

2024 Impact Report

25 years

**of Justice,
Truth & Voice**



Cristosal

Human Rights

A Letter

From Our Executive Director and Board President

Dear Friends,

As we mark **25 years of Cristosal**, we reflect not only on how far we've come—but on the extraordinary resolve it has taken to get here: an unwavering commitment to justice, truth, and voice, even in the hardest moments. **This has been one of the hardest.**

In early 2025, US foreign aid cuts significantly impacted our budget. Months later, the Salvadoran government passed the Foreign Agents Law—designed to criminalize dissent, delegitimize human rights organizations, and consolidate unchecked power. Two days before its approval, our Anti-Corruption Director, Ruth López, was arbitrarily arrested and remains unjustly detained.

In El Salvador, mass arbitrary detentions have become routine, and due process has all but disappeared. Earlier this year, U.S. authorities deported over 250 Venezuelan migrants directly into Salvadoran prisons—without evidence, legal counsel, or contact with their families. Cristosal is accompanying 152 of those families. These are not isolated events; they reflect a broader authoritarian shift that puts anyone defending justice at risk.

In July, we made the painful but necessary decision to suspend operations in El Salvador—not as a retreat from our mission, but in direct response to escalating repression, the collapse of judicial independence, and the targeting of human rights defenders. With no legal guarantees and constant threats, continuing work inside the country would have endangered our team and the people we accompany.

The first half of this year has tested us financially, strategically, and personally. Yet Cristosal remains strong and independent. We are reorganizing, rebuilding, and finding new ways to accompany those defending their rights in Central America. Our mission has not changed—if anything, its urgency has only grown.

This impact report is not a typical annual review. It commemorates a quarter century of work—celebrating the victories, honoring the struggle, and recommitting to the road ahead.

Today, our work is grounded in three pillars:

- We pursue justice through legal advocacy and strategic litigation.
- We preserve truth through documentation, forensic research, and public accountability.
- We protect voice by standing with those who refuse to be silenced.

These pillars are not just what we do -- they define who we are. Cristosal began as a small organization in El Salvador. Today, we are a regional leader in human rights, working across El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. We walk alongside displaced families, victims of abuses seeking justice, and human rights defenders—those who have not given up, and neither will we.

As we look ahead to the next 25 years, we do so with courage and with conviction, but we cannot do this alone.

Your partnership is essential. The need is urgent. And our resolve is strong.

Thank you for standing with us as we write the next chapter of Cristosal's story—one of resilience, impact, and unwavering defense of human dignity.

With gratitude and hope,



Noah Bullock
Noah Bullock
Executive Director



David Holiday
David Holiday
President, Board of Directors

August 2025

Cristosal at a Glance

Where We Work



El Salvador



Guatemala



Honduras

25 years of Impact



11,736

people directly protected
across the region
in the past decade



60+

protection
networks
active



50+

strategic
litigation
cases



1,200+

cases of legal, psychological,
and social assistance



100+

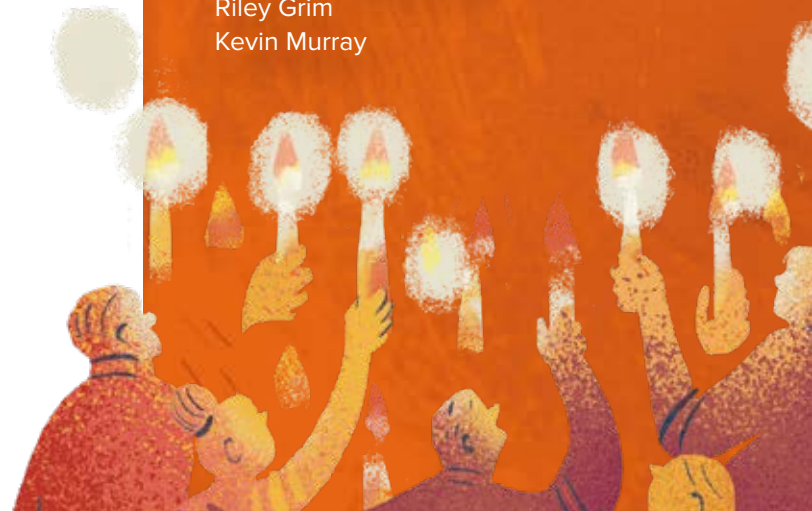
leaders supported

2024 Board of Directors

David Holiday, President
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Santana Alvarado, Secretary
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Beth McFadyen, Governance Officer
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The Rev. Bob Wilson, Board Member
Clare Gibson Nangle, Board Member
Hannah Odell, Board Member

Welcome 2025 New Members

The Rev. Joshua Case
Riley Grim
Kevin Murray



A Regional Force:

A Timeline of Impact and Growth

2000

Cristosal is founded

Born from the vision of Episcopal clergy and lay leaders, Cristosal begins its work in El Salvador, grounded in a commitment to human rights and faith-based justice.



2010

A New Chapter of Leadership and Vision

Cristosal launches its first strategic plan, marking a pivotal step in shaping its programming and identity as a regional human rights organization.



2006

First legal cases defending victims of violence

Cristosal initiates strategic litigation to support victims of violence and challenge systemic impunity in El Salvador.



2014

Launch of the Protection Program

In response to rising internal displacement, Cristosal begins offering protection services, including emergency shelter, legal assistance, and psychosocial support.

2016

Adoption of a community-based protection model

Cristosal advances a durable solutions approach, focusing on rights-based strategies, social support networks, and community leadership development.



2018

Expansion to Guatemala and Honduras

Cristosal opens offices in Guatemala and Honduras, extending its regional mission to address forced displacement and growing authoritarianism across Central America.



2017

“Ruta de Atención Integral” is formalized

Cristosal establishes the Ruta de Atención Integral (RAI), a comprehensive care model combining legal aid, psychosocial support, and livelihood assistance for displaced individuals.



2020

El Salvador passes landmark displacement law

After years of sustained advocacy, the Salvadoran Legislative Assembly approves the Ley Especial para la Protección de Personas Desplazadas Internamente—a milestone achievement led by Cristosal.

2020

First report on the human rights situation of returnees in Guatemala

Cristosal publishes its inaugural report on the conditions and rights violations faced by returnees, spotlighting a growing crisis.



2021

Evaluation of Honduras' response to Hurricanes Eta and Iota

Cristosal conducts a comprehensive assessment of the Honduran government's handling of the humanitarian emergency caused by the 2020 hurricanes.



2021

Launch of forensic and anti-corruption initiatives

Cristosal establishes a forensic analysis unit and intensifies legal action against corruption in Guatemala and El Salvador.



2022

Response to El Salvador's State of Exception

Cristosal provides legal representation and documents abuses as the Salvadoran government detains tens of thousands without due process under emergency decrees.

2023

San Andrés death squad case goes to public hearing

Cristosal initiates strategic litigation to support victims of violence and challenge systemic impunity in El Salvador.



2025

Expansion of our community-based protection model

Cristosal expands its protection model beyond Central America, launching a legal registry and response system for Venezuelan migrants detained under El Salvador's repressive security regime.



2024

Response to El Salvador's State of Exception

Cristosal publishes a landmark investigation identifying 10 key patterns of corruption, based on dozens of legal cases filed by its anti-corruption team led by Ruth López.



Justice, Truth, Voice:

A Three Pillar Approach

Cristosal's work is built on a powerful foundation: Justice, Truth, and Voice. These three pillars shape every legal case we pursue, every person we support, and every corrupt system we challenge. They represent not just strategies—but a relentless commitment to dignity, accountability, and lasting change. Across Central America, these principles come to life through courageous individuals and communities who refuse to be silenced. This section highlights just a few of the many lives transformed, rights defended, and voices elevated over the past 25 years— and the work still to come.

Justice

"When my sister was arrested and lost her baby in prison, we were terrified and alone. Cristosal was the only organization that stayed with us—protecting us, supporting us, and helping us believe that justice was still possible."

— Cindy, Dina's sister. Dina was unjustly imprisoned under El Salvador's State of Exception. Her baby died while she was in custody. Cristosal fought for her release and supports her family's ongoing search for justice.

"I didn't know we had the right to a lawyer. They taught us about our rights, how to talk to people, and how to express ourselves. Now, we feel confident in ourselves."

— Yuli, El Salvador, whose family received legal support during the State of Exception after her husband was arbitrarily detained.



Justice by the Numbers

800+

Individuals supported with legal aid under the State of Exception.

50+

Strategic litigation efforts across Central America.

Helped pass 1 national law

Protecting displaced people in El Salvador.



Read more about human rights abuses under the state of exception

Truth

Cristosal leads legal efforts in the El Mozote massacre case—the first crimes against humanity trial in El Salvador. Over 38,000 pages of documentary, testimonial evidence and expert witness testimony and 50+ survivor testimonies have been collected.

“My dream would be for the State to eventually fulfill its obligations to the families, to fulfill its responsibilities in a way that truly assists and protects the victims who have been abandoned.”

— David Morales, Senior Attorney, head of Transitional Justice in Cristosal, part of the Prosecution team representing the victims of El Mozote and surrounding areas.

“My main motivation is to fight and to denounce the people doing illegal things affecting us all.”

— Ramiro Gómez, Transparency and Probity Commission, San Miguel Siguilá, Guatemala. In Guatemala, Cristosal’s legal team is supporting cases that expose corruption and defend judicial independence—working alongside civil society allies as civic space narrows and threats against judges and prosecutors increase.



Cristosal defends truth in this and many other cases

20+

Legal cases built on forensic investigation.

100+

Testimonies recorded.

Dozens

Dozens of civil society organizations joined cases led by Cristosal



Learn more about
El Mozote case

Voice

“For months, I lived with constant anxiety and fear (...) when the pandemic hit, I stayed home—but the threats followed me online, through social media and phone calls. That’s when I knew I had to leave.”

- Melvin, a gay man in Honduras, found refuge and support through Cristosal, after facing violent harassment. He is now rebuilding his life and advocating for LGBTQIA+ rights.

“Thanks to Cristosal, I’ve grown so much, and now I can talk to people and submit written requests to the mayor’s office. We’ve grown as an association, and more and more people are coming to us.”

— Claudia, Honduras, describing how, after her experience migrating and returning home, Cristosal helped her become a community advocate.

“Today, we don’t hide. We organize.”

— Ana, Co-Founder of Manos Unidas in El Salvador, a partner organization of Cristosal.

“God and the truth are with me.”

“I want to be granted a public trial.”

— Ruth López, Cristosal’s Chief Legal Officer for Anti-Corruption

On the night of May 18, 2025, our friend and colleague Ruth López was unjustly detained by El Salvador’s National Civil Police.

Ruth is not imprisoned for committing a crime, but for courageously defending the rule of law, denouncing authoritarianism, and demanding justice. Her arrest is a stark reminder of the risks faced by those who speak truth to power.

We stand with Ruth. We will not let her voice be silenced.

Together, we raise it even louder in the pursuit of justice and dignity. **Learn more about Ruth's case QR Code:**



Funding Overview

2024 vs. 2025

In 2024, Cristosal's \$6.4 million budget, our largest ever—powered by individual donors, faith communities, and institutional partners—made our work possible. But in early 2025, the withdrawal of U.S. government funding cut our projected budget to **\$2.6 million, a reduction of nearly 60% from the previous year.**

This abrupt change has required difficult decisions for our 2025 planning: restructuring programs, reducing staff, and urgently seeking new, diversified sources of support.

This isn't just a funding gap—it's a critical turning point.

In this new chapter, we are turning to a broader community of supporters—individuals, churches, and foundations—who believe, as we do, that justice, truth, and human dignity are not optional. We are working not only to sustain core operations, but to build the reserves needed for long-term stability, so we can weather uncertainty and grow with purpose.

Thanks to donors like you, we are adapting and pressing forward. Your continued partnership is not only sustaining us—it's helping to shape a more just and hopeful future for the region.

Financials

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024

REVENUE	2023	2024
Grants	\$1,992,199	\$5,290,517
Households	\$385,237	\$433,107
Other Income	\$243,186	\$369,468
Faith Communities	\$56,758	\$40,621
Total Revenue	\$2,677,380	\$6,133,713
EXPENSES		
Program	\$3,496,773	\$5,808,958
Management/General	\$414,011	\$350,960
Resource Development	\$255,815	\$315,845
Total Expenses	\$4,166,602	\$6,475,763
Change in Net Assets	-\$1,489,222	-\$342,050
Beginning of the Year	\$3,455,993	\$1,966,771
End of the Year	\$1,966,771	\$1,624,721

We're grateful to our 2024 donors for their generosity and steadfast support!

View the full list of our
2024 supporters



“We are not just holding the line—we are shaping the future. Where others retreat, Cristosal advances, because we believe the defense of human rights is the foundation for lasting peace”

Noah Bullock,
Executive Director, Cristosal

The Next 25 Years:

Our Vision for the Future

As Cristosal enters its next chapter, one thing is clear: the fight for human rights in Central America—and across the region—is far from over.

Authoritarianism is rising. Displacement is growing. But so is our resolve.

In the years ahead, Cristosal will:



Expand victim support


across borders, offering legal aid, psychosocial care, and long term protection.



Deepen regional collaboration

with frontline organizations and defenders

- **Scale our advocacy**, challenging impunity and defending due process
- **Invest in new leadership**—youth, women, LGBTQIA+ communities, and grassroots organizers.

An illustration featuring a diverse group of people. On the left, a woman with dark hair and a pink flower crown looks towards the right. In the foreground, a man with a mustache and a yellow straw hat looks forward. Next to him, a woman with blue and white striped hair looks upwards. On the right, an older woman with grey hair and a green headscarf looks towards the center. Several lit candles with yellow flames are visible in the background, creating a warm, hopeful atmosphere.

We are profoundly grateful to every donor, partner, and community member who has stood with us on this journey. For 25 years, your steadfast support has made our work possible. It is your belief in justice, your generosity, and your unwavering solidarity that give us strength. We've made it this far because of you—and together we'll keep building a future where human rights are protected for all.



Cristosal

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Support our mission.

Your contribution helps us protect rights and lives across Central America. Scan the QR code to donate today.



Support Cristosal today at

www.cristosal.org

25 years

**of Impact - Building
a More Just Future
Together**