

Danish Institute Against Torture (DIGNITY)

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DIGNITY started its work on the rehabilitation of torture victims in the early 1980s. Since the mid-1990s, it has expanded its scope to include the prevention of torture and organized violence at both national and international levels, including in places of detention, and – more recently – prevention of urban violence. DIGNITY's work against torture and organized violence has thus expanded to include the world's rapidly growing cities, where most people now live, where inequality is largest, and where violence, torture and insecurity are often part of everyday life.

DIGNITY has – with its international civil society partners – gained considerable experience internationally in violence prevention. The unique access DIGNITY has to information about the causes and perpetrators of torture and organized violence provides a good basis for initiating prevention activities.

In 2013, DIGNITY reorganized its work into three areas:

- Rehabilitation of torture survivors
- Prevention of torture in urban areas
- Prevention of urban violence

It focuses on promoting international human rights standards and law and addressing the economic, social, and cultural factors relevant to the prevention of torture and organized violence.

DIGNITY has established the following priority areas for prevention work in partner countries:

- *In places of detention:* Monitoring and documenting torture; reforming criminal justice systems; and improving the climate of and relations in prisons.
- *In urban areas:* Strengthening locally-based interventions in cooperation with civil society organizations; collecting and systemizing knowledge and experiences about implementation of existing projects, and contributing to place the prevention of urban violence high on the global agenda.

VPA focal person

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Finn Kjaerulf is a programme specialist in the area of urban violence at DIGNITY. He is an international development professional with more than 20 years of experience as a policy, strategy and operations advisor to state institutions and civil society organisations. He has in recent years worked in the fight against torture and organised violence in conflict and post-conflict settings in Central America and South Africa, within a knowledge-driven, human security and rights-based development perspective. Finn holds a MSc. in Economics (University of Copenhagen).