



QKRMT Qendra Kosovare për Rehabilitimin
e të Mbijetuarve të Torturës
KRCT The Kosova Rehabilitation
Center for Torture Victims



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

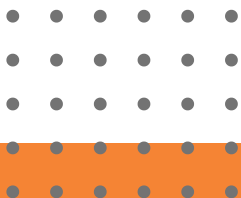


This publication was supported by:

**THE
SIGRID
RAUSING
TRUST**

Table of Contents

Message from the Executive Director	02	Human Rights and Advocacy Program Overview	13
Vision, Mission and Values	03	Publications	15
KRCT 25th Anniversary	04	Memorial Day for Survivors of Sexual Violence During the Last War in Kosovo	16
Success stories of 2024: A victory for Survivors: The Right to Double Pension	07	2024 in Focus	18
Free Health Insurance: Another Victory for Survivors	07	Networking: National Level International Level	27
Services and Achievements: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support services (MHPSS)	08	Donor & Partner Recognition	28
Long-Term Support	10		
Advocacy and Human Rights Impact	11		
Programs & Activities Rehabilitation Program Overview	12		



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Partners, Supporters, and Friends,

As we look back on 2024, we do so with profound gratitude and reflection. This year has once again highlighted the unwavering resilience of survivors and the steadfast commitment of our team at the Kosova Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims (KRCT). In a world still grappling with the long-term impacts of conflict and trauma, we remain deeply committed to our mission: to advocate for the rights of survivors, to support their healing, and to build systems that uphold dignity, accountability, and justice.

2024 was a landmark year in many ways. Our sustained efforts in advocacy and partnership culminated in two major achievements: the recognition of dual pensions for survivors of wartime sexual violence and the adoption of the Law on Health Insurance, which secures free healthcare for these survivors. These are not merely policy changes, they are significant steps toward justice, restoring a measure of security and recognition that survivors have long deserved.

Beyond these milestones, we expanded access to psychosocial support, strengthened our legal aid services, and deepened our work on community mobilization and stigma reduction. Each initiative was grounded in the voices and needs of survivors, who continue to be the heart of our work. Their courage is our compass.

This year also marked a deeply meaningful moment in KRCT's journey, our 25th anniversary. For a quarter of a century, we have walked alongside survivors, witnessed their strength, and fought for systemic change. It is a history built on trust, persistence, and collaboration. We are proud of the progress we have made, and we are more determined than ever to continue advancing the rights of civilian victims of war and survivors of torture.

None of this would be possible without you, our partners, supporters, and friends. Your belief in our mission, your solidarity, and your continued support have made every step forward possible. To our dedicated staff, who bring expertise, compassion, and resolve to their work every day: thank you for making KRCT what it is.

As we move into the future, we do so with a clear vision and an unshakable commitment, to ensure that every survivor is seen, heard, and supported. Together, we will continue to build a society where dignity, justice, and healing are not just ideals, but realities.

With sincere appreciation,

Feride Rushiti

Executive Director



Vision

A society without torture, where every survivor of violence is treated with dignity, finds support and lives free from stigma.

Mission

Empowering survivors and transforming them into active citizens by helping them cope with trauma and contributing to the development of an institutional system of support, recognition and accountability.

Core Values

We work with a deep commitment to human dignity, believing that every person deserves respect and humane treatment, without exception.



Empathy and Solidarity

We are guided by empathy and solidarity, standing by survivors and building a more sensitive and united society.



Justice and accountability

We believe in justice and accountability, where every act of violence must be addressed and no violation should go unpunished.



Inclusion and Equality

We promote inclusion and equality, opposing discrimination and building a society that accepts and respects all people in their diversity.





KRCT 25th Anniversary

International Conference on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: “Advancing Rights, Changing Lives of CRSV survivors”

To mark its 25th anniversary, KRCT organized the International Conference on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, bringing together survivors, institutional representatives, civil society organizations, and international experts. The conference served as a critical platform for addressing justice policies, rehabilitation, and survivor-centered approaches, fostering essential discussions on strengthening support mechanisms and ensuring accountability for conflict-related sexual violence.

The event featured several key panel discussions, each addressing crucial aspects of survivor rights and transitional justice:

Survivor Engagement: Challenges in Post-Conflict Societies

This panel underscored the importance of survivor-led initiatives and their role in shaping policies and public awareness. Key topics included stigma, trauma, re-traumatization, access to justice, and the need for long-term psychological and legal support. The discussion also highlighted success stories of survivor-led movements, demonstrating their impact on policies and community-building.

Comprehensive Care for Survivors: Best Practices in Support Systems

Panelists explored integrated approaches to psychosocial, medical, economic, and legal assistance for survivors. Discussions focused on multidisciplinary rehabilitation models, access to healthcare, and economic empowerment, emphasizing the importance of trauma-informed care and sustainable support structures that help survivors regain independence and stability.

Collaboration Between Civil Society and Institutions: Addressing Survivor Needs

This discussion centered on partnerships between institutions and civil society organizations in supporting survivors. The conversation highlighted policy gaps, financial sustainability, and the effectiveness of survivor-centered approaches. Panelists emphasized the need for better coordination between legal, healthcare, and social services to provide comprehensive support.

Pathways to Justice and Accountability: Overcoming Legal Barriers

The panel examined challenges in prosecuting sexual violence as a war crime, addressing barriers to justice, accountability gaps, and the need for survivor-sensitive legal frameworks. Discussions explored the role of international legal standards, the impact of landmark cases, and strategies to improve survivor access to justice.

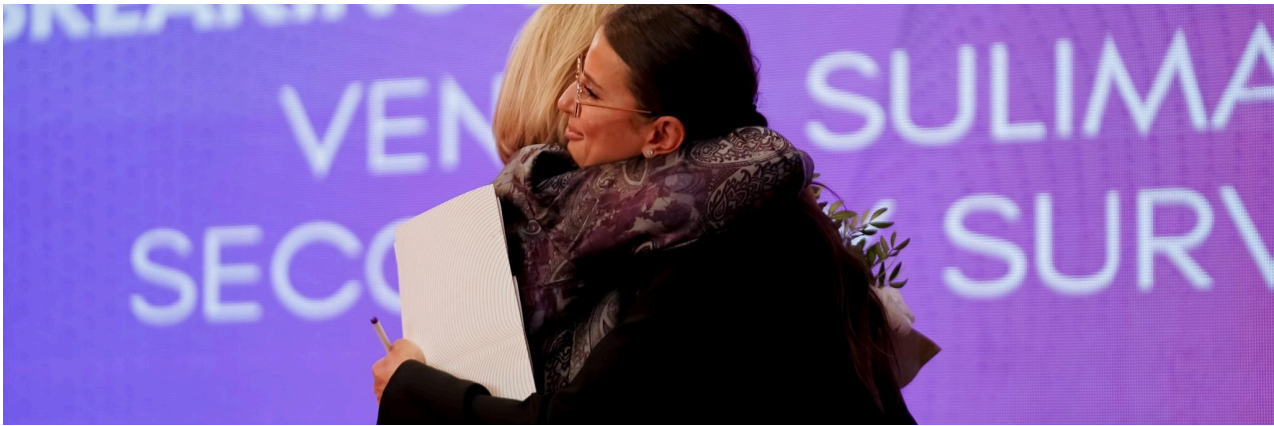
Media, Art, and Public Discourse: The Power of Storytelling in Advocacy

This panel focused on how journalism, media, and art contribute to breaking stigma, raising awareness, and amplifying survivor voices. Discussions covered ethical storytelling, survivor-centered reporting, and the use of creative expression as a tool for healing and advocacy.

Commitment to Justice and Healing

This conference was more than a reflection on KRCT's 25-year journey—it was a call to action for policymakers, civil society, and global partners to strengthen survivor rights, ensure reparations, and build a future where conflict-related sexual violence is prevented and justice is served. KRCT remains unwavering in its mission to advance rights, provide healing, and empower survivors.





Impact Highlights

Success stories of 2024

A Victory for Survivors: The Right to Double Pension

KRCT has achieved a significant milestone in the legal representation of survivors of wartime sexual violence in Kosovo. In an unprecedented victory, the Basic Court in Prishtina – Department for Administrative Affairs has recognized the right of three survivors to receive two pensions: one as survivors of wartime sexual violence and the other as a basic age pension (including the contributory pension).

This decision marks a crucial step in ensuring justice and equality for survivors, eliminating bureaucratic barriers that previously forced them to choose only one pension. The legal proceedings, initiated by KRCT in 2021, reflect its commitment to providing free legal assistance and guaranteeing the rights of survivors in accordance with the law.

Based on this important precedent, KRCT calls on the Government of Kosovo and the Ministry of Finance, Labour, and Transfers to regulate this issue through an administrative act, enabling survivors to receive both pensions as soon as they meet the legal requirements, without having to endure years of court proceedings. This achievement reaffirms KRCT's dedication to supporting and empowering survivors in society.

Free Health Insurance: Another Victory for Survivors

As a result to KRCT's continuous advocacy efforts, the Assembly of Kosovo passed the Law on Mandatory Health Care Insurance in December 2024. This law includes KRCT's proposal to provide state-funded health insurance for survivors of wartime sexual violence in Kosovo, without any conditions.

This success is the result of relentless work, including ongoing meetings with relevant ministries, members of the Kosovo Assembly, and the preparation of advocacy letters addressing this urgent issue.

The recognition of the right to free health insurance is a crucial step toward improving the well-being of survivors and ensuring their access to essential medical services. This victory highlights the importance of continuous advocacy and institutional collaboration in securing the rights and dignity of survivors of wartime sexual violence in Kosovo.

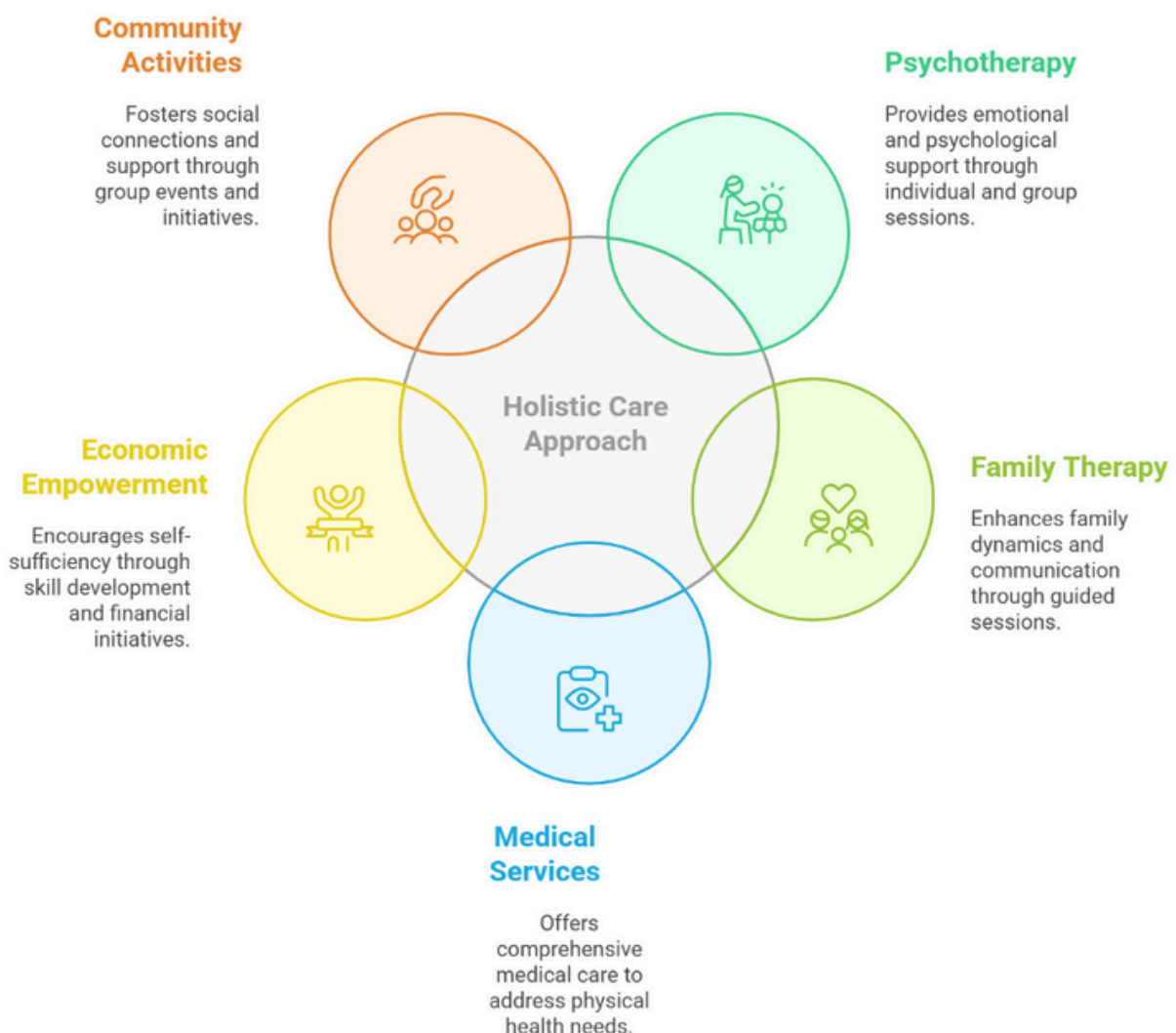
KRCT remains committed to its mission of empowering, protecting, and promoting the rights of survivors, ensuring that their voices are heard and respected at all institutional levels.

Services and Achievements

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS)

KRCT provided beneficiaries with a holistic approach to care, ensuring comprehensive support for their psychological, social, and emotional well-being. This approach included:

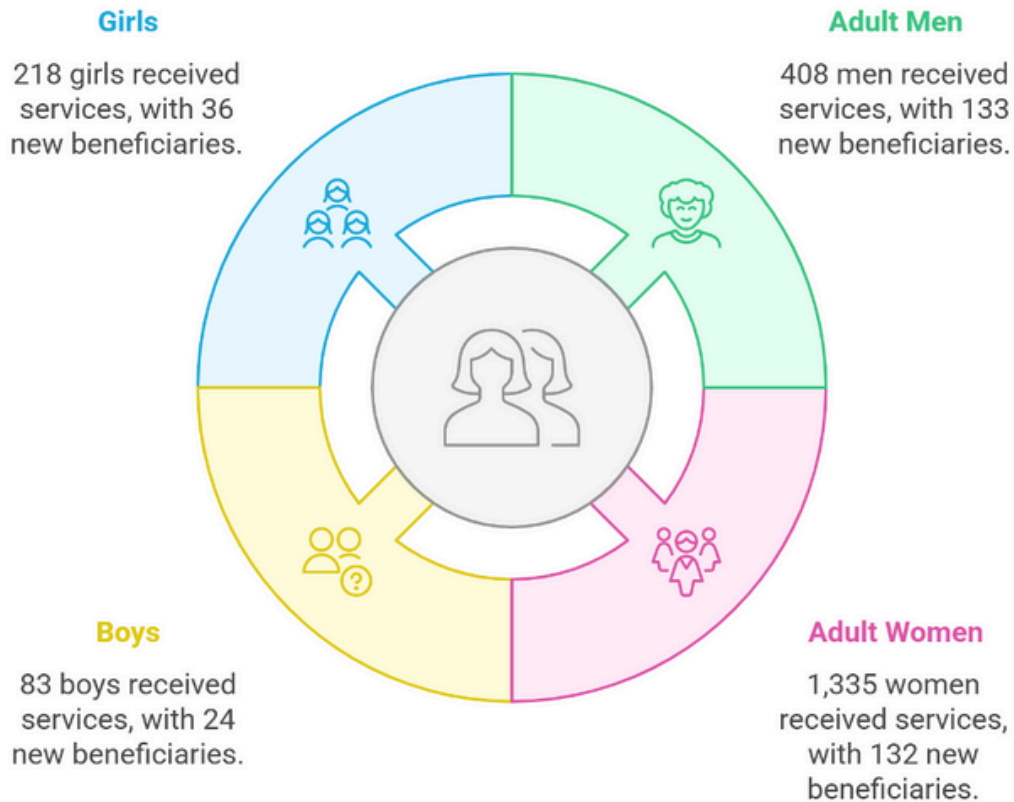
KRCT Comprehensive Support Strategies for Holistic Well-Being



KRCT served a total of **2,044 beneficiaries***, including **379 new beneficiaries** who accessed services for the first time.

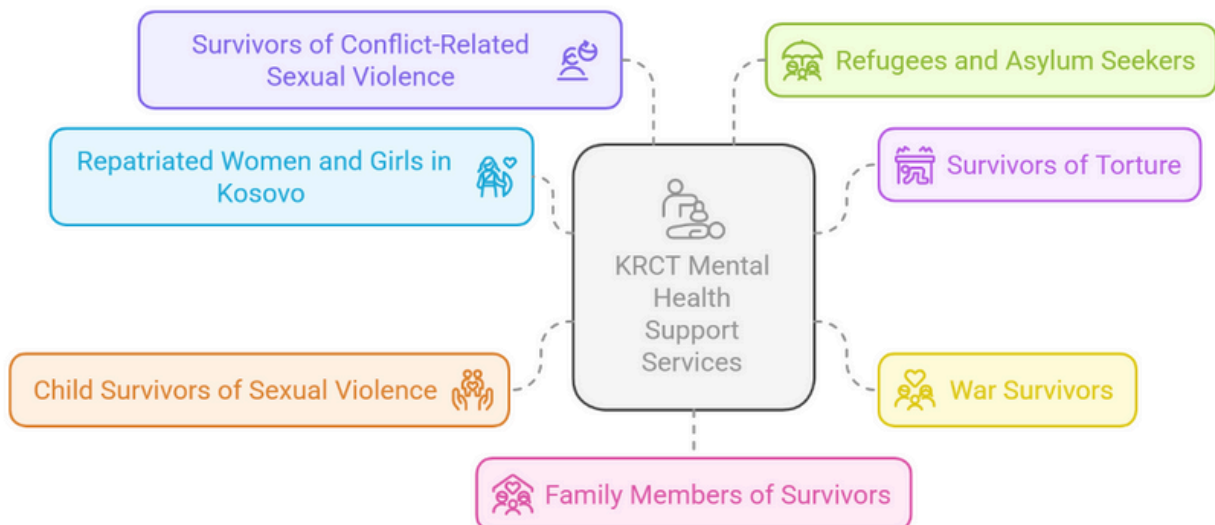
*An individual who receives more than one service is counted separately for each service received (for example, an individual who received individual therapy and participated in a psychoeducational group, when these services are separate in the organization). On the other hand, an individual who receives the same service multiple times should only be counted once (for example, someone who participates in 5 individual therapy sessions during the reporting period would not be counted as 5 beneficiaries but would be counted as only 1 beneficiary).

Beneficiary Breakdown



KRCT provided tailored support to:

KRCT Mental Health Support Services



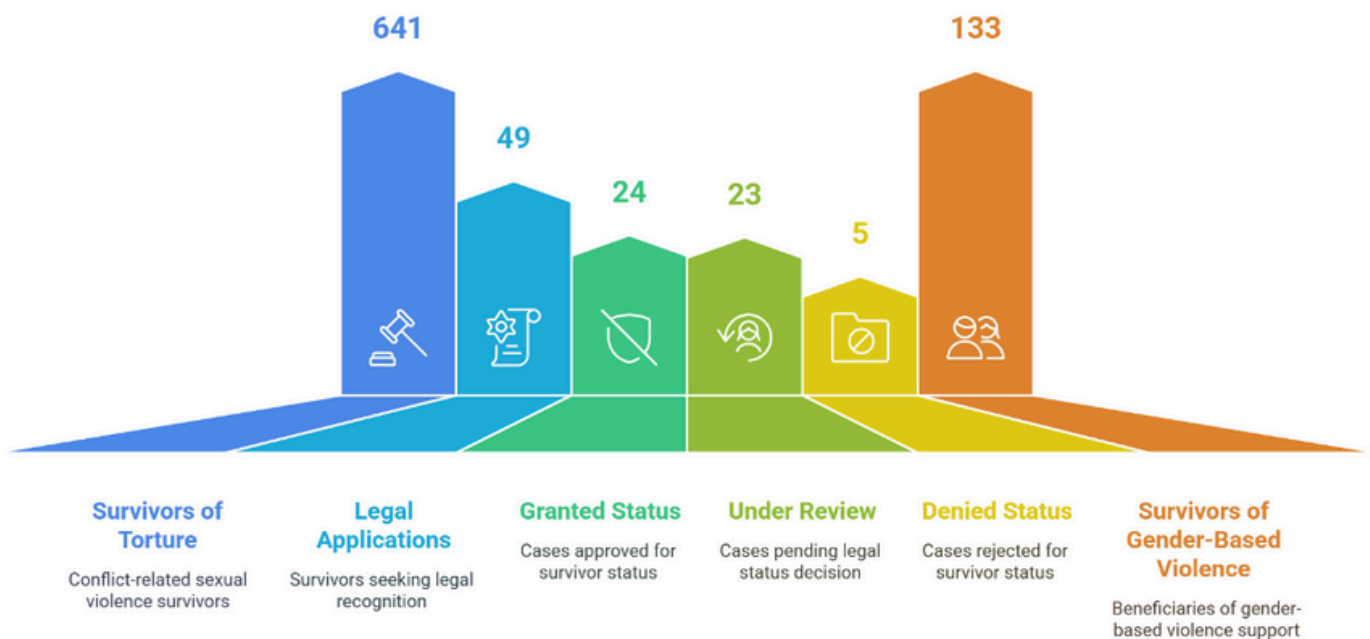
Long-term Support



Among these beneficiaries, KRCT provided sustained assistance to:

- Survivors of torture, primarily survivors of conflict-related sexual violence: 641 beneficiaries
- Survivors of gender-based violence: 133 beneficiaries

KRCT Beneficiary Support Overview

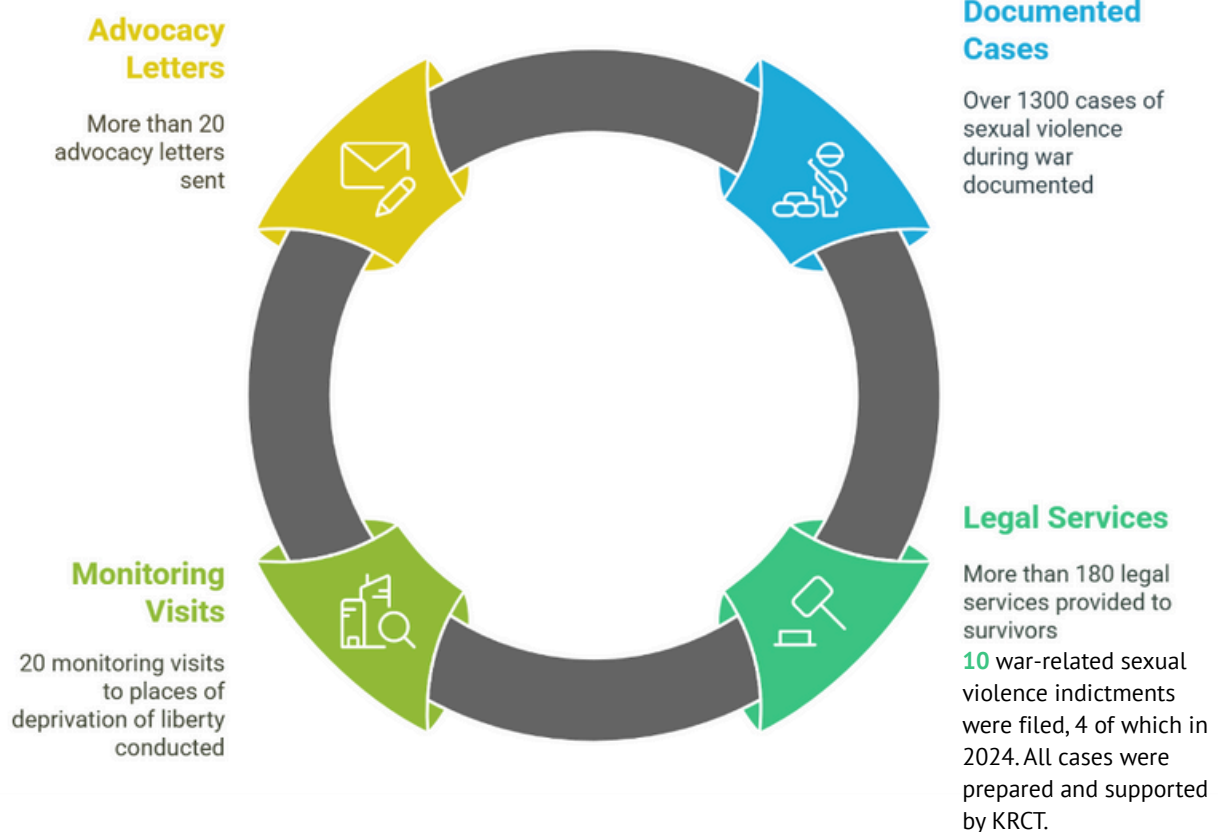




Advocacy & Human Rights Impact



Overview of Advocacy and Human Rights Impact

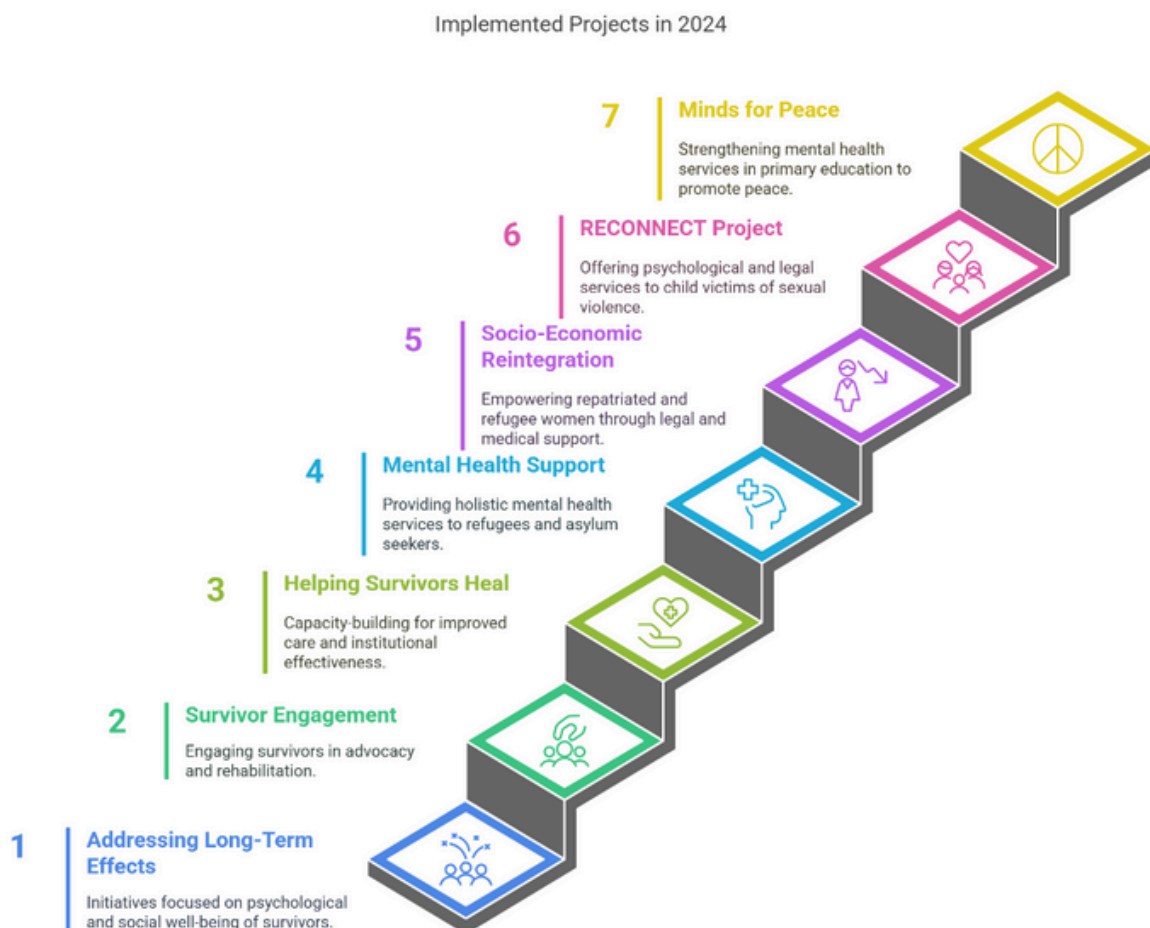


Programs & Activities

Rehabilitation Program Overview

The Rehabilitation Program provides comprehensive rehabilitative services through an integrated multidisciplinary approach to address the health and psychosocial issues of survivors of torture and trauma, as well as their family members. Rehabilitation services include both psychological and physical rehabilitation.

Psychological rehabilitation is provided by a psychiatrist, several psychologists, and social workers. Physical rehabilitation is conducted by a general practitioner, offering beneficiaries medical advice, medication, and referrals to appropriate healthcare institutions based on their needs.



Human Rights and Advocacy Program Overview

This program oversees, coordinates, and strategizes initiatives aimed at promoting human rights and freedoms, with a strong focus on safeguarding the rights of individuals deprived of liberty and survivors of war. It operates through four key sub-programs: Monitoring of places of deprivation of liberty, Free legal aid, Advocacy, and Transitional Justice.



Upholding Human Rights in Correctional Institutions

Annual Conference

KRCT held its annual conference titled “Human Rights in Correctional Institutions – 2023”, where it presented key findings and recommendations from its annual monitoring report. The event focused on critical issues such as the lack of adequate treatment and facilities for individuals with mental health conditions, ongoing challenges in addressing drug addiction, and the persistence of smuggling in prisons. Despite these challenges, a generally positive dynamic between inmates and correctional staff was noted. The conference also featured the screening of KRCT’s short documentary “Journey in Seeking Justice”, which portrays the psychosocial and legal support provided to a young man sexually abused in prison and the broader obstacles in securing justice. KRCT reaffirmed its commitment to collaborating with institutional mechanisms to enhance the protection of human rights within Kosovo’s correctional system.



Publications

In 2024, KRCT published **13 publications** in various categories, including research studies, reports, policy documents, survivor testimonies, and methodological manuals. These publications are of particular significance as they are based on empirical research and practical observations. All publications are available as electronic copies at KRCT and are accessible to university educators, researchers, and the general public.

These publications serve as essential resources for policymakers, legal professionals, service providers, and advocacy groups in their efforts to support war survivors and uphold human rights.



Memorial Day for Survivors of Sexual Violence During the Last War in Kosovo

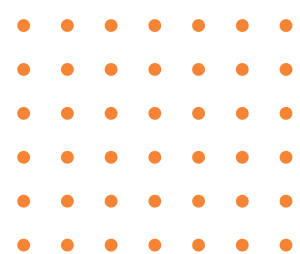
On April 14, KRCT organized a press conference to commemorate the Memorial Day for Survivors of Sexual Violence during the last war in Kosovo.

The Executive Director of KRCT, Feride Rushiti, emphasized the significance of this day in fostering a more supportive environment where survivors of wartime sexual violence have access to justice, healing, and rehabilitation. She also highlighted the April 14 campaign, which has gained the support of globally influential figures, including Dr. Denis Mukwege, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, international human rights activists, President Vjosa Osmani, Prime Minister Albin Kurti, Speaker of the Assembly Glauk Konjufca, ministers, MPs, civil society activists, as well as individuals from the fields of culture and the arts.





2024 IN FOCUS:



KRCT'S EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN SYSTEMS FOR JUSTICE, HEALING, AND SURVIVOR EMPOWERMENT

Strengthening Institutional Partnerships for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Children Affected by Sexual Violence in Kosovo

In 2024 through a series of Memoranda of Understanding signed with local institutions in Prishtina, Ferizaj, Gjilan, Mitrovica, and the national Association of Social Work Centers, the Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims has significantly expanded its institutional partnerships to strengthen the rehabilitation and reintegration of children affected by sexual violence. These collaborations aim to improve the efficiency and coordination of responses to sexual violence against minors by ensuring trauma-informed care, legal assistance, and a continuous, supportive environment for healing and empowerment. The agreements also include the development of professional capacities of social workers, research in social protection, and advocacy for survivors' rights.





Amplifying Survivors' Voices

Institutional Engagement for Justice and Recognition of Wartime Sexual Violence Survivors in Kosovo



In a series of high-level advocacy events, survivors of wartime sexual violence in Kosovo—both men and women—engaged directly with national and international actors to present their challenges and demands. In an informal discussion with Foreign Minister Donika Gërvalla-Schwarz and UK Ambassador Nicholas Abbott, male survivors emphasized the lack of recognition as civilian war victims, including the absence of victim ID cards which hinders access to legal rights and benefits. Minister Gërvalla-Schwarz pledged to convey these demands to relevant ministries. Survivors expressed heartfelt gratitude to Ambassador Abbott for his continued support and his acknowledgment of their courage, as captured in the book *"Unheard Voices."* In follow-up meetings with the Ministers of Health, Justice, and Finance, survivors reiterated their demands for equal access to public health services, legal recognition through victim ID cards, and the right to double pensions—receiving commitments for concrete steps. Meanwhile, in a separate empowering encounter supported by the British Embassy, women survivors met with the Special Prosecutor and War Crimes Police Unit, who pledged full confidentiality and support for legal proceedings. Survivors expressed readiness to testify, marking a critical step toward justice. Additionally, during a meeting with British Foreign Secretary Lord Cameron, KRCT representatives highlighted the ongoing challenges of stigma, the need for sustained psychosocial support, and the importance of unhindered access to justice for all survivors.

Building Sensitivity and Justice

Strengthening Institutional Responses and Survivor Engagement in Kosovo

In celebration of its 25th anniversary, the Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT) organized a series of impactful activities aimed at strengthening institutional responses and survivor engagement in the aftermath of wartime sexual violence. In partnership with the Academy of Justice and KOMF, KRCT trained 43 justice professionals—including judges, prosecutors, and police—on trauma-informed approaches to cases involving children and survivors of sexual violence.



A separate workshop focused on empowering justice sector professionals to support wartime survivors in accessing justice, while police investigators were trained on sensitive and respectful investigative procedures. A dedicated seminar for journalists promoted ethical reporting, guided by Nadia Murad's principles, encouraging empathetic interviewing and responsible storytelling. Additionally, KRCT hosted a two-day regional workshop on “Engaging Survivors of War-Related Sexual Violence,” bringing together representatives from IRCT Denmark, Georgetown University, and regional/local organizations. The workshop fostered knowledge exchange and advocacy strategies, resulting in the initiation of a regional platform for the joint inclusion of survivors in advocacy and rehabilitation efforts.

Marking the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict and World Refugee Day

Art as Testimony: Honoring Refugees and Survivors Through Symbolic Installations

To mark two globally significant days –the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict (June 19) and World Refugee Day (June 20) –the Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT) participated in two powerful events using art as a medium of remembrance, empathy, and advocacy. In Pristina, KRCT and UNHCR Kosovo showcased the installation by artist Astrit Blakçori, symbolizing the refugee experience as a moment suspended between fear and hope, identity and loss, as people cross borders in search of safety. The event, attended by institutional representatives, diplomats, civil society, and refugees themselves, served as a heartfelt reminder of Kosovo's commitment to inclusivity and human dignity. Meanwhile, in The Hague, KRCT joined activists and survivors at the opening of “Thinking of You” by Alketa Xhafa-Mripa—an installation first displayed in 2015 in honor of the 20,000 wartime survivors of sexual violence. With Nobel Laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege opening the event, and in collaboration with the Dutch Embassy, Mukwege Foundation, SEMA Network, and the city of The Hague, the exhibition served as a symbolic act of global solidarity and collective remembrance for survivors everywhere.



Strengthening Global Solidarity and Partnerships for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

Nobel Laureate Nadia Murad Visits KRCT

On the occasion of KRCT's 25th anniversary, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and human rights activist Nadia Murad, together with the President of the Republic of Kosovo, Ms. Vjosa Osmani, visited KRCT. Dr. Feride Rushiti, KRCT's Executive Director, welcomed them and shared a comprehensive overview of KRCT's two-and-a-half decades of work in rehabilitating and advocating for survivors of wartime sexual violence. During her visit, Ms. Murad met with survivors treated by KRCT and Medica Kosova, acknowledging their pain and resilience. In a powerful speech, she emphasized the crucial role of state and societal support in affirming survivors' dignity and shifting the shame from victims to those who failed to protect them. A survivor of conflict-related sexual violence herself, Murad praised KRCT's achievements and reaffirmed her commitment to advocating for survivors globally.



Throughout 2024, KRCT had the honor of hosting a wide range of international delegations and high-profile visitors, reaffirming its role as a key actor in the global fight against conflict-related sexual violence. Visitors included representatives from the U.S. Department of State, Georgetown University, and the U.S. and UK new Ambassador in Prishtina, the Head of the UK's Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI), as well as Dr. Monika Hauser of medica mondiale. Delegations from Iraq and Finland, including government officials and civil society partners, also visited KRCT to exchange experiences and explore collaboration. These visits offered opportunities to present KRCT's 25-year legacy in rehabilitation, advocacy, and research—particularly on intergenerational trauma and stigma—and to discuss efforts to expand survivor recognition and remove legal barriers. Guests engaged with survivors, recognized the impact of KRCT's work, and expressed commitment to joint efforts toward justice, healing, and empowerment across borders.



New Milestones in 2024

Expanding Justice, Mental Health, and Family Support for Survivors

In 2024, KRCT introduced several groundbreaking initiatives to strengthen justice, mental health, and family support for survivors of war-related trauma. As part of its 25th anniversary, KRCT promoted the launch of the Legal Aid Clinic, aiming to improve access to justice for survivors of wartime sexual violence and other vulnerable groups in Kosovo. The event featured a panel discussion with key actors in the legal field and reinforced the critical role of NGOs in providing trauma-informed legal support. KRCT also launched the “Minds for Peace” project, an ambitious initiative to improve mental health services in Kosovo’s schools. This project, supported by USAID and the Rotary Foundation, equips school psychologists with specialized trauma-focused training like EMDR, fostering a safe and healing environment for children. In another major step, KRCT presented two new family-focused manuals: one on Family Therapy to address trauma’s impact on family dynamics, and another on Family Support offering practical tools for self-care and psycho-education. These manuals are essential tools for professionals working with families affected by war trauma, reinforcing KRCT’s holistic and forward-thinking approach to healing and justice.



Advancing Survivor Rights on Human Rights Day: Legal Milestone Achieved

On International Human Rights Day, KRCT had the honor of hosting members of the Kosovo Assembly's Committee on Health and Social Welfare for a powerful visit dedicated to advancing the rights of wartime sexual violence survivors. Executive Director Feride Rushiti presented KRCT's mission and long-standing work in rehabilitation and advocacy, highlighting the importance of free and unconditional access to healthcare for survivors. The Committee engaged directly with survivors, learning about their ongoing needs and challenges. A key outcome of the visit was the Committee's formal acceptance of KRCT's proposed legal amendments, which will guarantee survivors full access to health services free of charge. This legislative breakthrough—achieved symbolically on Human Rights Day—marks a critical step toward translating human rights principles into concrete protections. It underscores the impact of sustained advocacy and the power of institutional collaboration in restoring justice and dignity to survivors.



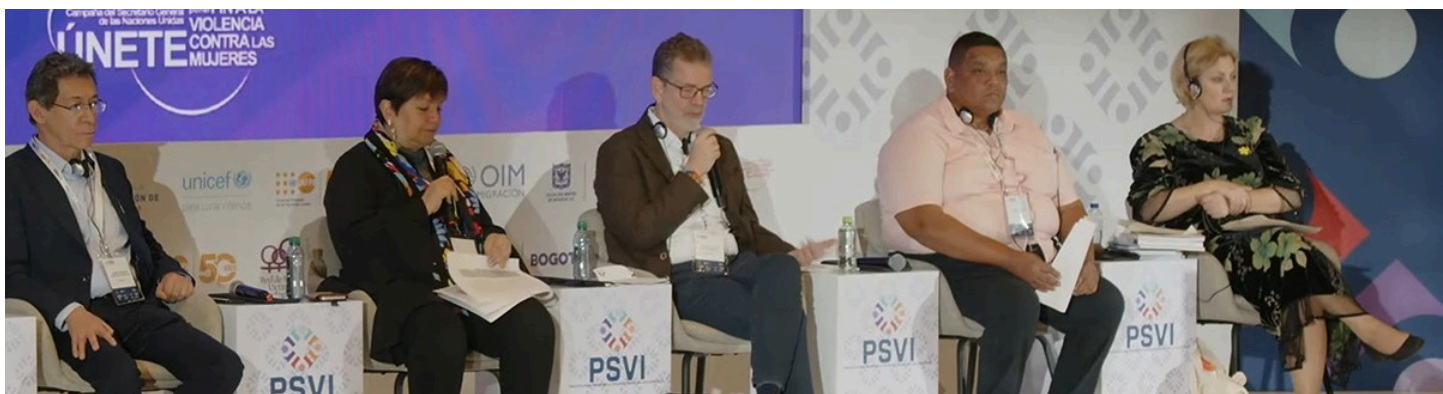
"Handicrafts of Courage" Exhibit Showcased at U.S. Embassy

As part of the global campaign **"16 Days of Activism,"** KRCT had the honor of presenting the "Handicrafts of Courage" exhibition at the U.S. Embassy in Kosovo. The exhibit featured powerful handmade works created by survivors of wartime sexual violence, highlighting their strength, resilience, and journey toward empowerment. This moving display not only celebrated their creativity but also served as a powerful act of resistance against stigma. KRCT expressed deep gratitude to the U.S. Embassy for its continued partnership and support in advancing the rights and visibility of survivors.



KRCT at the 4th International PSVI Conference: Sharing Kosovo's Experience on Health and Justice for Survivors

The Executive Director of the Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT), Dr. Feride Rushiti, has participated in the 4th International Conference of the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) in Bogotá, Colombia. As a panelist, she contributed to the panel on **Reparative Justice in Healthcare**, where she presents Kosovo's experience in addressing trauma and providing health support for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. Dr. Rushiti highlights effective practices and lessons learned in building a survivor-centered, trauma-informed healthcare response. Alongside her, Venesa Sulemani shares her powerful personal testimony as a secondary survivor of wartime sexual violence in Kosovo, bringing forward the voices and resilience of survivors in the global conversation on justice and healing.



KRCT Recognized for Supporting Journalists from Ukraine and Afghanistan sheltered in Kosovo

The Association of Journalists of Kosovo (AJK) awarded a recognition to the Kosovo Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims (KRCT) and its Executive Director, Dr. Feride Rushiti, for their continuous support to journalists in residence in Kosovo. KRCT has played a key role in organizing educational activities, including seminars for Ukrainian and Afghan journalists focusing on addressing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence.





Networking

Networking at National Level

At the national level, KRCT is the initiator of the national campaign “Be my voice”, within the framework of which it has founded the platform Be my voice, which is a coalition of NGOs (KRCT, Center for the Promotion Women Rights, Medica Kosova and Medica Gjakova). This Platform aims to represent and advance the rights of survivors of sexual violence from the wartime in Kosovo. As such, the KRCT has been widely approached by various groups of women who have experienced all kinds of violence; providing opportunities to address and solve their problems – professionally supported by professional women. In addition, KRCT actively participates in the Coalition of NGOs for the Protection of Children’s Rights in Kosovo (KOMF); Kosovo Women’s Network (KWG); and the CiviKos Platform.

Networking at International Level

At the international level, KRCT has a full accreditation at the International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture (IRCT) as well as a member of the IRCT Council; The Global Network of Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence in Wartime (SEMA), the Holistic Radicalization Prevention Initiative (HOPE), the International Detention Coalition, the European Prison Litigation Network (EPLN) and Amna Refugee Healing Network.

Donor and Partner Recognition

At the Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT), our mission to support survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and other war victims is made possible by the generosity and commitment of our donors and partners. We extend our deepest gratitude to the institutions, foundations, and individuals who provide financial support, as well as the legal, psychosocial, medical, academic, and community-based organizations that collaborate with us to ensure justice, dignity, and healing for survivors.

Your support is not just financial—it is a statement of solidarity and a catalyst for change. Together, we have secured legal recognition for CRSV survivors, implemented trauma-informed legal aid, and pioneered psychosocial programs addressing intergenerational trauma. KRCT remains committed to transparency, accountability, and collaboration as we continue this vital work. Thank you for standing with us in the fight for justice and healing.

**THE
SIGRID
RAUSING
TRUST**



British Embassy
Pristina



irct

International Rehabilitation
Council for Torture Victims



CFLI/FCIL
Fondo Canadá para
Iniciativas Locales



**Deaconess
Foundation**



Federal Foreign Office





KRCT

Hamëz Jashari street, 16b/2

10000 Pristina, Kosovo

Tel: +383 38 243 707

E-mail: info@krct.org

web: www.krct.org



QKRMT-KRCT

Qendra Kosovare për Rehabilitimin
e të Mbijetuarve të Torturës

The Kosova Rehabilitation
Center for Torture Victims