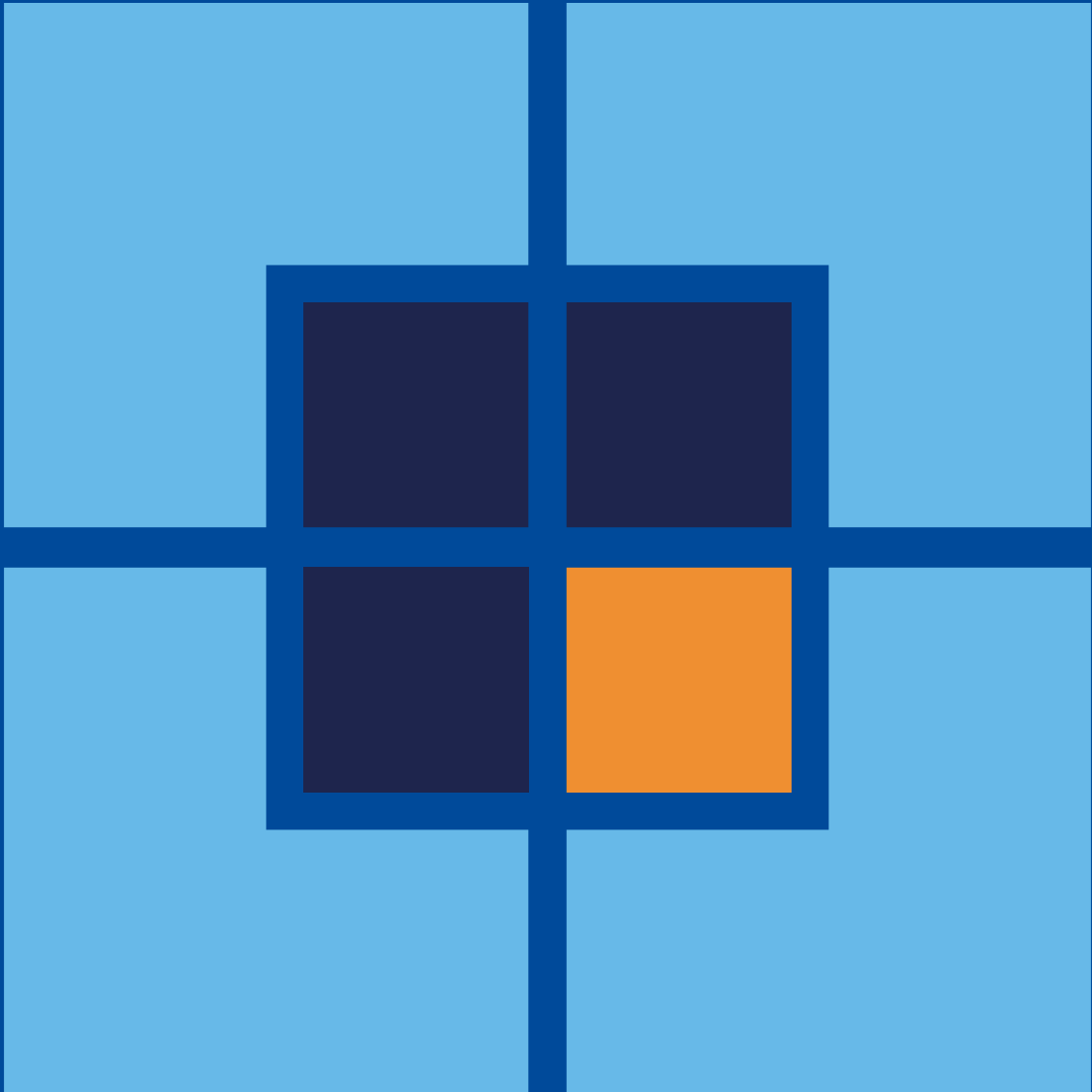
The ICMP Treaty provides for a review of the Treaty to be initiated by its original Signatories. The review process is now well advanced and will deliver recommendations that will help to strengthen international cooperation on the issue of missing persons, and which will facilitate donor funding by expanding the range of circumstances in which voluntary contributions to ICMP can be made by State Parties and other countries and organizations.

ICMP is seeking donor support for its state-of-the-art DNA laboratory and its secure data systems capabilities, and other Horizontal Programs within its Main Program, as well as for the geographic and thematic programs that are maintained and supported through the Main Program.

In the following pages, ICMP's Horizontal and geographic programs are presented, providing a snapshot of current operations and also of objectives and desired outcomes over the next five years. The Program and Budget offers an overview of the ways in which ICMP is helping its partners around the world, and the ways in which prospective donors can assist ICMP through funding and other measures so that it can continue to implement its mandate effectively.

# Table of Contents

|                                                                          |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>I. Executive Summary</b>                                              | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>II. Funding</b>                                                       | <b>11</b> |
| 2.1. Funding history                                                     | 11        |
| 2.2. Funding structure                                                   | 11        |
| 2.3. Funding strategy                                                    | 12        |
| <b>III. Indicative Funding 2024-2029</b>                                 | <b>13</b> |
| <b>IV. 2024 Budget</b>                                                   | <b>14</b> |
| 4.1. Budget by program and cost category                                 | 18        |
| <b>V. Main Program</b>                                                   | <b>21</b> |
| 5.1. Direction and Policy (D&P)                                          | 21        |
| 5.2. Institutional Development (ID)                                      | 22        |
| 5.3. Civil Society Initiatives (CSI)                                     | 23        |
| 5.4. Science and Technology (S&T)                                        | 24        |
| 5.5. Data Systems and Data Coordination (DSDC)                           | 25        |
| 5.6. Wim Kok Center for Excellence and Learning (CEL)                    | 26        |
| 5.7. Corporate Services (CS)                                             | 27        |
| 5.8. Secretariat Program: ICMP Treaty or Statutory and Subsidiary Bodies | 28        |
| <b>VI. Geographic Programs</b>                                           | <b>32</b> |
| 6.1. Canada                                                              | 32        |
| 6.2. Colombia                                                            | 33        |
| 6.3. Iraq                                                                | 34        |
| 6.4. Libya                                                               | 35        |
| 6.5. Mexico                                                              | 37        |
| 6.6. South Caucasus                                                      | 39        |
| 6.7. Syria/MENA                                                          | 40        |
| 6.8. Ukraine                                                             | 42        |
| 6.9. Vietnam                                                             | 44        |
| 6.10. Western Balkans (WB)                                               | 45        |
| <b>VII. THEMATIC PROGRAMS</b>                                            | <b>49</b> |
| 7.1. Missing Migrants and Refugees (MMR)                                 | 49        |
| 7.2. Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)                                | 51        |
| 7.3. Assistance to Justice                                               | 52        |



# I. Executive Summary

This Program and Budget presents ICMP's workplan for 2024-2029.

The 2021 inclusion of ICMP on the list of ODA-eligible multilateral organizations (channel category: Other multilateral organizations/47000) is based on the assessment of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee that ICMP's work is focused on technical assistance in the development of good governance and rule-of-law strategies to address the issue of missing persons, by:

- **Ensuring** that governments and other parties cooperate to address the missing persons issue, which includes institutional capacity building, encouraging public involvement and addressing the needs of the judicial system; and
- **Providing** technical assistance to governments in locating, recovering and identifying missing persons.

ICMP's programs and work align themselves to the development strategies of donor countries in a number of priority areas, including:

- **Fighting** the root causes of displacement, for example in the Middle East and North Africa;
- **Advancing** open societies and conflict resolution where the issue of large numbers of missing persons has deepened sectarian divisions;
- **Advancing** economic and human development by strengthening rule-of-law approaches and human rights to uphold or reinstate public trust in state institutions; and
- **Increasing** partner country ownership of development strategies by aligning rule-of-law-based strategies to account for the missing

and disappeared through domestic legislative and policy frameworks and through technical development.

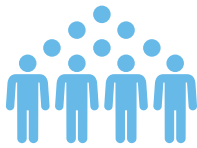
Accordingly, ICMP will:

- **Continue to implement its mandate** with the utmost effect through its programs and the assistance it provides to governments, as well as to international and other organizations, in their efforts to uphold and advance human rights and rule-of-law guarantees in respect of missing persons and their families; and
- **Continue developing and supporting multilateral** instruments for doing this, in particular through the ICMP Conference of States Parties (CSP) and other Multilateral Forums, Working Groups and Joint Processes.

The Program and Budget lays out program work that is already underway or is envisaged in the near- and medium-term. The present document also presents ICMP Treaty, Statutory and Subsidiary Bodies in the context of ICMP's program work.

ICMP has 170 staff members at the time of writing and maintains geographic programs related to Albania, Canada, the Caucuses, Iraq, Libya, Mexico, Syria/MENA, Ukraine, Vietnam, and the Western Balkans. Planned geographic programs during the 2024–2029 period, for which activity plans will be developed subject to funding, include Afghanistan, Botswana, Colombia, El Salvador, The Gambia, Nigeria, and Yemen. In addition, ICMP maintains three thematic programs, namely the Missing Migrants and Refugees Program (MMR), the Platform for Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) and the Assistance to Justice Program.

## 170 Staff members



## Geographic Programs



- Albania
- Canada
- The Caucuses
- Iraq
- Libya
- Mexico
- Syria/MENA
- Ukraine
- Vietnam
- The Western Balkans

## Thematic Programs

- Platform for Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)

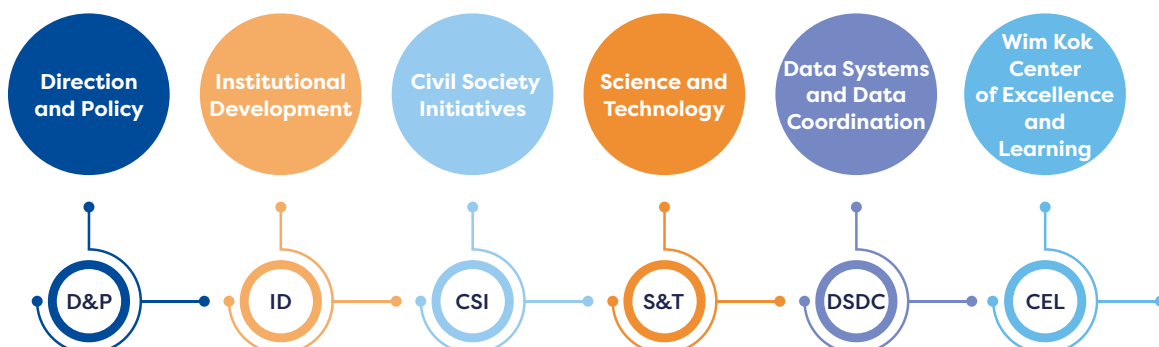


- Assistance to Justice Program

- Missing Migrants and Refugees Program (MMR)

ICMP maintains a Main Program under the direction of the Director-General. The Main Program consists of six Horizontal Programs (HPs), as well as Corporate Services and a Secretariat Program for ICMP Treaty or Statutory and Subsidiary Bodies (TSSB) as part of ICMP's programmatic work. The HPs are: Direction and Policy (D&P), Institutional Development (ID), Civil Society Initiatives (CSI), Science and Technology (S&T), Data Systems and Data Coordination (DSDC), and the Wim Kok Center of Excellence and Learning (CEL). ICMP's highly specialized HPs provide direction, oversight and support to all geographic and thematic programs and they also deliver work directly in all geographic programs.

## Horizontal Programs





The Secretariat Program is part of ICMP's Main Program. The Secretariat Program provides administrative support to ICMP's treaty and statutory and subsidiary bodies, namely the Board of Commissioners (BoC), the Conference of States Parties (CSP), the Financial Committee (FC) and the Global Forum on Missing Persons (GF), as well as the Panel of Experts (PE), and the Inter-Agency Committee on Missing Persons (IAC). It also supports inter-governmental bodies that are specific to regional programs, including the Missing Persons Group (MPG) in the Western Balkans, the Joint Process for countries in the Mediterranean to address the issue of Missing Migrants and Refugees, and the inter-governmental group for the Syria/MENA program.

ICMP programs are designed to assist states in their efforts to meet their obligations regarding missing and disappeared persons in the following areas:

- **Human rights:** In many parts of the world, persons going and remaining missing are both a consequence and a cause of failures by public institutions to uphold the rule of law. ICMP seeks to strengthen the capacities of authorities to protect human rights.
- **Rule of law:** ICMP works with authorities to ensure that missing persons issues are effectively addressed through public law processes.
- **Good governance:** ICMP helps authorities to adopt measures to ensure that investigations of disappearances are at all times adequate, proportional and fair.
- **Strengthening multilateral cooperation:** Helping states to fulfil their responsibility to locate missing persons necessarily requires multilateral cooperation, and all ICMP thematic and geographical programs have a multilateral dimension.
- **Gender equality and peacebuilding:** ICMP supports the economic and social wellbeing of women survivors of missing persons cases through education, training and grant-making programs.
- **Development and social wellbeing:** ICMP's work contributes directly to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, *including promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions.*

ICMP's work also supports prevention and contributes to reducing violence and fatalities, and enhances domestic and international capacity to advance development and social wellbeing in particular for low- and medium-income countries emerging from conflict, lawlessness or man-made or natural disasters.



# II. Funding

## 2.1. Funding history

1. ICMP receives no assessed contributions from States Parties and its activities are entirely voluntarily funded. Over the last 26 years, the organization has received approximately **USD 181 million** in donations; annual contributions have averaged **USD 6.5 million**. As an intergovernmental organization (IGO), historically **73 percent** of ICMP's funding has been provided by governments, with the remaining **27 percent** coming primarily from multilateral organizations, such as the European Union (EU).

- **Horizontal Programs (HP)**

- Direction and Policy (D&P)
- Institutional Development (ID)
- Civil Society Initiatives (CSI)
- Science and Technology (S&T)
- Data Systems and Data Coordination (DSDC)
- The Wim Kok Center for Excellence and Learning (CEL)

- **Corporate Services (CS)**

ICMP's integrated operational structure requires a corresponding funding structure that allocates costs of the Main Program for the geographic and thematic programs.

3. Consequently, the ICMP funding model requires that a proportion of funds that are restricted to geographic programs are allocated to the Horizontal Programs, as the primary, overriding objective of the HPs is to support the geographic and thematic programs. Direct cost coverage for the Main Program is always agreed upon with the donor in advance and includes details on the attribution of work to be carried out by the HPs and associated costs. Given that ICMP is funded through voluntary contributions, direct cost coverage for the Main Program offsets in a flexible manner the absence of assessed contributions towards the Main Program.

## 2.2. Funding structure

2. The centralized manner in which ICMP is structured and functions requires a corresponding funding structure. ICMP maintains its Horizontal Programs at its Headquarters (HQ). ICMP's Main Program provides direction, oversight and support to all country and thematic programs and is responsible for the direct delivery of activities across all geographic and thematic programs. It comprises three components

- **Statutory Bodies (SB)**

- The Board of Commissioners (BoC)
- The Conference of States Parties (CSP)
- The Financial Committee (FC)
- The Global Forum on Missing Persons (GF)
- Other expert and advisory bodies

## 2.3. Funding strategy

4. ICMP's aim is to continue its sustainable growth. Since establishing its HQ in The Hague in 2015, the organization has moved from an annual budget of around **USD 6.5 million to USD 17 million**. The majority of this funding has been restricted for use by ICMP's geographic programs, with a smaller amount of funding earmarked for ICMP's HPs.
5. ICMP's funding strategy for 2024-2029 is to **increase direct cost coverage** and earmarked funds for HPs from an average of USD 1 million per annum to a minimum of USD 4 million per annum and to increase funding for ICMP's current geographic and thematic programs from an average of USD 1 to 2.5 million per annum to a minimum of USD 4 million per annum. Larger operations such as Ukraine and Iraq will require a minimum of USD 6 million per year.
6. The Inclusion of ICMP on the list of ODA-eligible multilateral organizations (channel category: Other multilateral organizations/47000) provides donor states with the opportunity to contribute to securing ICMP's sustainability, and in particular the sustainability of its Main Program, which provides bilateral and multilateral strategic planning, oversight, expert input and technical support to the geographic and thematic programs. The Main Program accounts for **19 percent** of ICMP's total budget.
7. In addition, a review of the ICMP Treaty, which is currently under discussion, could include the possibility of introducing measures to support funding of the Main Program, with proposals allowing participating States to make special agreements in order to provide sustainable funding. For instance, ICMP is exploring bringing together an initial group of its States Parties that could provide annual funding for the DVI program. Considering that man-made and natural disasters can strike anywhere at any time, strengthening ICMP's ability to implement and advance DVI standards will directly benefit participating States and advance ICMP's mandate across a range of missing persons scenarios.

ICMP's current geographic and thematic programs include the Western Balkans (WB), Syria, Iraq, Libya, Mexico, Ukraine, Vietnam, Canada and the Southern Caucasus, Chile, Brazil and the Missing Migrants and Refugees program and the Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) program. New geographic programs require commitments over the **longer term**, with a minimum of **USD 2 million** in start-up costs, and about **USD 4 million** per annum to maintain. Other programs for which ICMP has been asked to develop concepts for engagement include Yemen, Afghanistan, the Gambia, Uganda, El Salvador, Nigeria, and the situation of the Rohingya. ICMP maintains smaller projects in Brazil, Chile, and elsewhere.

In addition to negotiating direct cost coverage funding arrangements with donors, ICMP seeks to establish long-term financing agreements with key donor governments, ensuring sustainable, multi-year funding for programs through regular multilateral donor meetings in program areas, as well as in capitals.

## III. Indicative Funding 2024-2029

8. Indicative financial resource requirements based on the funding strategy for the five-year period are detailed below:

| Program Funding                   | 2024              | 2025              | 2026              | 2027              | 2028              | 2029              |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Statutory Bodies                  | 137,770           | 141,250           | 143,750           | 144,440           | 148,773           | 153,236           |
| Horizontal Program                | 4,908,800         | 4,928,520         | 4,997,000         | 5,109,645         | 5,262,934         | 5,420,822         |
| Corporate Services                | 1,297,510         | 1,282,000         | 1,410,140         | 1,439,520         | 1,482,706         | 1,527,187         |
| <b>Subtotal Main Program</b>      | <b>6,344,080</b>  | <b>6,351,770</b>  | <b>6,550,890</b>  | <b>6,693,605</b>  | <b>6,894,413</b>  | <b>7,101,246</b>  |
| Iraq                              | 4,074,000         | 4,165,700         | 4,285,425         | 4,450,000         | 4,583,500         | 4,721,005         |
| Mexico                            | 1,085,400         | 1,154,000         | 1,245,000         | 1,328,000         | 1,420,960         | 1,520,427         |
| Syria/MENA                        | 2,050,500         | 2,546,000         | 3,841,060         | 4,512,391         | 4,589,102         | 4,667,116         |
| Ukraine                           | 4,787,322         | 4,376,000         | 4,375,600         | 4,520,050         | 4,655,652         | 4,795,321         |
| Armenia                           | 1,260,010         | 1,289,400         | 1,301,500         | 1,358,900         | 1,372,489         | 1,386,214         |
| Azerbaijan                        | 1,260,010         | 1,289,400         | 1,301,500         | 1,358,900         | 1,372,489         | 1,386,214         |
| Colombia                          | 650,000           | 1,000,000         | 1,000,000         | 1,000,000         | 1,000,000         | 1,000,000         |
| Western Balkans                   | 3,354,178         | 3,889,000         | 2,000,000         | 1,985,200         | 1,925,644         | 1,867,875         |
| Canada                            | 1,900,000         | 1,900,000         | 1,900,000         | 1,900,000         | 1,900,000         | 1,900,000         |
| Libya                             | 1,640,000         | 2,003,500         | 2,458,060         | 4,000,000         | 4,020,000         | 4,040,100         |
| Vietnam                           | 2,363,200         | 2,220,000         | 3,258,700         | 2,945,650         | 3,034,020         | 3,125,040         |
| Chile                             | 250,000           | 250,000           | 250,000           | 251,250           | 250,000           | 250,000           |
| Brazil                            | 300,000           | 305,000           | 305,000           | 305,000           | 305,000           | 305,000           |
| <b>Subtotal Country Programs</b>  | <b>24,974,620</b> | <b>26,388,000</b> | <b>27,521,845</b> | <b>29,915,341</b> | <b>30,428,855</b> | <b>30,964,312</b> |
| Missing Migrants and Refugees     | 1,585,000         | 1,595,000         | 1,600,000         | 1,600,000         | 1,600,000         | 1,600,000         |
| Disaster Victim Identification    | 500,000           | 525,000           | 525,000           | 540,000           | 570,000           | 580,000           |
| Assistance to Justice             | 50,000            | 50,000            | 50,000            | 50,000            | 50,000            | 50,000            |
| <b>Subtotal Thematic Programs</b> | <b>2,135,000</b>  | <b>2,170,000</b>  | <b>2,175,000</b>  | <b>2,190,000</b>  | <b>2,220,000</b>  | <b>2,230,000</b>  |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                | <b>33,453,700</b> | <b>34,909,770</b> | <b>36,247,735</b> | <b>38,798,946</b> | <b>39,543,268</b> | <b>40,295,558</b> |

Table 1: Indicative financial resource requirements 2024-2029.

## IV. 2024 Budget

9. ICMP's program budget for 2024 is USD 33,453,700 with expenditure forecasted to be USD 33,453,700.

|                          | Main Program     |                     |                    | Geographical/Thematic Programs |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                          | Statutory Bodies | Horizontal Programs | Corporate Services | Geographical Programs          |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |
| Western Balkans          |                  |                     |                    | Iraq                           | Syria/MENA         | Canada             | Libya              | Vietnam            |                    |
| <b>Income</b>            | 0%               | 15%                 | 4%                 | 10%                            | 12%                | 6%                 | 6%                 | 5%                 | 7%                 |
| <b>Restricted</b>        |                  | \$3,992,052         | \$-                | \$3,354,178                    | \$4,074,000        | \$2,050,500        | \$1,900,000        | \$1,640,000        | \$2,363,200        |
| <b>Unrestricted</b>      | \$137,770        | \$916,748           | \$1,297,510        |                                |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>\$137,770</b> | <b>\$4,908,800</b>  | <b>\$1,297,510</b> | <b>\$3,354,178</b>             | <b>\$4,074,000</b> | <b>\$2,050,500</b> | <b>\$1,900,000</b> | <b>\$1,640,000</b> | <b>\$2,363,200</b> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>       |                  |                     |                    |                                |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |
| <b>Staff Costs</b>       | \$67,507         | \$3,387,072         | \$934,207          | \$1,710,631                    | \$1,385,160        | \$1,168,785        | \$741,000          | \$606,800          | \$1,039,808        |
| <b>Operational Costs</b> | \$70,263         | \$1,521,728         | \$363,303          | \$1,643,547                    | \$2,688,840        | \$881,715          | \$1,159,000        | \$1,033,200        | \$1,323,392        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>\$137,770</b> | <b>\$4,908,800</b>  | <b>\$1,297,510</b> | <b>\$3,354,178</b>             | <b>\$4,074,000</b> | <b>\$2,050,500</b> | <b>\$1,900,000</b> | <b>\$1,640,000</b> | <b>\$2,363,200</b> |
| <b>Surplu/ (Deficit)</b> | <b>\$-</b>       | <b>\$-</b>          | <b>\$-</b>         | <b>\$-</b>                     | <b>\$-</b>         | <b>\$-</b>         | <b>\$-</b>         | <b>\$-</b>         | <b>\$-</b>         |

Table 2: 2024 Projected Income and Expenditure

| Geographical/Thematic Programs |             |             |             |           |           |           |                               |                                |                       |              |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Geographical Programs          |             |             |             |           |           |           | Thematic Programs             |                                |                       | TOTAL        |
| Ukraine                        | Armenia     | Azerbaijan  | Mexico      | Colombia  | Chile     | Brazil    | Missing Migrants and Refugees | Disaster Victim Identification | Assistance to Justice |              |
| 14%                            | 4%          | 4%          | 3%          | 2%        | 1%        | 1%        | 5%                            | 1%                             | 0%                    |              |
| \$4,787,322                    | \$1,260,010 | \$1,260,010 | \$1,085,400 | \$650,000 | \$250,000 | \$300,000 | \$1,585,000                   | \$500,000                      | \$50,000              | \$31,101,672 |
|                                |             |             |             |           |           |           |                               |                                |                       | \$2,352,028  |
| \$4,787,322                    | \$1,260,010 | \$1,260,010 | \$1,085,400 | \$650,000 | \$250,000 | \$300,000 | \$1,585,000                   | \$500,000                      | \$50,000              | \$33,453,700 |
| Expenditure                    |             |             |             |           |           |           |                               |                                |                       |              |
| \$1,962,802                    | \$567,005   | \$541,804   | \$466,722   | \$279,500 | \$122,500 | \$147,000 | \$729,100                     | \$230,000                      | \$23,000              | \$16,110,403 |
| \$2,824,520                    | \$693,006   | \$718,206   | \$618,678   | \$370,500 | \$127,500 | \$153,000 | \$855,900                     | \$270,000                      | \$27,000              | \$17,343,297 |
| \$4,787,322                    | \$1,260,010 | \$1,260,010 | \$1,085,400 | \$650,000 | \$250,000 | \$300,000 | \$1,585,000                   | \$500,000                      | \$50,000              | \$33,453,700 |
|                                |             |             |             |           |           |           |                               |                                |                       |              |
| \$-                            | \$-         |             | \$-         |           | \$-       | \$-       | \$-                           | \$-                            | \$-                   | \$-          |

## → Main Program

10. ICMP's Main Program consists of three sub-program areas; the Secretariat Program for Statutory Bodies, the HPs and CS:

**The Secretariat Program** provides support to the ICMP BoC, CSP, FC, GF, and expert, advisory mechanisms called for by the Director-General (DG); for example, the ICMP PE costs for 2024 are projected to be **USD 137,770**. Support to these mechanisms ensures that ICMP maintains structured governance in accordance with its international agreements and undertakings.

**The HPs** consist of Direction and Policy, Institutional Development, Science and Technology, the Wim Kok Center for Excellence and Learning, Civil Society Initiatives, and Data Services and Data Coordination. Direction and Policy is responsible for strategic program management, grants management and communications.

**CS** is responsible for centralized finance, and administrative, logistics and security support to geographic and thematic programs to ensure effective and efficient utilization of resources and compliance with donor requirements. As ICMP continues to grow, CS will require further resources to mitigate operating in challenging program areas of work.

**The Main Program** budget totals **USD 6,344,080**, (19 percent of total program budget). Of this, **USD 3,996,770 (63 percent)** comes from restricted sources. The remaining **USD 2,347,310 (37 percent)** comes from Main Program funding sources including expected grants from the Netherlands and other countries amenable to funding ICMP's Main Program. Included in this amount is the recovery of overhead from delivery of geographic and thematic programs. Recovery of the total overhead is contingent on a full funding and expenditure of all geographic and thematic program budgets.

## → Geographic and Thematic Programs (GTPs)

11. Funding for the geographic and thematic programs (GTPs) totals **27,109,620 (81 percent)** of total budget). Income is projected to equal expenditure as the budget is calculated based on estimates of available funds. Recovery of total funds is contingent on 100 percent delivery of agreed activities within agreed timescales.
12. The largest budget (total value) for 2024 is for Ukraine, accounting for **USD 4,787,322 (14 percent)** of GTP funds. The main cost components are staff, rent, security and forensic supplies. The security budget includes funds for personnel and physical protection measures, given the challenging operating environment and the need to engage local security contractors.



### 2024 Funding

#### Geographical and Thematic Program USD

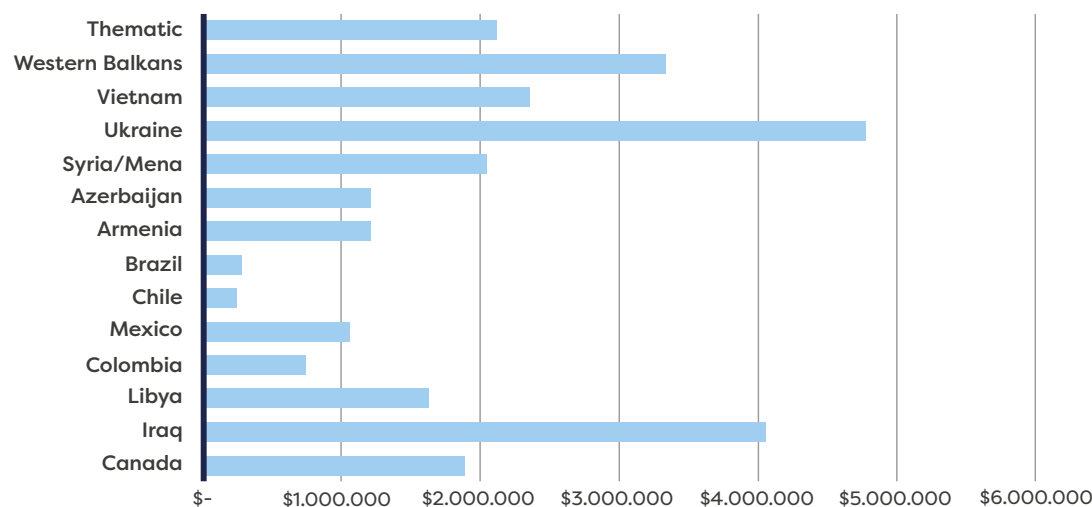


Chart 1: 2024 Funding for GTPs

- 13. The Iraq Program funding is budgeted at **4,074,000 USD** **12 percent** of total projections of funds in 2024. This program includes rental, security costs, partner support, and regional activities such as conference and training workshop provisions.
- 14. The Western Balkans Program is budgeted at **USD 3,354,178** (**10 percent** of total projections of funds) in 2024. This program includes rental, partner support, and regional activities such as conference and workshop provisions.
- 15. The Syria/MENA budget requirements for 2024 are **USD 2,050,500** (**6 percent** of total projections of funds) in 2024. This program includes funding for Support to Partners, and grants given to small grass-roots organizations that support delivery of ICMP’s mission in country.
- 16. The Mexico Program requirements are **USD 1,085,400** (**3 percent** of total projections of funds) in 2024.
- 17. The Canada program requirements are **USD 1,900,000** (**4 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 18. The Vietnam program requirements are **USD 2,363,200** (**7 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 19. The Azerbaijan program requirements are **USD 1,260,010** (**4 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 20. The Armenia program requirements are **USD 1,260,010** (**4 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 21. The Chile program requirements are **USD 250,000** (**1 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 22. The Brazil program requirements are **USD 300,000** (**1 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 23. The Libya program budget is **1,640,000 USD** (**5 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 24. The Colombia budget amounts to **USD 650,000** (**2 percent** of total projections for 2024).
- 25. The 2024 budget for the Missing Migrants & Refugees Program, the Disaster Victim Identification Platform, and Assistance to Justice amount in total to **USD 2,135,000** (**6 percent** of GTP funds).

## 4.1. 2024 Budget by Program and Cost Category

The 2024 Budget by program and cost category is detailed below:

|                                      | Main Program | Geographic/Thematic Programs 2024 |             |             |             |             |             |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                      |              | Western Balkans                   | Iraq        | Syria/MENA  | Canada      | Vietnam     | Libya       |
| <b>Staff Costs</b>                   | \$4,388,787  | \$1,710,631                       | \$1,385,160 | \$1,168,785 | \$741,000   | \$1,039,808 | \$606,800   |
| <b>Operational Costs</b>             |              |                                   |             |             |             |             |             |
| Travel                               | \$161,974    | \$202,732                         | \$523,401   | \$102,525   | \$135,450   | \$95,829    | \$105,433   |
| <b>Professional Service</b>          |              |                                   |             |             |             |             |             |
| Contracted Service                   | \$75,689     | \$111,849                         | \$609,479   | \$133,283   | \$406,350   | \$140,868   | \$94,973    |
| <b>General Operating Expenses</b>    |              |                                   |             |             |             |             |             |
| Staff Training and Development       | \$20,184     | \$21,931                          | \$50,412    | \$20,505    | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         |
| Financial Costs                      | \$30,276     | \$38,374                          | \$44,110    | \$15,994    | \$9,030     | \$29,899    | \$13,054    |
| Support to Partners                  | \$-          | \$258,251                         | \$401,025   | \$305,012   | \$271,351   | \$600,174   | \$533,440   |
| Vehicle Maintenance                  | \$6,055      | \$36,375                          | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         |
| Public Relations                     | \$20,486     | \$25,111                          | \$25,206    | \$35,884    | \$54,180    | \$38,331    | \$16,233    |
| Meeting and Conferences              | \$15,138     | \$51,461                          | \$133,843   | \$136,563   | \$180,600   | \$28,749    | \$61,251    |
| Goods transport and storage          | \$5,046      | \$65,794                          | \$2,521     | \$718       | \$-         | \$1,342     | \$586       |
| IT Subscriptions                     | \$27,248     | \$12,062                          | \$-         | \$-         | \$1,806     | \$9,583     | \$-         |
| Rent and Utilities                   | \$343,123    | \$270,624                         | \$176,441   | \$73,818    | \$27,090    | \$239,571   | \$82,547    |
| Maintenance                          | \$30,276     | \$34,478                          | \$12,603    | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         |
| Communications                       | \$50,459     | \$27,414                          | \$32,516    | \$28,707    | \$36,120    | \$28,844    | \$14,853    |
| Representation Costs                 | \$4,037      | \$5,483                           | \$2,521     | \$2,051     | \$4,515     | \$4,791     | \$2,510     |
| <b>Supplies and Materials</b>        |              |                                   |             |             |             |             |             |
| Office Supplies                      | \$522,199    | \$21,931                          | \$18,274    | \$6,152     | \$5,418     | \$38,331    | \$4,184     |
| Office Inventory                     | \$8,073      | \$21,931                          | \$12,603    | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         |
| Forensic Supplies                    | \$381,472    | \$334,670                         | \$177,577   | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         |
| <b>Equipment</b>                     |              |                                   |             |             |             |             |             |
| Equipment                            | \$253,558    | \$103,077                         | \$434,802   | \$20,505    | \$27,090    | \$67,080    | \$104,136   |
| Vehicles                             | \$-          | \$-                               | \$31,507    | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         |
| <b>Sub-total - Operational Costs</b> | \$1,955,294  | \$1,643,547                       | \$2,688,840 | \$881,715   | \$1,159,000 | \$1,323,392 | \$1,033,200 |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                   | \$6,344,080  | \$3,354,178                       | \$4,074,000 | \$2,050,500 | \$1,900,000 | \$2,363,200 | \$1,640,000 |

Table 3: 2024 Budget

| Geographic/Thematic Programs 2024 |             |             |             |           |           |           |             | Total        | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Ukraine                           | Armenia     | Azerbaijan  | Mexico      | Colombia  | Chile     | Brazil    | Thematic    |              |            |
| \$1,962,802                       | \$567,005   | \$541,804   | \$466,722   | \$279,500 | \$122,500 | \$147,000 | \$982,100   | \$16,110,403 | 48%        |
| \$119,587                         | \$75,601    | \$78,350    | \$32,505    | \$91,224  | \$14,532  | \$17,439  | \$201,668   | \$1,958,248  | 6%         |
| \$227,784                         | \$107,101   | \$110,995   | \$178,777   | \$21,465  | \$18,808  | \$22,570  | \$218,724   | \$2,478,715  | 7%         |
| \$34,168                          | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-       | \$826     | \$992     | \$-         | \$149,017    | 0%         |
| \$22,778                          | \$6,300     | \$6,529     | \$5,417     | \$26,294  | \$2,363   | \$2,835   | \$26,163    | \$279,416    | 1%         |
| \$1,655,078                       | \$299,882   | \$310,787   | \$366,223   | \$179,171 | \$46,570  | \$55,885  | \$602,015   | \$5,884,864  | 18%        |
| \$-                               | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-       | \$268     | \$322     | \$-         | \$43,020     | 0%         |
| \$51,251                          | \$25,200    | \$26,117    | \$5,417     | \$3,005   | \$2,922   | \$3,506   | \$8,721     | \$341,572    | 1%         |
| \$68,335                          | \$37,800    | \$39,175    | \$10,835    | \$10,732  | \$7,016   | \$8,419   | \$14,974    | \$804,892    | 2%         |
| \$68,335                          | \$6,300     | \$6,529     | \$5,417     | \$-       | \$796     | \$955     | \$17,442    | \$119,139    | 0%         |
| \$-                               | \$1,260     | \$1,306     | \$1,083     | \$-       | \$377     | \$452     | \$34,884    | \$90,062     | 0%         |
| \$56,946                          | \$55,440    | \$57,456    | \$-         | \$-       | \$10,136  | \$12,163  | \$-         | \$1,405,356  | 4%         |
| \$11,389                          | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$6,089   | \$655     | \$786     | \$17,442    | \$113,718    | 0%         |
| \$13,667                          | \$6,300     | \$6,529     | \$5,417     | \$9,874   | \$2,262   | \$2,714   | \$8,721     | \$274,398    | 1%         |
| \$2,278                           | \$1,260     | \$1,306     | \$1,083     | \$859     | \$288     | \$346     | \$1,744     | \$35,071     | 0%         |
| \$9,111                           | \$5,040     | \$5,223     | \$4,334     | \$322     | \$3,799   | \$4,558   | \$-         | \$648,877    | 2%         |
| \$5,695                           | \$2,520     | \$2,612     | \$2,167     | \$-       | \$371     | \$446     | \$-         | \$56,418     | 0%         |
| \$233,478                         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-       | \$5,816   | \$6,980   | \$-         | \$1,139,993  | 3%         |
| \$170,610                         | \$63,001    | \$65,291    | \$-         | \$21,465  | \$9,056   | \$10,868  | \$401       | \$1,350,939  | 4%         |
| \$136,670                         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-         | \$-       | \$639     | \$766     | \$-         | \$169,583    | 1%         |
| \$2,824,520                       | \$693,006   | \$718,206   | \$618,678   | \$370,500 | \$127,500 | \$153,000 | \$1,152,900 | \$17,343,297 | 52%        |
| \$4,787,322                       | \$1,260,010 | \$1,260,010 | \$1,085,400 | \$650,000 | \$250,000 | \$300,000 | \$2,135,000 | \$33,453,700 |            |

**26.** Staff costs are budgeted to comprise **48 percent of total 2024 expenditure**, which is low in comparison to other international organizations. ICMP currently has 171 staff members, which includes personnel in the Main Program and the GTPs listed above. Of this number, 78 positions are part of the Main Program and its HPs, 1) D&P, 2) ID, 3) CSI, 4) S&T, 5) DSDC, 6) the Wim Kok CEL, as well as CS and the Secretariat Program for Treaty or Statutory and Subsidiary Bodies. The remaining staff members are employed in the geographic and thematic programs.

**27.** Geographic programs during the 2024-2029 period for which activity plans will be developed subject to funding include Afghanistan, El Salvador, Nigeria, Mexico, Colombia, the Gambia, and Yemen.

| Total staff     | Full-time equivalent |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Main Program    | 80                   |
| Western Balkans | 29                   |
| Iraq            | 17                   |
| Syria/MENA      | 14                   |
| Canada          | 3                    |
| South Caucasus  | 2                    |
| Libya           | 4                    |
| Ukraine         | 19                   |
| Vietnam         | 3                    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>171</b>           |

| Main Program Staff                 | Full-time equivalent |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Corporate Services                 | 23                   |
| Office of DG                       | 13                   |
| Policy and Cooperation             | 9                    |
| Science and Technology             | 23                   |
| Data Systems and Data Coordination | 12                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | <b>80</b>            |

**Table 4:** 2024 Staffing Analysis

**28.** Within the other categories, travel comprises 6 percent of the total budget. General operating expenses comprise 29 percent and cover running costs primarily associated with field operations, notably rental fees and initiatives in support of civil society (e.g. small grants programs). Professional services comprise 7 percent of the budget and mainly

comprise security provisions. Supplies and materials are 6 percent, primarily covering the cost of forensic supplies. The furniture and equipment line totals 5 percent of the budget and includes the cost of equipment required for the DNA laboratory and the geographic programs.

# V. Main Program

**29.** ICMP's Main Program represents the central thematic and geographic program implementation capacity of the organization, mostly located at HQ in The Hague. The Main Program consists of six HPs, as well as CS and the Secretariat Program for the ICMP Treaty or Statutory and Subsidiary Bodies. The HPs are: 1) Direction and Policy, 2) Institutional Development, 3) Civil Society Initiatives, 4) Science and Technology, 5) Data Systems and Data Coordination, 6) the Wim Kok Center for Excellence and Learning (CEL).

## 5.1. Direction and Policy (D&P)

### Introduction

The D&P HP includes the DG, the Director of Policy and Cooperation (PC), the Program Coordination and Impact Unit (PCI), and the Program Operations Unit. PCI includes fundraising, grants management and communications. Program Operations includes Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL), Management of New and Emerging Programs and Security. PC includes the Documentation Unit (DU) and the Legal Unit (LU).

D&P provides strategic direction and leads the implementation of all ICMP programs and activities. The program supports and provides a secretariat to the ICMP Treaty or Statutory and

Subsidiary Bodies, including the BoC, the CSP, the FC, the PE and GF (see section 5.8 below). It is also responsible for efforts to broaden state participation in ICMP as Parties, Signatories and Observers, or through States' adherence to ICMP declarations and other instruments, or through technical cooperation and assistance.

D&P is responsible for enhancing and strengthening cooperation with governments, particularly in new program areas by concluding agreements or other arrangements that allow for program implementation, as well as building the institutional and technical capacities of state institutions to address the issue of missing persons. D&P functions ensure effective outreach and planning across programs through inclusive consultative processes, and by ensuring that ICMP's policies, standards and best practice become known and readily accessible to all.

### Program objectives

- Provide strategic direction and oversight to the organization;
- Ensure compliance of thematic and geographic programs with regulatory frameworks, including the ICMP Treaty, bilateral agreements and ICMP Staff Rules and Regulations;
- Ensure full implementation of ICMP's mandate through geographic and thematic programs;
- Develop, together with the HPs, programs that are adapted to the operational context and based on data and lessons learned;

- Secure support from governments, international organizations and others;
- Raise awareness about the global challenge of missing persons, including through ad hoc and periodical publications;
- Ensure the organization's inclusive coverage of all global regions and other representational requirements, including maintaining gender balance;
- Secure grant and other funding to meet the requirements of the organization; and
- Ensure broad participation in ICMP's work through partnerships and membership in the organization.

### Strategy 2024-2029

- Directing and managing all ICMP programs, D&P will ensure the smooth functioning of ICMP's governance structures and meet the immediate goal of securing multi-donor structural/core funding. It will also work on expanding state participation in ICMP;
- It will support States Parties in amending and interpreting the ICMP Treaty to redress any possible disincentives to broader State participation and to secure more sustainable institutional processes and funding;
- It will further advance ICMP's multilateral approach in the field of technical assistance in the human rights and rule-of-law field;
- D&P will work on expanding and developing cooperation with additional international and other organizations whose mandates relate to the issue of missing persons, with a view to minimizing duplication of effort and creating opportunities for synergies and resource sharing;
- D&P will further advance ICMP's multilateral technical assistance in particular concerning scientifically-based human identification work through DNA analysis, transnational data processing and capacity building in the administrative and legal fields; and
- D&P will advance the adoption of a Gender and Diversity Policy and strategy to ensure gender-mainstreaming across all ICMP activities.

Expected outcomes include the strengthening of global participation in ICMP, including the participation of new States from Africa and Asia.

Voluntary core funding and other support will be secured, key cooperative relationships will be established or further advanced, good governance on the issue of the missing will be advanced globally, ICMP's thematic and geographic programs will contribute measurably to global development goals, multilateral engagement with and among states will be further strengthened, and Gender and Diversity Policy and Strategy will be implemented.

## 5.2. Institutional Development (ID)

### Introduction

ID is led by the DG and DPC, and includes Heads of Program (HoPs) and Government Relations (GRs). ID involves supporting countries in building purpose-specific capacities and legislation to address missing persons. This is necessary following conflict and human rights abuses, or when the scale of missing persons cases exceeds domestic capacities. In the context of globalization, with increasing numbers of refugees and migrants, and deteriorating environmental conditions, the internationalization of missing persons issues has increasingly become the norm.

### Program objectives

**ID operates along three strategic lines:**

- Developing and deploying methods for assessing, in local contexts, the performance of domestic and multilateral processes to account for the missing against human rights and rule-of-law requirements;
- Improving organizational performance and mechanisms through which processes of accounting for the missing are administered; and
- Directly strengthening institutions in countries through capacity building and minimizing international substitution for responsibilities and functions, thus promoting local ownership and visibility of institutional achievement.

## Strategy 2024-2029

- ID will further develop indicators for assessing processes and institutional performance in regard to the missing persons issue;
- ID will develop a handbook on institutional governance of missing persons investigations, including a comparative analysis of legislative frameworks;
- ID will support the development of transparency and communications systems to enhance accountability and trust in institutions; and
- ID will contribute with subject matter expertise to the Wim Kok CEL training program on good governance in missing persons investigations.
- Institutions are resourced, capable and motivated;
- Local ownership of processes (goals and means) is achieved;
- Institutional governance is accountable and transparent both horizontally to communities and vertically to leadership and oversight agencies;
- Institutionalized processes conform to the rule of law and human rights obligations; and
- Domestic institutions working with families of the missing adopt gender- and victim-sensitive approaches in their activities, and their engagement and communication with the families of the missing.

## 5.3. Civil Society Initiatives (CSI)

### Introduction

Civil society initiatives at ICMP seek to provide opportunities to families of the missing for voluntary and well-informed participation in the process of accounting for their missing relatives. Through outreach and information sessions, ICMP works closely with families of the missing and community-based civil society organizations on raising awareness about the rights the families are entitled to, the role they play in a State-driven, rule-of-Law approach to resolving the missing persons issue, and creating the necessary knowledge upon which surviving family members

can exercise effective participation in support of these processes.

CSI supports initiatives to foster collaboration among families of the missing from diverse backgrounds to enhance unity and solidarity and to reduce divisions and politicization of the issue. It also advocates for and supports free and independent assembly of families, and encourages regional and international networking. Through its Small Grants Program and other capacity-building modalities, ICMP provides agency to associations of families of the missing and other civil society actors to address the issue in their local communities, while its Profiles of the Missing conferences and media campaigns provide families with an international platform. Since the majority of those who go missing in armed conflict are men and the majority of survivors are women, the CSI Program promotes gender-specific approaches to the needs and rights of victims and enhances gender equality by championing female leadership among affected communities and by integrating gender mainstreaming in activities with families and CSOs. As per ICMP mandate, CSI encourages public engagement in the issue and supports commemoration and memorialization initiatives across ICMP programs.

### Program objectives

CSI operates along seven strategic lines:

1. It consolidates and maintains a detailed understanding of the landscape of family associations and other relevant civil society actors in a given geographic or thematic program;
2. It contributes to capacity building in skills and resources of family associations and CSOs;
3. It advances the understanding of families of the missing and other civil society actors in respecting and promoting a rule-of-law approach to the issue of missing persons and acting within that framework;
4. It ensures the participation of families in official processes to account for the missing;
5. It promotes dialogue between families of the missing and authorities tasked with resolving the missing persons issue;
6. It advances gender-sensitive approaches to

the issue of the missing and to the civil society sphere of action; and

7. It promotes a global discussion on the role of civil society actors in the missing persons process.

### Strategy 2024-2029

- ICMP will continue mapping, training and capacity building, as well as designing assessment frameworks on the rights of survivors, advocacy strategies and advanced analytical tools;
- CSI will continue building the capacities of families of the missing and other civil society actors to engage the public in addressing the missing persons issue, in particular through commemoration and memorialization initiatives and in global fora;
- CSI will continue supporting initiatives of associations of families and CSOs through ICMP's Small Grants Program;
- CSI will expand ICMP's partnerships, and promote local and global networks of families of the missing and like-minded CSOs, and support coordination and cooperation among CSOs;
- CSI will continue raising awareness on State responsibilities on the issue of the missing and call upon States to comply with national and international legislation pertaining to the rights of families of the missing;
- CSI will continue organizing Profiles of the Missing conferences and seek other national/regional/international opportunities (e.g. conferences, panel discussions, academies etc.) to bring the voices of families of the missing to the fore;
- CSI will identify and utilize opportunities to organize exchange visits of families of the missing across country programs;
- CSI will promote strategies to guarantee solid interactions and meaningful participation between CSOs and relevant institutional actors;
- CSI will promote improved understanding among local actors of connections between gender equality and the issue of the missing, and the importance of providing a space for civil society in the process.

## 5.4. Science and Technology (S&T)

### Introduction

ICMP's Science and Technology Program encompasses Archaeology, Anthropology and DNA Teams that work hand-in-hand to support missing persons investigations. It provides subject matter expertise and capabilities that span location, recovery and identification activities, and it reflects an integrated repository of experience, operating procedures and informatics. S&T's primary purpose is to assist government authorities and others through scientific and technical support, often, working closely with the Wim Kok Center for Excellence for Learning (CEL) to ensure that the latest technical methods, practical experience and strategic insight serve as a continuing global resource for sustainable training and capacity building.

As well as providing technical assistance and training in support of ICMP's geographic programs, S&T maintains capacities in forensic archaeology and anthropology, and accredited standing capacity for DNA testing and kinship matching, that can be made available to support governments or other partners as required.

### Archaeology and Anthropology

The S&T conduct desk-based analyses and critically evaluate available data to establish geo-spatial and temporal patterns that may aid in identifying potential sites to investigate; analyze aerial imagery to detect anomalies that may indicate the presence of clandestine graves or burial sites; conduct on-site landscape assessments to identify anomalies or signs of human remains concealment; undertake comprehensive site investigations, including testing anomalies to confirm or refute the presence of human remains; undertake excavation, recovery, and meticulous documentation of human remains and associated evidence; processes, examines and analyze human remains, including the collection of samples for DNA testing; conduct mortuary assessments to enhance workflow and processing efficiency; review complex cases by



combining DNA matching with anthropological re-examination for comprehensive analysis, and integrate analytical results and findings to support ongoing investigations and facilitate the efficient identification and resolution of cases. In addition, S&T develops and provides practical and classroom-based training programs for various stakeholders, including family associations, medical professionals, law enforcement agencies, and legal practitioners.

## DNA

ICMP's DNA Laboratory is located at its Headquarters in The Hague. Accredited to the international testing standard – ISO 17025 – they specialize in DNA testing of heavily degraded skeletal remains using the latest techniques. As one of the world-leaders in DNA profiling and sequencing of bone samples, ICMP's DNA Laboratory maintains a standing capacity for both post-mortem and reference samples that governments and partners can call upon – often at short notice in response to conflicts, natural disasters or other mass casualty incidents. The team of 20 also works closely with other laboratories and academic institutions around the world in support of the continuous development of techniques and knowledge sharing, leading to improved, quality-assured and sustainable DNA testing provision.

### Program objectives

- Provide technical solutions to governments and others to locate, recover and identify missing persons, including internationally accredited DNA capacity to respond to large-scale emergencies;
- Provide technical and scientific expertise for ICMP training and capacity-building goals, in coordination with other ICMP departments and programs, in particular through the CEL and the Assistance to Justice Program; and
- Support judicial processes of States and international justice and investigative institutions to advance social cohesion and individual rights.

### Strategy 2024-2029

- S&T will advance scientific capabilities to assist missing persons investigations through the rapid development of new testing protocols and methods, including an expansion of STR testing to include additional human tissue sample types, and automation of methods;
- S&T will also advance scientific capabilities to assist missing persons investigations, particularly in contexts where availability of suitable reference samples challenges STR technologies, through the development and large-scale implementation of a custom single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) assay specific to missing persons casework;
- S&T will work primarily to the goals defined by geographic programs, where training requirements in the DNA, forensic anthropology and archaeology fields are often extensive; and
- S&T will further tailor relevant data processing and reporting requirements to data protection needs in developing countries.

## 5.5. Data Systems and Data Coordination (DSDC)

### Introduction

DSDC develops and operates ICMP's global missing persons data processing systems with the aim of optimizing the availability and quality of data on missing persons, including ensuring effective data flow and synchronization of data from internal and external sources, and, in conjunction with the CEL, trains domestic partners in its use. DSDC's most extensive web-based missing persons data processing application, the Integrated Data Management System (iDMS), includes integrated applications that support the process of storing, viewing and analyzing large amounts of data on missing persons and investigation processes, and currently holds data on more than 100,000 missing persons and more than 200,000 family members.

### Strategic program objectives

- DSDC will continue to make existing software more secure, user-friendly and applicable to diverse situations around the world, accessible in multiple languages and compliant with domestic legal specifications;
- DSDC will provide tools, training and support in the data processing field, in particular by domestic partners; and
- DSDC will further advance good data governance frameworks to improve legal processing capacities by domestic partners.

### Strategy 2024-2029

- Data systems on missing persons including the iDMS are used by domestic government institutions so as to ensure robust and secure missing persons data processing;
- Data protection guarantees are upheld by policy and design that enables effective control over personal data by data subjects; and
- Data governance frameworks include partner organizations as well as government entities participating in data processing.
- DSDC will make use of new data collection and data verification techniques. One of the most promising techniques currently in use is Open Source Intelligence Data (OSINT). OSINT comprises insight gained from processing and analyzing public data sources such as broadcast TV and radio, social media, and websites. These sources provide data in text, video, image, and audio formats.
- DSDC will focus on improving mechanisms to measure quality, adequacy and availability of data, and will deploy data visualization tools to provide an accessible way of seeing and understanding trends, outliers, and patterns;
- DSDC will develop software modules to simplify access and reporting, to be accompanied by Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) documents, user manuals and user guides, and training for domestic authorities to operate these systems independently;
- DSDC will continue to provide support for all deployed iDMS applications to partners' servers to ensure smooth operation of its components. DSDC will also provide technical support by

implementing iDMS changes requested by our partners as a result of changes in their internal SOPs and workflows. Re-deployment (updates) of the iDMS to partners' infrastructures must be done manually, as this is a sensitive, multi-step operation;

- Data governance will be strengthened by facilitating data subject control over personal data at the time of processing, and by providing a standing complaints mechanism; and
- DSDC will enhance the Data Systems Quality Management/Quality Control (QM/QC) mechanism by strengthening the security posture of evaluated web applications underlying IT systems and networks for protection against external threats.

## 5.6. Wim Kok Center for Excellence and Learning (CEL)

### Introduction

ICMP's CEL is named in honor of the late Dutch Prime Minister, Wim Kok, an ICMP Commissioner from 2002 until his death in 2018. The CEL continues Wim Kok's legacy as a trusted partner to governments, civil society, and families of the missing.

The CEL coordinates ICMP's training functions. It supports the development of capacity-building strategies related to the issue of missing persons, and aids ICMP in maintaining high standards in the design, delivery, and assessment of capacity-building activities across its programs. It uses modern technological developments, including e-learning, for course design and delivery in line with ICMP's strategic policy priorities. The CEL is supported, as necessary, by an ICMP Panel of Experts, which comprises distinguished researchers and practitioners in the field of human rights, rule of law, justice, and forensic science. The CEL functions under the direction of the Director of Policy and Cooperation.

### Program objectives

To foster global sharing of knowledge, experience, and technical expertise, the CEL aims to:

- Provide capacity building and training opportunities to government agencies, CSOs, families of the missing, judicial authorities, court-appointed experts, and law enforcement personnel;
- Plan, design, and organize virtual and face-to-face training programs and other learning activities on all aspects of the missing person process, including domestic and international legal frameworks, forensic archaeology and anthropological methods, DNA-based identification, rights of families of the missing and engagement with families of the missing, and the importance of centralized data systems;
- Maintain and provide access to a repository of training and peer-reviewed material, acting as a focal point for in-person and virtual dialogue, collaboration and knowledge sharing through the hosting of a Learning Management System and scenario-based learning programs; and
- Promote good training practices, supporting the development of curricula, needs assessment processes, and monitoring and evaluation tools.

### Strategy 2024-2029

Key objectives of the CEL over the next five years include:

- Enhancing ICMP's capacity-building framework and continuing to formulate training standards for the organization, to strengthen its online learning portfolio and delivery capabilities, as well as to increase its course offerings for the general public, institutions, CSOs, and families of the missing;
- Leading the development of small private interactive online courses through ICMP's learning management system;
- Further developing capacity-building partnerships with relevant academic institutions, as well as leveraging the expertise of other international and intergovernmental organizations or national authorities with which ICMP has partnerships;
- Initiating the development of a community

of practice related to human rights and rule-of-law capacity building and monitoring and evaluation. The CEL will also continue to advance standards globally in the application of forensic anthropological and archeological methods, and the creation and development of data and information management systems, as well as advancing standards globally for missing persons DNA laboratory systems; and

- Through training for ICMP staff and ICMP partners, supporting the implementation of ICMP's Gender and Diversity Strategy.

## 5.7. Corporate Services (CS)

### Introduction

Corporate Services provides critical operational support related to finance and administration, human resource management, information technology, Accounting and Procurement. This department provides critical technical and administrative support to all geographic programs and forms part of the cost structure within our geographic programs.

### Program objectives

- Ensure the consistent, accurate and continued application of ICMP's administrative, risk management, financial procedures and guidelines;
- Ensure that ICMP's administrative and financial policies, procedures and guidelines remain fit for purpose through continuous review and improvement;
- Provide effective and efficient administrative services to enable and support ICMP's program activities;
- Ensure financial contributions are managed efficiently while minimizing risks during implementation;
- Ensure ICMP's financial information system provides regular, timely information to internal budget holders and donors to allow for reliable, time-sensitive, informed decision-making;

- Ensure that ICMP maintains a quality-driven and fair workplace based on respect, diversity and inclusion; and
- Balance organizational effectiveness through effective staff recruitment, retention and engagement policies with a focus on performance management and duty of care to ensure the personal wellbeing of staff.
- CS General Services will continue to ensure that organization-wide assets are managed in accordance with ICMP policy; CS will provide travel, transportation and customs clearance support, and ensure the timely and cost-efficient provision of required goods and services in accordance with international standards of public procurement.

### Strategy 2024-2029

- ICMP implements its mandate and programs efficiently and effectively and in compliance with ICMP's rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
- CS will oversee administrative functions, financial planning, administration and reporting, including facilitating external audits, in accordance with ICMP policies, procedures and guidelines;
- CS will continue to strengthen financial management systems and procedures and will provide timely, accurate and relevant reports and advice to senior managers and donors on financial policies and budget implementation rates in order to ensure optimal utilization of resources within budget ceilings;
- CS will focus on diversity and creating an inclusive environment so that each staff member has a sense of belonging regardless of ethnic or social origin, marital status, nationality, age, opinions or beliefs, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disabilities;
- CS will continue to focus on diversity and inclusive (D&I) initiatives and will gather and improve D&I analytics. It will review policies and guidelines to ensure that practices promote gender equality, the development of gender perspective training such as respect in the workplace, gender mainstreaming in project development & implementation, zero tolerance discrimination, and gender sensitive leadership;
- In close coordination with DSDC, CS will continue to support and enhance ICMP's IT infrastructure by administering servers and networks, as well as data storage and software services required to ensure efficient operations, while ensuring a secure IT environment that mitigates cyber threats; and

## 5.8. Secretariat Program: ICMP Treaty or Statutory and Subsidiary Bodies

### Introduction

ICMP was created in 1996 at the G-7 Summit in Lyon, France, originally as a blue-ribbon Commission of eminent individuals. The initial Commissioners were appointed by their respective governments, including Cyrus Vance as the first Chair, or were invited by the US State Department in the case of institutional representatives, including the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioners on National Minorities. Whereas all ICMP Chairpersons continued to be appointed by the US Secretary of State until the entry into effect of the ICMP Treaty in 2015, cooptation among incumbent Commissioners became the primary mode of ensuring continuity in the Commission.

The ICMP Treaty established a Board of Commissioners (BoC) to consist of Commissioners listed in the Annex thereto, and subsequently to be appointed from among eminent persons at the invitation of the BoC (Article III 4). The BoC adopts the organization's program of work, staff regulations and policies, considering policy directives promulgated by the Conference of States Parties (CSP) and subject to financial regulations as adopted by the CSP's Financial Committee (FC). The Secretariat to the BoC is

provided by the DG and the Director of Policy and Cooperation.

**The following subsidiary bodies have been established pursuant to Article III 5. of the ICMP Treaty:**

- The Inter-Agency Committee on Missing persons (IAC) brings together international and other organizations with a public mandate concerned with the issue of the missing. The Secretariat to the IAC is provided by the DG or the Heads of thematic or geographic programs;
- The Panel of Experts (PE) provides advice to the DG on issues pertaining to ICMP's current or future work program, and compiling the Global Report on Missing Persons; and
- The Global Forum (GF) serves as a creative meeting place comprising the BoC, PE and IAC, plus CSOs and representatives of families of the missing. The GF is currently a virtual space.

### Program objectives

- Meetings of the ICMP Treaty or Statutory and Subsidiary Bodies are held as planned and in consonance with their Rules of Procedure or Terms of Reference;
- Documents are prepared, edited and released in a professional and timely manner;
- Professional strategic, policy and legal advice is provided; and
- Outcomes of deliberations for implementing resolutions or recommendations are disseminated in a timely manner.

### Program outcomes and strategy BoC

- The BoC provides effective guidance and oversight for ICMP in strengthening the mandate implementation and relevance of the Program of Work;
- Political will to address the issue of missing persons through a human rights and rule-of-law-based approach is strengthened;
- Participation of States in ICMP is improved through high-level outreach to governments;
- Resource and capacity gaps are bridged through effective communication with donors and partner organizations;

- Multilateral working mechanisms at the level of the organization and its programs are continuously advanced;
- Inclusiveness of under-represented groups is continuously improved at the level of the organization and its programs; and
- Addressing the issue of persons going missing and disappearing is universally embraced as an investment in peace, development and social wellbeing.

**In the coming period, ICMP's BoC Secretariat Program will reinforce five BoC objectives:**

- Supporting the process of a review of the ICMP Treaty as stipulated under Article IX 7 with a view to addressing possible disincentives to broader State participation; creating additional incentives for participation in ICMP; and creating possibilities for securing more sustainable funding for ICMP under agreements among States Parties and signatory and third States;
- Securing political will and commitments of governments in program areas to support effective approaches to locating the missing based on human rights and the rule of law in particular through multilateral mechanisms for that purpose;
- Securing multilateral engagement by donors in respect of ICMP country and thematic programs, in particular regarding peace processes in which the issue of missing persons figures prominently on agendas;
- Fostering a more cohesive international response in line with existing obligations to persons going missing and disappearing by addressing global inequity impacting developing and low-income countries in particular; and
- Ensuring the full representation of all global regions on the BoC and within consultative bodies, including the PE, as well as through State participation in the CSP.

### Program outcomes and strategy CSP

- States Parties, signatory States and Observer States and Organizations are apprised of ICMP's activities;
- States Parties discuss and recommend policy directives for the BoC; and
- States Parties discuss and recommend joint measures to advance the aims of ICMP.

Multilateral working mechanisms at the level of the organization and its programs are continuously advanced.

#### In the coming period, the CSP Secretariat Program will reinforce five CSP objectives:

- Supporting the CSP in its participation of a review of the ICMP Treaty as stipulated under Article IX 7;
- Supporting the CSP on measures to advance the aims of ICMP i.e. through improving the sustainability of the organization's standing technical capacities in the scientific and data processing fields, including data processing security;
- Ensuring synergies between ICMP and Observer and other organizations concerned with missing persons in the technical and policy field; and
- Securing consensus on the role of ICMP in respect of specific thematic, country and regional programs, in particular concerning programs in the Middle East and the Americas; and
- Enhancing the role of the CSP in program implementation, in particular through convening Multilateral Fora in program areas.

### Program outcomes and strategy FC

- States Parties and other participating States are apprised of ICMP's activities in the past year and the coming year;
- The FC adopts recommendations relating to ICMP's financial management; and
- The FC reviews and approves ICMP's financial regulations and reporting format.

#### In the coming period, the FC Secretariat Program will reinforce the following FC objectives:

- Supporting the FC in its participation of a review of the ICMP Treaty as stipulated under Article IX 7;

- Supporting the FC in formulating recommendations relating to ICMP's financial management in particular concerning thematic, country and regional program allocations on the one hand and structural or core allocations, including HQ requirements, on the other; and
- Reviewing ICMP's financial regulation in tandem with the Treaty review process.

### Program outcomes and strategy IAC

- Continuously to improve inter-agency coordination in the fields of data processing, technical cooperation and developing best practice on missing and disappeared persons issues;
- To consider specific missing and disappeared persons issues globally with a view to optimizing the use of financial and other resources in order more effectively to prevent persons from going missing or disappearing and to account for missing and disappeared persons; and
- To address legal constraints, omissions and gaps in regard to missing and disappeared persons scenarios and endeavor to redress the adverse impact of these on missing and disappeared persons.

#### In the coming period, the IAC Secretariat Program will reinforce the following IAC objectives:

- Providing inter-agency coordination and support in emergencies and communicating coordinated response plans to domestic and other authorities where necessary;
- Strengthening planning and leadership capacities to address missing and disappeared persons issues;
- Enhancing transparency and accountability for effective coordination among agencies; and
- Apprising the GF of steps taken to advance the responsibility of domestic and other authorities concerning missing and disappeared persons, as well as civil society, in goal setting and strategic planning.

### Program outcomes and strategy PE

- The PE meets in plenary session at least once a year to discuss crosscutting issues;

- The PE Editorial Group and Peer Group compile the Global Report for finalization and publication by the Secretariat; and
- The PE supports the DG and the BoC in advancing ICMP policy objectives.

**In the coming period, the PE Secretariat Program will reinforce the following PE objectives:**

- Ensuring the representation of global regions in the PE, as well as ensuring a gender balanced panel; and
- Supporting PE participation in a review of the ICMP Treaty as stipulated under Article IX 7.

### **Program outcomes and strategy GF**

- Effective and holistic approaches and mechanisms to address the issue of the missing are designed, developed and shared, based on stakeholders' experience and expertise;
- Relevant policies and practical challenges and opportunities in efforts to account for missing and disappeared persons, regardless of the circumstances under which people may have gone missing, are discussed;
- Best practice and experience in formulating effective strategies for sustainable and transparent efforts to account for missing and disappeared persons and to facilitate the application of these strategies wherever they are needed identified and exchanged;
- Partnerships and cooperation with ICMP and with various stakeholders across regions are established;
- Policy development and coherence at national and international levels are promoted to account for missing and disappeared persons;
- Capacity-building and empowerment initiatives to benefit CSOs and families of the missing are advanced; and
- Knowledge and interest constituencies around the issue of missing and disappeared persons are fostered.

**In the coming period, the GF Secretariat Program will reinforce the following PE objectives:**

- Ensuring the representation of global regions in the GF, as well as ensuring a gender balanced panel;
- Systematizing and producing knowledge;

- Ensuring that the GF meets the requirements of participants for exchange, discussion and dissemination;
- Creating partnerships to maintain the GF, focused on local and country specific needs and promoting cross fertilization and learning in regard to global and crosscutting issues;
- Supporting GF participation in a review of the ICMP Treaty as stipulated under Article IX 7; and
- Supporting the outreach functions of the GF through public events, including seminars and conferences and providing expert advice to ICMP's thematic, country and regional programs.

# VI. Geographic Programs

**29.** ICMP's expertise and technical capacity make it possible to address the social, political, legal and scientific challenges of different missing persons scenarios in an effective way throughout the world. Geographic programs vary in scope and complexity, but all contain elements of the HPs and are initiated on the basis of clearly articulated requests by governments.

## 6.1. Canada

### Introduction

ICMP has engaged with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) since December 2021 to assist Canada with implementing a National Strategy for the Identification and Repatriation of Human Remains of Canadian Indigenous – First Nations, Inuit and Metis – persons presumed to be in unmarked and clandestine gravesites at and around Residential Schools and other locations. In February 2023, ICMP and CIRNAC signed a Technical Arrangement (TA) formalizing their cooperation in this endeavor.

Thousands of Indigenous children died while attending residential schools and were often buried in unofficial cemeteries or unmarked burial sites associated with the school, or in local church graveyards or municipal cemeteries that were a long distance from their home communities. Frequently, families were not notified of sickness,

death or burial location. The number of burial sites is not known, as recording and reporting of deaths and burials was often neglected or inconsistent, or provided minimal information. Many sites were not marked, and have since been abandoned or significantly disturbed. Indigenous communities across Canada have conducted archeological work to investigate sites near former residential schools. Some communities have found early indicators of unmarked graves at these sites. Several communities are seeking assistance for the identification of family members through the analysis of human remains, and specifically through the use of DNA. There is a need for a coherent approach to identification and repatriation so that requests from Indigenous communities can be addressed in a clear, equitable, efficient and cohesive manner.

### Program objectives

ICMP will help residential school survivors, Indigenous communities, and the Government of Canada to achieve justice and accountability for missing children and unmarked burials associated with Canada's Indian Residential Schools system.

It will inform Indigenous communities and families about the process of accounting for and identifying their missing relatives, including the DNA-led process, data coordination and their role in the process.

It will support efforts by sovereign Indigenous



communities to excavate and analyze human remains from former residential schools.

It will facilitate the design and implementation of a coherent strategy that respects local knowledge and information provided by Indigenous communities

It will implement amendments to the Technical Arrangement (TA) so that it serves as an effective mechanism to support efforts to address the issue of missing persons in the context of the Indian Residential School system.

### Strategy 2024-2029

ICMP will actively reach out to and listen to the experiences and the wishes of survivors, leadership and Indigenous communities. ICMP will be guided by their experience and make available to them its DNA laboratory, scientific and technical expertise, data systems and data coordination capabilities and the insights that it has gained working with communities, including Indigenous communities, in other parts of the world. To ensure that its activities and recommendations are respectful of Indigenous protocols, ICMP's work in Canada will be Indigenous-led, and Indigenous facilitators will lead each step of community outreach.

## 6.2. Colombia

### Introduction

ICMP first became engaged in Colombia in 2007 following a request by the Prosecutor's Office. Between 2008 and 2010, ICMP contributed to public policy documents and legislation on missing persons in Colombia, recommending provisions on the protection of genetic data, establishment of a national DNA database, collection and processing of reference samples, protection of unidentified remains in cemeteries, and provision of reparations to families of the missing.

The parties to the Final Peace Agreement, signed in November 2016, invited ICMP to support the peace process as an international partner on the

issue of missing persons. From 2019 to mid-2021, supported by the European Union, ICMP assisted the Search Unit for Persons Listed as Disappeared (UBPD), created in the context of the Peace Agreement, as well as other authorities and CSOs, with special emphasis on families of the missing.

ICMP stands ready to help achieve the aspirations articulated in the Peace Agreement, especially through the transfer of capacity and expertise to State institutions and CSOs. ICMP plans to continue supporting civil society and plans to work with Colombian institutions that have a role in addressing the issue of the missing, including the General Prosecutor's Office, the Directorate of Criminal Investigation and INTERPOL (DICI), the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), and the Office of the Attorney General, and promote their collaboration with one another.

### Program objectives

**Strengthen the operational and technical capacity of Colombian institutions that have a missing persons mandate to search for, locate, and recover missing persons;**

- Ensure cooperation, collaboration and dialogue among Colombian institutions on the issue of the missing;
- Support the effective participation of CSOs and families of the missing in the process of accounting for their relatives;
- Promote leadership and collaboration among CSOs for an impartial and inclusive process of accounting for missing persons;
- Address the issue of missing persons effectively at the local and regional level; and
- Promote visibility and international engagement on the issue of the missing.

### Strategy 2024-2029

ICMP concluded an initial phase of its presence in Colombia in July 2021, made possible by the support of the EU. In a future Colombia Program, ICMP will focus on expanding the number of institutions that receive technical assistance, while acknowledging the leadership and coordination

role of the UYPD. Innovative ways of working through new relationships, especially with the JEP, will be promoted, along with inter-institutional coordination.

ICMP will continue to support the development of CSOs and families, and will work to strengthen their role in advocating for an effective response from the State. It will also seek to promote their joint collaboration across the political divide and their participation in initiatives undertaken by State institutions.

ICMP will seek to support the development of CSOs and families to strengthen their role in advocating for an effective response from the State. ICMP's focus will reflect the aspirations of the Peace Agreement, will be gender-justice oriented and will integrate specialist approaches to include the participation of minorities and special groups.

Expected outcomes will include improved forensic operations and field capacity among institutions, greater inter-institutional coordination, enhanced participation of civil society so that families of the missing can continue advocating directly and legitimately for their rights, enhanced capacity of former members of the FARC to meet their commitments under the Peace Agreement regarding the provision of information on missing persons with proper data collection efforts, and enhanced capacity of families of the missing and CSOs, regardless of different levels of expertise, to work across the political divide.

## 6.3. Iraq

### Introduction

Government estimates range from 250,000 to one million persons missing in Iraq from decades of conflict and human rights abuses including from the Ba'ath regime, the Iran/Iraq war, the Gulf Wars, and those missing since 2003 including as a result of Da'esh-related atrocities. The issue has significant consequences for society and security in Iraq today. Tens of thousands of families suffer the anguish of uncertainty regarding the fate of their relatives, and communities entertain different

and often conflicting accounts of the truth, which undermines efforts to ensure peace, security and reconciliation. Further, many surviving family members are unable to access their rights, due to administrative, political and legal hurdles.

People continue to go missing, and few measures have been implemented to end impunity for enforced disappearance and other crimes that cause persons to go missing. Moreover, laws, policies and customs concerning missing persons diverge and often excessively categorize missing persons according to group characteristics, era/ time period, geographic area or the presumed circumstances of their disappearance.

As a result, the work of multiple agencies and institutions that deal with the issue of missing persons has developed in an ad hoc manner that cannot adequately safeguard the rights of survivors, including families of the missing and does not comply with international obligations to search for and locate missing persons. Such weaknesses are inevitable for any country in transition. However, they have been particularly acute in Iraq because of the circumstances in which institutions must operate and the extremely large number of persons who have gone missing over the past decades.

### Program objectives

ICMP will continue to work towards advancing progress against the following three strategic objectives (SOs) as part of its five-year plan launched in 2022 to help Iraq implement a sustainable strategy to account for all missing persons and to secure the rights of families of the missing:

1. Promote a centrally coordinated approach to accounting for missing persons, through the creation of a central structure;
2. Strengthen the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and build bridges with government authorities; and
3. Advance Iraq's legal framework on missing persons that incorporates international legal standards.

## Strategy 2024-2029

ICMP's core partners will be those agencies mandated to deal with missing persons under Article 6 of the Law on Mass Graves Affairs, including families of the missing. ICMP will therefore seek to strengthen cooperation among these agencies, and between them and other important state entities, including the Iraqi Parliament, Prime Minister's and President's Offices, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, in order to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing the issue of the missing in Iraq.

A key priority of the five-year plan is to help Iraq meet its aspiration to create a centralized structure on missing persons, to account for missing persons irrespective of their race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, or the circumstances of their disappearance. ICMP will continue to facilitate bilateral consultations, roundtables and workshops with relevant Iraqi authorities and civil society partners on the structure, responsibilities and eventually the establishment of a central mechanism that will coordinate, unify and oversee the missing persons process.

In addition, ICMP will strengthen domestic legislation and institutional capacities to secure the rights of families of the missing by providing expert advice, including on draft legislation, such as the draft law on enforced disappearance.

ICMP will continue assisting the authorities in ongoing field operations to conduct forensic archaeological assessments, excavations, and anthropological examinations. This includes on-the-job mentoring on handling complex cases, in particular to address commingled cases, wherein excavated human remains are mixed. ICMP works in tandem with the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) and/or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), where appropriate.

ICMP will continue capacity-building initiatives to prepare the MLD DNA laboratory in Baghdad, in particular, for international accreditation in its Quality Management System. The overall aim is to

increase Iraq's ability to recover, preserve, interpret and analyze human remains and associated evidence, and to obtain post-mortem (PM) and ante-mortem (AM) samples that can lead to DNA-based identifications.

ICMP will continue to help the Iraqi authorities create a central record by helping to improve data collection and data management, which are central to the development of a coherent and comprehensive missing persons process. ICMP will continue to support the roll-out of the iDMS in relevant institutions, including but not limited to the Directorate for Protection and Affairs of Mass Graves (MGD) of the Martyrs' Foundation and the Medico-Legal Directorate (MLD) of the Ministry of Health. This will be a huge undertaking and will require sustained support both technically and financially.

ICMP will maintain a strong focus on strengthening the capacity of families of the missing to hold the authorities accountable by ensuring that the government fulfills its responsibilities to account for missing persons. This work will focus on establishing mechanisms to enable families to contribute to the process of locating and identifying their missing relatives. Similarly, ICMP will support national CSOs financially through the implementation of sub-grants and through the delivery of training courses for grassroots organizations to enhance their ability to convey information to families of the missing.

## 6.4. Libya

### Introduction

In 2012, according to estimates made by the Government of Libya, up to 10,000 persons were unaccounted for in the country. This included persons missing as a result of the 2011 conflict, as well as those who went missing during Muammar Gaddafi's 42-year rule, including in the 1977 war with Egypt, the 1979 war with Uganda, wars with Chad in the 1980s, and in the Abu Salim prison massacre in Tripoli in 1996. In addition, persons are missing from more recent events – these include victims found in 2020 in mass and clandestine

graves in Tarhuna and other areas, as well as migrants traveling through Libya. The September 2023 Darna flood disaster in the eastern region of Libya may have resulted in as many as 10,000 dead or missing.

Libya's first Commission dealing with the missing persons issue was established following the 2011 conflict. At the end of that year, the Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC) created the Ministry for the Affairs of the Families of Martyrs and the Missing (MAFMM) to handle the missing persons issue and dissolved the Commission. In 2012, Libya invited ICMP to assist in its efforts to build a sustainable process to find all missing persons, including those missing from the 2011 conflict. ICMP established a program in late 2012 and supported the country in line with an agreement with the Government of Libya until 2014, when the deteriorating security situation forced an end to the program's work.

The program focused on helping Libya develop institutional, legislative and technical capacity to account for missing persons impartially, in line with the rule of law, including by developing the capacities of the MAFMM and other state institutions engaged in the issue of the missing.

With the assistance of ICMP, the MAFMM collected more than 11,000 genetic reference samples from families of the missing, representing more than 3,000 missing persons in Tripoli, Benghazi, Sabha, Ben Walid, Sirte, and other places. Over its two-year program, ICMP was entrusted with 249 PM samples and 1,325 family reference samples. ICMP supported a DNA-led identification process that made it possible to submit more than 100 DNA match reports to the authorities concerning missing persons cases, including the case of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and then human rights activist and critic of the Qadhafi regime, Dr. Mansour Rashid Khikia. ICMP also trained Libyan experts, including more than 50 MAFMM staff, in forensic archaeology, anthropology, pathology, DNA reference sample collection and PM sampling procedures. Training in personal data processing, including DNA profiling, matching, and reporting, was also delivered, with a focus on data protection standards.

Despite ending its in-country presence in 2014 due to the security situation, ICMP continued to provide support. In 2015 and 2016, ICMP trained Libyan legal experts, civil society activists and government representatives to enable them to improve court-led processes on mass graves and missing persons. The training aimed to expand the use of forensic evidence in missing persons investigations and to clarify inter-institutional responsibilities and legal obligations to family members of the missing.

In late 2020, ICMP was asked to assess Libya's missing persons process, including its institutional, legal and technical capacities to address the issue of disappeared and other missing persons, as part of a project that aims to lay the foundations for a sustainable process to account for missing persons. Completed in January 2021, the assessment showed that, despite commendable efforts undertaken by various institutions, current legal, institutional, and technical provisions to account for missing persons are inadequate. The assessment also highlighted the need for immediate action to pave the way towards a process of effective investigations of missing persons cases and eventual accountability as well as to provide answers to families of the missing. At the end of September 2021, the US State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) confirmed a USD 2-million grant and in December 2022, the support will contribute to helping the Libyan authorities establish an effective and sustainable missing persons process based on the rule of law. In December 2022, the Government of The Netherlands awarded a EUR 2-million grant for a five-year ICMP program in Libya.

### Program objectives

**The long-term goal to be achieved in 2024-2029 is to help Libya to establish a sustainable process to account for missing persons in a manner that upholds the human rights of families of the missing. This will enable rule-of-law-based investigations that can support future judicial processes, and will protect the rights of families of the missing. This includes:**

- Establishing institutional and legislative

capacities and a centralized data system capability;

- Enhancing technical and scientific capacities (including DNA) and data processing capacities of law enforcement, medical experts, and others working in Libya to address the issue of missing persons;
- Establishing standards for personal data protection and data privacy;
- Conducting recovery and analysis of human remains and associated evidence in accordance with rule-of-law standards;
- Strengthening the capacity and engagement of civil society and families of the missing; and
- Strengthening networks of experts and others, including international and other organizations, to coordinate efforts to locate the missing in a comprehensive and effective manner.

### Strategy 2024-2029

- To enhance the capacities and resources available in the country through a dedicated capacity-building program on forensic archaeology, anthropology, crime-scene investigation and geospatial technology to map and locate burial sites; DNA testing, profiling and matching; and introduction to effective missing persons investigations for policymakers, CSOs, and families of the missing;
- To support identification efforts undertaken by institutions such as the General Authority for the Search and Identification of Missing Persons (GASIMP), by using ICMP's DNA laboratory to conduct DNA testing and matching, while at the same time supporting the relevant Libyan authorities in collecting PM samples and reference samples from families of the missing;
- By building on achievements of the Libyan Identification Center established in 2012, to create data networks for DNA-based human identification work drawing on existing DNA reference and PM data, and new data;
- To contribute to a long-term effort by Libyan institutions to centralize information about missing persons cases with the creation of a central record of all cases;
- To launch an outreach program to engage families of the missing through seminars for CSOs and families of the missing on reporting

mechanisms and their rights; capacity building for CSOs through training and small grants programs; training in use of the OIC to report missing persons and mass graves sites; and collection of DNA reference data directly from relatives of the missing; and

- To build synergies among domestic stakeholders, between domestic and international stakeholders, and among international stakeholders. This will align to and support the Berlin Process, which aims to assist the United Nations (UN) in unifying the International Community in their support for a peaceful solution to the Libyan crisis.

Outcomes of this approach will include improvement in the standards and procedures that are applied in missing persons investigations, strengthened overall forensic capacity in relevant institutions, increased capacity for engagement by families of the missing and civil society in a rule-of-law-based missing persons process with the rights of families guaranteed throughout the process, protection provided for mass graves in and around Tarhuna, Ben Walid and other locations and investigations conducted according to international standards, and incorporation of the missing persons issue in initiatives and other activities conducted by the international community to reach a sustainable peace.

## 6.5. Mexico

### Introduction

According to the National Registry of Missing Persons, as of 21 September 2023, 111,521 persons were reported as disappeared in Mexico as a result of crime. In light of widespread under-reporting (because of intimidation) and the lack of comprehensive nationwide statistics, these numbers likely offer only a partial view of the situation: day-to-day disappearances are a fact of life in Mexico.

Disappearances reflect rising levels of violence by organized crime in response to the government's strategy of militarized security, as well as violent repression by state or private groups competing for

control of illegal markets, natural resources, and land. More than 150,000 people are estimated to have been killed in Mexico between 2006 and 2018 and, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, more than 357,000 had been internally displaced by violence as of December 2020. Migration from Central America has also fueled a spike in violent disappearances among migrants.

Data on missing persons in Nuevo León collected by ICMP's NGO partner, Citizens in Support of Human Rights (CADHAC) and analyzed by the University of Oxford, the University of Minnesota, and the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO-Mexico) in 2017, found that at least 47 percent of disappearances in Nuevo León were committed by state authorities and 91 percent of victims had no relationship to organized crime. Across the country, 75 percent of those reported missing are men, and 25 percent are women. The states of Jalisco, Tamaulipas, and Estado de Mexico have the largest number of missing persons, while Nuevo León has one of the highest numbers of municipalities with the highest per capita rate of missing persons.

The forced disappearance of 43 students from the Teacher Training School in Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, in 2014 raised the visibility of the issue of missing persons. In 2017 the National Movement for the Disappeared (MovNDmex), reuniting collectives of families of the missing, along with many CSOs secured the adoption and entry into force of the General Law on Enforced Disappearances and Disappearances by Private Persons.

The General Law provides for criminal and administrative frameworks to punish perpetrators of disappearances, and establishes the National System for Missing Persons, composed of a National Search Commission (CNB), a Search Commission in each of the 32 states, and various other agencies, including the Conference of Prosecutors, and a Citizens' Council. In 2021, also thanks to the mobilization of families of the missing, the government of Mexico in collaboration with the United Nations established an Extraordinary Mechanism for Forensic Identification composed of seven Mexican and international experts in forensic, legal,

psychosocial and international cooperation, to contribute to the development of strategies to address the large numbers of mass graves that must be excavated and the more than 52,000 unidentified remains nationwide.

Under the leadership of the CNB, formally established in 2019, efforts to account for missing persons have been more visible and intensive. Moreover, through the establishment of the Regional Center for Human Identification (CRIH) in Coahuila and more recently the National Center for Human Identification (CNIH) in Morelos, the CNB is promoting the collection of family reference samples and a program of massive exhumation from cemeteries and common graves to address the examination and identification of unidentified human remains held by the state.

From December 2018 to July 2022, ICMP participated in a four-year program to assist the authorities in Nuevo León through the "Justice for the Disappeared in Nuevo León" project designed in collaboration with CADHAC, with funding from USAID.

The CADHAC-ICMP project enhanced the institutional capacity of Nuevo León to comply with the General Law on Missing Persons, improved the data-processing infrastructure, strengthened the forensic processes for missing persons, including DNA-led identification, and enhanced victims' organization advocacy. Additionally, ICMP provided direct assistance to fill critical gaps in forensic anthropology capacity for highly complex cases in 2022 and, with the General Attorney's Office, launched a customized version of the OIC to improve communication with families and promote transparency.

From July 2021 to August 2022, ICMP expanded its activities in Mexico to include assistance to the Federal Prosecutor's Office through a 10-month pilot project funded by USAID. Through this project, ICMP supported the adoption of two new DNA extraction methods that were validated and proven to achieve better results in obtaining reportable DNA profiles.

### Program objectives

- To help the authorities implement a scientific and technical missing persons strategy in Mexico;
- To introduce the Federal and state authorities to technical identification strategies;
- To transfer knowledge and capacity and support efforts to enhance cooperation and collaboration between the Federal government and the states for processing data on missing persons;
- To strengthen implementation of legislative and institutional frameworks for addressing the issue of missing persons; and
- To help family associations to participate in efforts to account for missing persons.

### Strategy 2024-2029

The huge number of missing persons cases in Mexico imposes an enormous burden on judicial authorities. The challenge of large numbers of missing is compounded by the fact that when persons are “disappeared” attempts are routinely made to hide evidence of the crime: human remains recovered from mass and clandestine graves are in most cases highly degraded, burned or fragmented.

**ICMP will seek to ensure that policymakers, the scientific community, families of the missing, and international donors increase their understanding of the missing persons issue and adopt appropriate technical and scientific strategies in the following areas:**

- a. The deployment of a multidisciplinary DNA-led approach, focused on large-scale DNA extraction, analysis, matching and reporting;
- b. The creation of dedicated teams, and mechanisms that coordinate information management;
- c. The creation of specialized archaeology, anthropology and DNA teams and procedures that ensure that forensic investigations are aligned with international best practice; and
- d. The deployment of integrated data management systems to support field and laboratory operations, and to enhance data cooperation across the country.

- e. The promotion of coordination mechanisms among CSOs, the state government, and the Federal government.

ICMP will seek to continue supporting Prosecutors’ Offices, Human Identification Centers and other national authorities through intensive mentoring, training and capacity transfer and work with civil society partners to enhance the communication, transparency and accountability of authorities towards families of the missing.

## 6.6. South Caucasus

### Introduction

The conflict began in 1988 and a full-scale war broke out in the early 1990s. A ceasefire brokered in 1994 resulted in two decades of relative peace, which deteriorated in 2016 when the ceasefire was breached, and again in 2020, with the 44-day War. According to international sources, almost 5,000 persons have gone missing since the start of the first Armenian-Azerbaijani war. On 19 September 2023, Azerbaijan conducted a military offensive that brought to an end more than three decades of de facto self-governance for the Armenian population living in Nagorno-Karabakh and resulted in a massive exodus of its population.

ICMP representatives visited Armenia in March 2022 and Azerbaijan in April 2022 at the invitation of the respective governments to discuss effective measures to locate persons missing as a result of the armed conflicts. In June-July 2023, ICMP again visited both countries to conduct an assessment to explore the legislative and institutional framework in place to account for the missing, the scientific and technical capacities of the institutions and mechanisms tasked with addressing the resolution of missing persons cases, and the engagement of civil society and international organizations. As a result of the assessment, ICMP has proposed a series of recommendations to each country, that seek to contribute to a sustainable and effective missing persons process aligned with human rights and rule-of-law standards.

## Program objectives

To support both Armenia and Azerbaijan in the adoption of measures that enhance their capacities to conduct effective investigations, through the improvement of domestic capacities, the implementation of legislative measures to secure the rights of families of the missing, the creation of central records of missing persons, and building technical capabilities to locate and identify missing persons.

## Strategy 2024-2029

**ICMP will work with the government authorities in Armenia and Azerbaijan to adopt the recommendations from the assessment reports and support both countries in building a sustainable process to find all missing persons by:**

- Establishing a secure Central Database on missing persons, for the collection, management and analysis of data relevant to missing persons investigations, including biometric data, such as genetic data;
- Locating and excavating suspected illicit burial sites and other locations of forensic interest in accordance with domestic legislation based on the rule of law and international standards;
- Supporting human identification processes and family reunifications, as needed, through DNA testing and supporting the development of domestic quality assured capacities in line with ICMP's accredited technical protocols relevant to DNA testing, other forensic processes and personal data processing and protection;
- Providing capacity-building and learning and development activities to families of the missing and civil society and enhancing their direct participation in the missing persons process;
- Increasing the capacity of competent authorities by transferring knowledge and expertise in human identification case management, data processing and outreach to families of the missing; and
- Promoting more active participation by families of the missing and civil society in the process of search and identification, so they can advocate with relevant government authorities on the resolution of the missing persons issue.

## 6.7. Syria/MENA

### Introduction

Approximately 17,000 persons are missing from the regime of Hafez al Assad, which includes cases that are still highly politically relevant for neighboring states, and at least 130,000 persons missing from the present conflict, including not only Syrians but people from at least 60 different countries. There are also Syrians missing as a result of migration from the region. Since the conflict began in March 2011, hundreds of thousands of Syrians have been killed; more than 6.5 million have been displaced inside the country, and a further 5.6 million have fled the country, seeking safety in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, and in Europe. The surviving families of the missing in a number of circumstances do not know if the person is missing inside or outside Syria and in some cases a number of relatives may have gone missing in different locations.

Creating a strategy to locate and identify the missing and secure the rights of surviving families to truth, justice, and reparations requires a shared understanding of the process by civil society, families of the missing and international organizations, as well as the cooperation of multiple states that are hosting Syrian refugees. Over the long term, it will also require the cooperation of the Syrian authorities.

A sustainable strategy will necessitate the continued development of a secure, central, impartial database that can store and process data from multiple sources, including families of the missing residing inside and outside Syria, on the location of mass graves and other clandestine missing persons sites, and data related to the person reported to be missing, as well as witness information concerning possible perpetrators.

Accounting for missing persons through a rule-of-law-based process will have a bearing on the credibility of future actions to redress the loss of economic and social rights and to secure potential reparations for victims of disappearance. To date, the international community has agreed to support efforts to document, analyze and store evidence of serious violations of human rights in



order to deter such conduct and lay the foundations for future accountability. These documentation efforts, led mostly by CSOs and NGOs, have been based on either the collection of statistical data and news reports about missing persons or on data collected about possible perpetrators. However, these efforts have not been designed to collect personal data about missing persons in a manner that can be used for future location and identification efforts. Further, to the extent that some organizations have been able to collect certain information and records, the legal, physical and operational protection of such data cannot be guaranteed as CSOs do not benefit from sufficient protections.

ICMP, therefore, supports efforts to establish an Independent Institution on Missing Persons in Syria (IIMP) in accordance with General Assembly resolution, A/RES/77/301 of 29 June 2023. ICMP participated in efforts to formulate a mandate for the IIMP, and discussed possible avenues of support with its CSO partners in Syria.

### Program objectives

- To ensure victims, civil society and key stakeholders have increased understanding of the processes, standards and rights of victims involved in accounting for missing persons;
- To launch a sustainable process of data collection about missing persons, and systematic compilation of data to assist efforts to locate the missing;
- To support efforts for planning a future rule-of-law approach to investigating missing persons cases in post-conflict Syria;
- To ensure that Syrian civil society, including families of the missing, is unified in supporting and influencing policy measures to find all missing persons and to ensure the rights of all families; and
- To enhance cooperation between relevant international organizations and INGOs.

### Strategy 2024-2029

The Syria/MENA Program seeks to provide an immediate response to the issue of persons missing

as a result of the Syrian conflict, while laying the foundations for a sustainable rule-of-law-based approach in post-conflict Syria. ICMP is working with partner organizations in Northeast Syria and is considering avenues to have a physical presence there. ICMP will also undertake contingency planning so that it can operate in all of Syria as soon as conditions allow and where this is consistent with donor policies.

ICMP's immediate response involves capturing data on missing persons in as comprehensive and complete a form as possible using ICMP's OIC and iDMS. Gaining the trust of families is an essential first step in this process, as is developing an understanding among families, community leaders and civil society of the process, and of the importance of data collection and the rights of victims and survivors. Through outreach and training, the Program will seek to empower families by highlighting the central role of their participation in the process and creating the conditions for this to happen.

ICMP has launched a participatory process to collect data from families of the missing and survivors from Syria. The OIC and iDMS have been translated into Arabic and the fields adapted to meet the needs of Syrian families, making it possible to collect, analyze, protect and share data. As the necessary legal agreements are formulated, collection of genetic reference samples to be processed at ICMP's DNA laboratory will be expanded. While ICMP's primary data collection focus will be on families of the missing who are living as refugees in host states, there will also be an effort to collect data from families in Syria, using the OIC, which can be accessed via an app, and through data collection partnerships with NGOs and other entities operating in Syria.

The Program will help families, especially those with female heads of household, to create a common platform regardless of sectarian or national affiliation or the role of the missing person in the conflict. It will also partner with CSOs and expert legal communities to strengthen families' capacities to advocate for their rights and to undertake self-help initiatives.

The Program will seek to prepare the ground for a future rule-of-law-based approach. This includes working with relevant Syrian CSOs, families, activists, legal experts and those with knowledge of the Syrian public administration, to develop policy papers that can support an effective institutional and legal framework to account for missing persons in post-conflict Syria.

ICMP will work on safeguarding forensic evidence from mass graves in Syria by focusing on enhancing the capacity of first responders to protect, collect, securely store, and archive evidence.

ICMP will also seek the cooperation of states hosting Syrian refugees, migrants and displaced persons, to facilitate efforts to work with Syrian groups and enable them to report missing persons cases.

Expected outcomes will include increasing the capacity of CSOs, families and survivors to document and record cases, through improved data collection and data security, and increasing the capacity of families to engage in the process, by improving stakeholders' understanding of their rights and enabling their participation in data collection. Data collection efforts will yield statistical and qualitative information that will contribute to future peace and reconciliation processes; a comprehensive missing persons database will be created with the participation of families of the missing, survivors and Syrian CSOs, contributing to greater public acknowledgment of this issue; and the foundations will be laid for an effective rule-of-law-based approach to accounting for missing persons in post-conflict Syria.

## 6.8. Ukraine

### Introduction

On 24 February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine, radically escalating an armed conflict that began in 2014. This has led to a wide range of human rights violations affecting civilians and combatants. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has verified numerous allegations of arbitrary deprivation of life, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treat-

ment, and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). The Ministry of Interior of Ukraine (MoI) reports that 28,000 persons have been registered in the Unified Register of Missing Persons. This number will continue to rise. In clear violation of international humanitarian law, many persons have been subjected to abductions, forced deportation, or incommunicado detention, and many have been killed, as evidenced by the discovery of mass and illicit graves.

Since April 2022, mass graves have been found in areas liberated from Russian occupation, and more graves containing unidentified victims are likely to be uncovered in the future. In addition to military personnel reported missing in action, and civilian victims of deportation, summary execution, incommunicado detention, and abduction, children have been subjected to unlawful adoption, as well as family separation in the midst of mass displacement. Missing and disappeared persons from the on-going war and related circumstances include both Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians.

In April 2022, the authorities in Ukraine requested urgent ICMP assistance based on an exchange of diplomatic notes and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in Kyiv in 2021. ICMP responded immediately with deployments to help Ukrainian institutions access high-volume, DNA-led identification capabilities; and to help the authorities ensure that evidence is collected, including evidence from mass and clandestine graves that would be admissible in criminal trials. ICMP has also supported laboratory operations, data collection, and mass grave investigations; and has started a process of engagement with civil society and families of the missing to ensure their effective participation in the missing person's process.

**Since opening an office in Kyiv in July 2022, ICMP has developed constructive partnerships with key Ukrainian institutions and line ministries involved in accounting for missing persons. It has signed the following Agreements:**

- Exchange of diplomatic notes between ICMP and the Embassy of Ukraine, based on the Office of the Prosecutor General's request for immediate assistance;
- Memorandum of Cooperation between ICMP and the Prosecutors Training Center of Ukraine;

- Protocol signed by ICMP and the Main Investigative Department of the National Police of Ukraine ;
- Memorandum of Cooperation signed by ICMP and the Ministry of Health of Ukraine.

### Program objectives

The objectives of ICMP's Ukraine program are to:

- Sign a Memorandum of Cooperation between ICMP and the Department on Missing Persons of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine;
- Sign a Host State Agreement/Office Agreement. N.B the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine will require another Ministry sponsor (sign) the Agreement. Possibly Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. First half of 2024;
- Support further development and strengthening of Ukraine's technical capacity for a dedicated and sustainable impartial investigation into missing persons cases, starting with the professional recovery of mortal remains, documentation of alleged crime scenes, determining cause and manner of death, DNA testing and matching of family reference and post-mortem samples, and identifying deceased persons and reuniting families;
- Support the meaningful participation of civil society and family associations, especially those that are women-led, in the missing persons process to strengthen the state's accountability and secure the rights of families;
- Facilitate intergovernmental and in-country cooperation and coordination of efforts among state institutions, civil society, international organizations, and the diplomatic community to address the issue of missing persons in an effective way;
- Advocate and raise public awareness in Ukraine and among policymakers globally regarding the issue of missing persons, highlighting its indispensable role in security, conflict-prevention, peace building and international justice;
- Support the strengthening of Ukraine's institutional capacity and legislative framework to account effectively for missing persons and secure the rights of all families of the missing, regardless of circumstances of disappearance, nationality, or any other factor, to truth, justice and reparations.

### Strategy 2024-2029

ICMP's strategy over the next five years is to support Ukraine in accounting for large numbers of missing persons to judicial standards that will make it possible to hold perpetrators of atrocities to account, provide the public with credible information regarding disappeared persons and related crimes, and secure the rights of their families. This requires strengthening technical capabilities of key Ukrainian institutions in all areas relevant to human identification of missing persons at the same time ensuring the admissibility of evidence for court purposes through proper investigations into missing persons cases. The strategy seeks to strengthen partnership, cooperation and coordination on many levels: intergovernmental, inter-institutional within Ukraine, and between the Government and State institutions of Ukraine and citizens, especially families of the missing.

To that end, ICMP will work on:

- Strengthening the technical capacity of Ukraine's DNA-led process of human identification;
- Enhancing cooperation within Ukraine's laboratory system under the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice and more broadly with international DNA experts;
- Increasing capacity within the Ministry of Health of Ukraine to augment the existing system of bureaus of forensic medicine and mortuaries across the country;
- Increasing capacity among Ukrainian institutions to manage data pertaining to missing persons;
- Increasing capacity among Ukrainian institutions to collect data from families of the missing in Ukraine and providing support to collect data in third countries;
- Enhancing domestic forensic expertise to recover and document sites of forensic interest;
- Enabling Ukraine's civil society organizations and family associations, especially women-led family associations, to acquire essential knowledge and skills to support missing persons data collection and to participate meaningfully in decision-making in the missing persons process;
- Enhancing agency among Ukraine's CSOs and family associations, especially women-led

family associations, to participate actively in the missing persons process;

- Strengthening cooperation between the Government and civil society, including families of the missing;
- Enhancing intergovernmental cooperation (in Kyiv and The Hague) on the missing persons issue, among Ukraine's neighbors and other countries hosting large numbers of Ukrainian refugees;
- Increasing the capacity of the Government of Ukraine to safeguard the rights of all families of the missing to truth, justice, and reparations by developing specific legislation on missing persons, accountability and implementation mechanisms; and
- Increasing the capacity of the Government to ensure the process is coordinated by a viable, rule-of-law-based state agency that operates in harmony with all relevant institutions.

## 6.9. Vietnam

### Introduction

The Government of Vietnam (GVN) estimates that millions of Vietnamese were killed or went missing in the 30 years of the Vietnam–American war. Vietnam has devoted considerable attention to locating and identifying human remains, but progress has been limited.

In July 2020, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and ICMP began a project to help advance DNA identification methods in Vietnam, working principally with the Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology (VAST) and the Center for DNA Identification (CDI). The project mainly aims to adopt modern-day DNA-led identification methods to the context of Vietnam, including Next Generation Sequencing (NGS).

In October 2022, with the support of the Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs Office of Seeking Missing Persons (VNSOMP), an Implementation Plan was signed between ICMP and VAST, which established a framework for the transfer of heavily degraded Vietnamese PM samples to ICMP's laboratory in The Hague for DNA testing and exchange of

technical knowledge and skills.

In February 2023, a delegation of Vietnamese scientists and government officials brought samples of unidentified human remains to the ICMP laboratory, where DNA was extracted from a number of highly degraded samples, resulting in a series of recommended modifications to protocols currently being used in Vietnam.

The first report on results under the Implementation Plan was delivered in July 2023 during a workshop organized by VAST, together with representatives from the CDI, the Institute for Biotechnology, the Department of National Devotees of the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs, and the VNSOMP.

In addition to DNA profiling and sequencing techniques that reflect the latest developments in forensic genetics, the program addresses the need for efficient data management, including the creation of a single, centralized database. This will require effective coordination of participating DNA laboratories and entities involved in registering missing persons and collecting reference samples. These activities need to be coordinated and undertaken in an efficient and controlled way. ICMP will offer database solutions for laboratory workflows, including access to the iDMS.

Government engagement with civil society and families is required in order to ensure trust, understanding and cooperation in a rule-of-law based missing persons process. Recovery and examination of human remains, sampling for DNA testing, missing persons registration and collection of reference samples, data protection and data privacy, DNA matching and reporting, and mechanisms for official identifications are all areas where ICMP can cooperate with Vietnamese authorities.

VAST will be ICMP's primary institution for scientific exchange, while program coordination will also intersect with other institutions such as the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and the VNOSMP, to define inter-institutional processes and identify gaps.

## Program objectives

Over a period of three years, ICMP proposes to conduct the following activities:

- Evaluate and optimize DNA extraction methods in comparison to ICMP's highly optimized bone extraction protocol, and establish a benchmark for successful nuclear STR profiling and NGS. This will be conducted on a sizeable representative sampling of case material from Vietnam;
- Support a program of knowledge and skills exchange, embedding a sustainable quality-assured DNA testing capability for heavily degraded skeletal remains in Vietnam;
- Conduct an NGS-focused pilot on selected test cases from Vietnam, in coordination with Vietnamese scientists to permit conclusive identification in cases where existing systems (e.g. mitochondrial DNA) suggest a possible identification;
- Evaluate additional sequencing assay methods for nuclear SNPs that are currently in use in other human identification and forensic laboratories around the world, including the method developed by the US Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL);
- Provide specialized bioinformatic assistance, including software tools, to permit kinship matching using high-density SNP data;
- Provide expert assistance in database-driven kinship matching, which is central to large-scale DNA identification projects;
- Conduct needs assessments to understand the GVN partners' current capacity to support human identification on a large scale and confirm equipment for donation that the GVN partners will require in order to implement the new DNA analysis workflows;
- Sequentially equip a GVN laboratory with required systems to help implement the technology and approaches developed by the project;
- Deliver customized training packages, instrumentation specifications and operating procedures to enable high-density SNP testing to be applied in Vietnam; and
- Conduct a needs assessment for the GVN to develop a coherent integrated large-scale identification project that capitalizes on technical advancements in DNA and kinship matching.

## Strategy 2024-2029

As well as laboratory-based activities, ICMP will work closely with Vietnamese laboratories to coordinate examination and sampling of human remains for DNA testing. ICMP's skeletal sampling protocols are informed by results from more than 60,000 DNA submissions, and serve as a basis to develop selection guidelines for samples submitted for testing.

ICMP will work with experts from Vietnam to pair the matching program with a single, centralized missing persons database involving government entities responsible for registering missing persons and collecting reference samples.

To secure the participation of relatives of the missing and to strengthen public trust, ICMP will plan outreach and public information campaigns together with Vietnamese authorities, inside and outside Vietnam. ICMP will also work with the GVN to develop a program that can be sustained and operate effectively over a period of decades.

## 6.10. Western Balkans

### Introduction

Since 1996, ICMP has spearheaded an extraordinary effort to help governments in the Western Balkans to develop dedicated institutions and technical capacities to account for those who went missing during the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. As a direct result of this regional effort it has been possible to account for more than 70 percent of the 40,000 persons who went missing, including 7,000 of the 8,000 persons missing as a result of the Srebrenica Genocide. Institutions that ICMP helped to create have been effective, despite continuous political challenges, and legislation that ICMP helped craft has served as a model for countries around the world.

However, an estimated 11,600 persons are still missing throughout the region. In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH), Kosovo and Serbia, the majority of persons identified have been accounted for through ICMP's DNA-led identification process. Other cases were

closed using traditional identification methods prior to ICMP's system going online in 2001.

ICMP helped the BiH authorities to develop the Law on Missing Persons, adopted in 2004, which created a clear legal framework for addressing the issue and a legal basis for the establishment of a Fund for the Families of the Missing, and for the creation of Central Records on Missing Persons (CEN).

ICMP helped the BiH authorities establish the Missing Persons Institute of BiH (MPI) tasked with locating and identifying the missing regardless of ethnic, religious or any other affiliation, which revolutionized the way in which the search for missing persons was carried out. ICMP assisted the MPI to create a Central Record of all persons missing in/from BiH (the CEN) as well as a centralized database of all non-identified cases in mortuaries (NNDMS).

BiH has assisted prosecutors' offices tasked with bringing perpetrators of war crimes, including enforced disappearances, to justice, and at the initiative and with the support of ICMP it has taken concrete steps to address the issue of more than 3,000 unidentified (NN) human remains stored in mortuaries across the country.

In Kosovo, ICMP has helped the domestic authorities to develop the Law on Missing Persons and establish domestic institutions, including a Government Commission on Missing Persons, to coordinate the process of accounting for the missing.

In Croatia, ICMP has developed, and is still implementing with the Croatian authorities, a Joint Project of Identifications based on the exchange of DNA samples pertaining to victims whose families provided reference samples outside Croatia. To date, 685 persons have been identified through the project implemented by ICMP and the Office for the Detained and the Missing within the Ministry of Defenders of the Republic of Croatia, who would have remained unidentified if this data sharing mechanism were not in place.

Through its cooperation with Serbia, as well as with the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and later the European Union Rule-of-law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), ICMP used DNA testing to assist

in identifying 90 percent of the mortal remains that were recovered on the territory of Serbia between 2001 and 2002. In addition, the remains of more than 300 persons missing from the conflicts in Croatia and BiH have been recovered in Serbia and returned to their families in Croatia or BiH. To date, ICMP has helped the Serbian authorities to find more than 1,100 persons on its territory.

Throughout the Western Balkans, ICMP has helped to empower associations of families of missing persons, enabling them to claim their right to truth and justice and to lobby the authorities to fulfill their obligations to account for the missing. In addition, ICMP has collected more than 100,000 reference samples and other data from families of the missing to enable DNA-based identifications. The formal establishment of the Regional Coordination Network of Associations of Families of the Missing from the former Yugoslavia (Regional Coordination) is a unique example of victims' groups from different sides of a conflict working together to hold the authorities to account and to keep the issue high on the agenda. The Regional Coordination gathers associations of families of the missing from BiH, Croatia, Kosovo, and Serbia.

In order to increase inter-governmental cooperation in a politically challenging environment, ICMP facilitated the establishment of a regional Missing Persons Group (MPG), which consists of domestic institutions for missing persons issues from BiH, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia. In November 2018 the MPG signed a Framework Plan that lays out steps to boost their cooperation and increase their effectiveness in accounting for missing persons throughout the region. The Framework Plan outlines a common approach in resolving missing persons issues and promoting more effective regional collaboration implemented by domestic institutions responsible for accounting for missing persons in the Western Balkans. ICMP has increased the engagement of families of the missing in the operations of the MPG through the Forum for Families, which affords families of the missing an advisory role in guiding the work of the MPG.

The MPG launched the Database of Active Missing Persons Cases from the conflicts from the territory

of the former Yugoslavia, in November 2022 in The Hague.

In the coming period, ICMP will continue to build domestic ownership and the sustainability of the MPG and ensure the MPG's continued engagement with families of the missing. ICMP will seek to ensure the financial sustainability of the MPG through high-level policy dialogue with governments. It will seek to increase domestic ownership of the MPG by gradually handing over the chairing of MPG sessions to MPG members on a rotating basis. ICMP will ensure that the MPG remains accountable for its work by facilitating its annual reporting to the Western Balkans Berlin Process, and by supporting the Regional Coordination in a monitoring role.

In BiH, ICMP will continue supporting the MPI and the prosecutors' offices to ensure that clandestine gravesites are excavated in line with best forensic standards, and that cases exhumed are accurately identified based on DNA analysis. At the same time, it will continue to provide training to the BiH Agency for Forensic Examinations and Expertise (AFEE) to develop its capacities in DNA analysis of PM samples. ICMP will strive to ensure domestic capabilities in forensic archaeology and forensic anthropology are established within the MPI.

In Albania, an estimated 6,000 persons are still missing as a result of political persecution during the communist era between 1945 and 1991. ICMP will continue to help the Albanian authorities to establish a missing persons process that will ensure proper investigations into missing persons cases and the engagement of families of the missing in the process.

### Program objectives

- To ensure a sustainable process to locate and identify missing persons from the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia;
- To enhance cooperation among states in the region to build trust and identify shared challenges and shared solutions to finding the remaining missing persons;
- To encourage and empower families of the missing and CSOs in the region to work together

to ensure that their governments cooperate in securing their rights to truth, justice, and reparations;

- To increase the technical capacities of domestic institutions to locate and identify the missing through the provision of assistance in advanced DNA technologies and data systems capabilities;
- To support regional governments (BiH, Croatia, Kosovo and Serbia) in resolving no-name (NN) cases in a transparent, trust-enhancing way. To provide MPG members with tools for effective tracking and management of NN cases at national level;
- To strengthen the technical capacities of the BiH Missing Persons Institute to ensure proper exhumations and forensic anthropological examination of recovered cases; and
- To develop cooperation with professional and academic institutions to ensure the transfer of knowledge and protect the legacy of the process.

### Strategy 2024-2029

**In the forthcoming period, ICMP's strategy in the Western Balkans will pivot on facilitating the cooperation of states in the region, and ensuring the engagement of families of missing persons in the process, while providing technical assistance to ensure that missing persons are identified accurately. Special attention will be directed to the sustainability of the missing persons process in the countries of the Western Balkans, with decreased presence of ICMP, by:**

- Developing sustainable national mechanisms to ensure state responsibility in finding the remaining persons missing in the Western Balkans;
- Ensuring the sustainability of regional cooperation through the MPG and the Regional Network of families, through positive policy dialogue with national authorities in the region and families of the missing;
- Ensuring that families of missing persons and the general public are informed about the work of the MPG and the implementation of the Framework Plan and other activities relevant to the missing persons issue, which includes but is not limited to the work of relevant institutions, legislation pertinent to families of missing persons, reparations and benefits, and

advances in science and technology pertinent to search and identification of the missing, etc;

- Ensuring continued access to DNA testing and matching of missing persons cases for national partners in affected countries of the Western Balkans, while building domestic DNA capacities for human identification of conflict-related missing persons cases;
- Ensuring that the associations of families of missing persons continue to remain actively engaged in the process and have the resources to do so;
- Establishing an effective electronic tracking and management system tool for tracking and resolving NN (unidentified) cases through the application of effective forensic methods in countries of the Western Balkans;
- Initiating the creation of sufficient capacity in forensic archaeology and anthropology in BiH;
- Ensuring the continued exchange, verification and updating of information about active missing persons cases between relevant domestic institutions from former Yugoslavia, members of the MPG, and families of the missing through the Regional Database;
- In Albania, ensuring that CSOs and families of persons missing from the Communist era understand the avenues that are available to them to secure their rights, and that local authorities in Albania become more aware of their legal obligations to victims and the conditions under which people disappeared. Progress towards resolving missing persons cases will contribute to establishing historical records, resolving grievances, and reinforcing the rule of law in Albania;
- Protecting the legacy and ensuring transfer of knowledge to young professionals and academics through training programs and lectures.



# VII. THEMATIC PROGRAMS

## 7.1. Missing Migrants and Refugees (MMR)

### Introduction

Based on records kept by the Missing Migrants Project of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the number of missing migrants has continued to rise since 2014. It is estimated that more than 50,000 migrants are missing globally, with the highest number in the Mediterranean region, where more than 25,000 migrants have gone missing since 2014. In addition, the war in Ukraine has resulted in the largest numbers of refugees in Europe since World War Two. Ukrainians are missing as a direct result of the fighting, but many are also missing outside the country as a consequence of human trafficking and other causes.

ICMP has taken steps to secure the participation of authorities in Europe in efforts to build a more effective response to the issue of missing migrants and refugees. Meeting in Rome at ICMP's invitation on 11 June 2018, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta launched a Joint Process to enhance domestic capabilities and expand cooperation.

Following agreements reached in Rome, ICMP conducted an assessment and produced a draft set of "Proposals for Action", which were presented at the second meeting of the Joint Process, in June 2019. The third meeting, in November 2021, highlighted the need to enhance a centralized data capability conducive to solving cases of

missing migrants across jurisdictions through the engagement of focal points in each country. The focal points have been appointed and ICMP looks forward to working with them to define a viable strategy.

Inter-agency cooperation has been at the center of ICMP's work on the MMR issue. In January 2016, together with the mission of the UK to the UN, ICMP brought together senior diplomats and experts at the UN Security Council, in the Arria Formula, to discuss core aspects of the global missing persons issue, including persons missing in the context of migration. Since then, ICMP has conducted five topical Inter-Agency roundtables and facilitated an MMR consultative group involving international and other organizations, with a view to providing assistance to the Joint Process countries in their efforts to deal with the missing migrants and refugees issue. One recurrent theme that has emerged from these discussions is the need to enhance data sharing and break data silos.

Regarding Ukraine, ICMP will work with Ukrainian refugees residing in neighboring countries and other countries in Europe hosting large numbers of refugees to collect data to help locate missing persons both inside and outside of Ukraine. ICMP will also facilitate the creation of an informal meeting format with neighboring countries

and other countries hosting large numbers of Ukrainian refugees to update them on the process of assisting Ukrainian families in finding their relatives. This format can also facilitate efforts to find Ukrainians missing from other causes, such as human trafficking.

### Program objectives

- To assist the Joint Process countries in implementing the Proposals for Action;
- To enhance cooperation with Italy based on the agreement signed with ICMP in 2016 to assist in specific cases of shipwreck victims;
- To assist Joint Process countries and other countries in the Mediterranean region in conducting DNA identifications in accordance with rule-of-law standards;
- To enhance cooperation with countries of transit and origin, as well as countries of destination, (e.g. France, Spain, and Southern Shore countries) and involve them in the Joint Process in a progressive manner;
- To enhance data sharing across the region, including through Regional Roundtables on Data Processing and Cooperation concerning MMRs;
- To find solutions for inter-agency data sharing and ascertain jointly with international partners the quantity and quality of existing data on missing migrants;
- To facilitate the establishment of a regional DNA experts working group to create a shared body of knowledge and skills and build synergies to address common problems and challenges in the Mediterranean region;
- To engage civil society and other stakeholders in promoting access for families of missing migrants and refugees to data reporting tools in the Mediterranean region; and
- To ensure informed participation of families in the process of accounting for missing persons in order to facilitate rule-of-law-based data collection efforts.

### Strategy 2024-2029

#### Areas of action for 2024-2029 will include:

- Enhancing cooperation among countries of origin, transit, and destination;
- Improving scientific capacity, through technical assistance;
- Enhancing cooperation with regional and domestic organizations that can provide expertise to improve the efforts of third countries in accounting for MMRs;
- Promoting joint solutions for data processing and exchange among domestic institutions, and between international and other organizations; and
- Building the capacity of CSOs and families to participate in the process (from enhanced access to reporting tools to informed participation in rule-of-law-based data collection).

ICMP will cooperate with international and other organizations (including, but not limited to, IOM, INTERPOL, ICRC, UNHCR and the EU) to help countries in the Mediterranean region advance data sharing modalities, and to develop an agreed inter-agency solution with regard to data collected by international and other organizations.

Through a set of policy-focused discussions in the context of the Global Forum, ICMP plans to raise awareness about the MMR issue. It will also make use of other international fora for this purpose (for example, the UN General Assembly, the UN Human Rights Council, the INTERPOL General Assembly). The Global Report on Missing Persons will cover this issue with detailed analysis and policy review.

Expected outcomes include the development of a regional process to account for MMRs in accordance with human rights and the rule of law, and the development of the Joint Process as a sustainable policy and technical mechanism. Resource and capacity gaps will be bridged through assistance to domestic authorities in applying international standards of victim identification that rely on DNA, leading to an increase in DNA matching capacity. Capacity-building measures focused on data processing will be undertaken, and a system for processing data on MMRs will be launched, through the development of protocols for sharing key data, with a view to developing shared access to DNA profiles and standardised reference

databases for relevant stakeholders in the Mediterranean region, and an inclusive and participative approach vis-à-vis families. Efforts to locate the missing, including DNA testing, will be conducted in accordance with rule-of-law standards across the Mediterranean region; and CSOs, families and others will participate in the process.

## 7.2. Disaster Victim Identification (DVI)

### Introduction

Man-made and natural disasters can affect any country at any time – and global warming and political instability have together increased the frequency of disasters worldwide. Major disasters today frequently have an international character, where multiple nationalities may be affected by a single event. However, currently no global platform exists which can provide immediately accessible assistance to States when faced with a disaster, and which can work together with, or alleviate the burden of, national institutions that can quickly become overwhelmed in such situations. In the coming years, ICMP aims to develop an agreement with States to establish a Global Disaster Victim Identification Platform (GDVIP), which would utilize ICMP's extensive expertise and advanced scientific techniques and technology to provide such support and assistance.

The GDVIP would constitute a benchmark in Disaster Victim Identification (DVI), setting internationally acceptable standards, protocols, and processes for rapid response in the event of a disaster. The GDVIP will offer States an improved level of preparedness, coordination through a centralized operational structure, and cost efficiency, and will avert duplication of effort. The GDVIP partial agreement would be open to accession by third States upon invitation. By being based on assessed contributions, the GDVIP partial agreement would be a viable and sustainable platform, which would in turn encourage State accession to the partial agreement.

ICMP maintains a high-throughput standing capacity for DNA testing. The ICMP laboratory in

The Hague offers accredited (to the international ISO/IEC 17025 standard) specialized techniques to extract DNA from highly degraded bone samples, and the integrated laboratory management system is coupled with a specialized human identification informatics system. ICMP's overall technical capacity is underpinned by policy frameworks for data processing and protection, and by international partnerships enabling effective operational deployments globally, including partnerships with INTERPOL and domestic agencies charged with responding to disasters, such as the Netherlands Forensic Institute and others.

ICMP began addressing disasters in 2004 following the Southeast Asian Tsunami, and since then it has been involved in disaster identification efforts involving Canada, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cuba, Haiti, Namibia, the Philippines, Thailand, Ukraine, and the US. In October 2013, ICMP deployed a team to provide on-site assistance to the Kenyan authorities in identifying victims of the Westgate shopping mall attack in Nairobi.

### Program objectives

- To provide a global standing capacity to respond effectively and efficiently to large-scale, complex DVI needs;
- To enhance disaster response mechanisms, especially those provided by law enforcement in DVI situations, through training;
- To ensure cost-effective provision of DVI and greater access to DVI among countries affected by disasters; and
- To provide training in DVI responses to law enforcement throughout the world through the Wim Kok Center for Excellence and Learning.

### Strategy 2024-2029

ICMP will work to achieve DVI preparedness while contributing to a platform for DVI operations with other actors, including INTERPOL. It will maintain its international rapid response capacity. Its specific focus will be to improve the scope and level of preparedness, to enhance better coordination mechanisms through a centralized operational structure; to identify means to provide DVI assis-

tance equitably, and to seek cost efficiencies and ensure avoidance of duplication of effort. In order to provide comprehensive assistance when responding to a DVI situation, ICMP's DNA laboratory maintains a minimum DNA profiling surge capacity that can be activated at short notice.

ICMP will support the capacity of law enforcement, first responders and other agencies to deploy quickly and effectively in disaster situations. It will also augment the technical capacity of domestic stakeholders and develop domestic leadership through training.

ICMP will work to ensure that basic elements of DVI are included in disaster planning and preparedness, especially in regard to local disaster response committees.

Families of the missing will be empowered to access and use DNA-led identification methods, including providing data and biological samples securely and without any threat to themselves.

Where necessary, ICMP will secure the participation of family members located in many parts of the world, through the OIC. The OIC will be complemented by open-source android applications in cooperation with mobile telecom operators, permitting almost universal reach in local languages. ICMP will also establish data exchanges with other missing persons reporting platforms, for instance those of INTERPOL, the ICC, the ICRC and social media operators.

Expected outcomes include a standard practice in which official, transparent and effective investigations to account for missing persons are conducted after disasters, the highest standards are maintained in DVI operations, domestic authorities are able to interact effectively with families of the missing and with the public, and families are able to access and use DNA-led identification methods including providing data and biological samples securely in accordance with ICMP data protection standards. ICMP aims to begin developing a multi-lateral agreement on a GDVIP in 2024.

## 7.3. Assistance to Justice

### Introduction

ICMP's assistance to the justice sector has been extensive, in particular in the context of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and domestic trials concerning the wars in the former Yugoslavia, but more recently also with the ICC, the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) and the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD). Much experience has been gained and processes have been developed for ICMP to support international and domestic criminal justice processes in an effective manner. Also, beyond criminal justice processes, judicial and law enforcement institutions are required to conduct effective investigations into the fate of missing persons and the circumstances of their disappearance as part of procedural human rights guarantees, in particular the right to life. ICMP's assistance to the justice sector in the context of criminal justice is one facet of supporting generally a rule-of-law-based approach to the issue of the missing.

### Program objectives

- Provide effective support to justice sector institutions to take the lead in missing persons investigations; and
- Ensure that the standard of work in missing persons investigations conforms to the rule of law, human rights and the requirements of criminal justice processes.

### Strategy 2024-2029

ICMP will support justice sector institutions with the aim of strengthening their capacity to conduct effective investigations regarding missing and disappeared persons. At the international level these efforts will include cooperation agreements with international tribunals and courts, as well as international law enforcement agencies.

At the domestic level, ICMP aims to establish technical agreements and arrangements to bolster the capacities of national prosecutors and investigative judges, as well as law enforcement and forensic investigators. In respect of their international counterparts, domestic support will strengthen the principle of subsidiarity of international investigations, which is particularly important in the context of strengthening the acceptance of international courts such as the ICC. International courts in particular often lack adequate forensic investigative resources. ICMP's cooperation with international courts will improve not only their investigative capacities, but also contribute directly to advancing domestic investigations.

Through the Assistance to Justice Program, ICMP will provide guidance to ad hoc investigative engagement at the request of courts and prosecutors or specialized investigative mechanisms, such as the IIMM for Syria, the IIMM for Myanmar, and UNITAD in Iraq.

Expected outcomes include the development and deployment of enhanced investigative techniques, increased capacity of international and domestic justice sector institutions to lead missing persons investigations, ICMP provision of analytical assessments relative to specific events or alleged crimes at the request of courts, and ICMP provision of expert witness statements and testimony in criminal justice processes.

