

IMPACT

REPORT 2025

SEVEN YEARS OF STANDING WITH SURVIVORS



LCW

LIBYA CRIMES WATCH
رصد الجرائم في ليبيا

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WHO WE ARE

SURVIVOR-LED

More than half of LCW's staff are themselves survivors of the violations we document. This is not incidental to our work. It shapes everything about how we do it..

When a colleague sits with a family still searching for their relative, they are not simply conducting an interview. They bring an understanding of what that experience costs, what it takes to speak about it, and what it means to be believed. That knowledge cannot be trained into someone. It comes from lived experience, and it is at the core of how LCW builds the trust that makes our documentation possible.

Survivor-led means the people most affected by Libya's human rights crisis are not the subjects of our work.

| They are leading it.

INDEPENDENT

Libya Crimes Watch is an independent, non-governmental Libyan human rights organisation, founded in 2019 and registered in the United Kingdom.

Our mandate is to monitor, document, and report on human rights violations and international crimes committed against civilians in Libya, and to advocate for accountability and justice on behalf of victims and survivors.

We operate through a team of field researchers and networks covering Libya's east, west, and south, producing verified, bilingual documentation that meets international evidentiary standards.

We refer cases to international accountability mechanisms, support survivors through protection referrals and legal advocacy, and engage UN bodies, diplomatic missions, and international courts with the evidence we gather.

We are non-partisan and politically independent. We take no position on Libya's competing authorities and accept no commitment that could compromise our impartiality.

| We side only with the victim.

SEVEN YEARS OF STANDING WITH SURVIVORS

2019 — Founded

In 2019, human rights defenders, many of whom were themselves survivors of violations came together to establish an organisation grounded in their lived experience and in their determination to document what they had endured or witnessed firsthand.

They set out to build an independent entity centred on victims, shaped by the needs of survivors, and closely connected to affected communities, one that documents violations in a professional and credible manner, and works to bring survivors' voices to international actors in support of accountability efforts.

2025 — Seven years on

Seven years on, that commitment has resulted in a trusted body of evidence, sustained relationships of trust with survivors across the country, and a clear track record of translating testimony into accountability processes at the highest international levels.

This Impact Report marks the seventh anniversary of our founding and presents the work of Libya Crimes Watch in 2025, highlighting what was achieved and the impact this work had on the lives of survivors, who remain at the centre of everything we do.

Seven years on, the need has not diminished. Nor has our commitment.

A SEVEN YEAR RECORD

4,335⁺

Violations and international crimes documented on behalf of victims across Libya

326⁺

Survivor testimonies preserved to international evidentiary standards

240⁺

Survivors and victims supported to access legal, medical, and psychosocial assistance

16

Survivors given pathways to skills, agency, and participation through LCW's empowerment initiatives

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Continuing this work for another year under these conditions is not something we take lightly. It is a constant struggle, shaped by ongoing challenges at every level: operating in a hostile environment, facing limited resources and support, and working largely from exile.

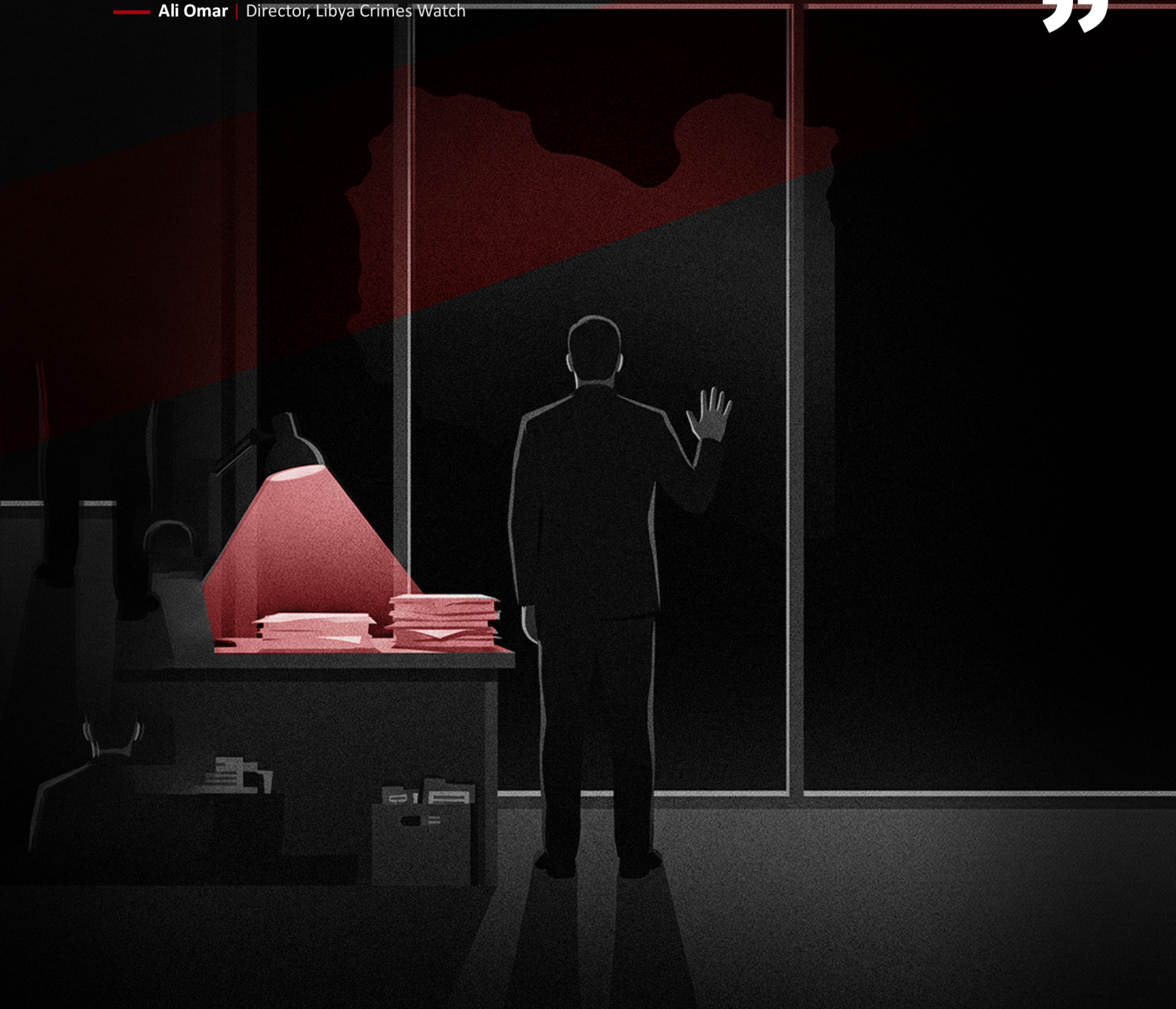
That we are still here is the result of collective effort. But more than anything, it is the trust of survivors that keeps this work going.

That trust is our fuel.

I have always believed that continuity matters more than anything else. Sustainability is what turns effort into real impact. That is why we continue this struggle, and why we will not stop until the goal is achieved.

— Ali Omar | Director, Libya Crimes Watch

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LIBYA IN CONTEXT

Libya continues to operate within a deeply constrained human rights environment, shaped by political fragmentation, weak institutions, and the absence of effective accountability. Across the country, serious violations persist, including arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and unlawful killings, carried out with little risk of consequence.

The space for civil society remains severely restricted. Human rights defenders, journalists, and lawyers face ongoing threats, harassment, and detention, while independent organisations encounter growing pressure and limitations on their ability to work openly.

As a result, much of the Libyan human rights movement now operates from exile. While this has enabled continuity, it has also created structural challenges, including distance from affected communities and increased risks for field-based documentation.

International attention fragmented. As other crises competed for priority, Libya slipped further down the global agenda, widening the distance between survivors and the institutions with the power to respond.

At the same time, accountability pathways remain limited, and the funding landscape has become more uncertain. Together, these pressures reinforce a cycle of impunity and place sustained strain on organisations working to document violations and support survivors.

In this context, independent, credible, and survivor-centred human rights work remains essential.

HOW WE WORK

FOUR PILLARS OF IMPACT

LCW's work is organised across four interconnected pillars. Each is measured by what changed, not only by what was done. No statistic captures that change more truthfully than the words of those who lived it. The testimonies that follow belong to people who trusted LCW with experiences they had rarely, if ever, spoken aloud, and who chose, with their consent, to share them here so that others might understand what this work means and why it must continue. All identifying details are withheld for protection.

01 | THE FIRST PILLAR DOCUMENTING THE TRUTH

Libya has no functioning national mechanism to investigate or record human rights violations. No independent ombudsperson. No truth commission. No judiciary is willing or able to prosecute security forces for what they do to civilians. When someone disappears, when a journalist is arrested without charge, when a migrant dies in detention, the default is silence. That silence is what LCW exists to break.

In 2025, LCW reached more than 435 victims and survivors, while the LCW field team documented over 900 serious violations and international crimes across various regions of Libya. Including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture, attacks on civilians, violations against migrants, and the systematic targeting of journalists, lawyers, and civil society actors. Every incident was verified and recorded to internationally recognised evidentiary standards: usable not just for reporting, but for accountability.

Behind those cases are people. LCW maintained 95+ individual survivor-centred case files, conducted over 190 hours of direct interviews with victims and witnesses, covered 26 cities and towns, including areas routinely overlooked, and mapped 28+ armed groups and security agencies with the depth of knowledge that seven years of field presence makes possible. Targeted monitoring of women, migrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and religious minorities ensured the most marginalised were not also the least counted.

That evidence does not sit in a file. It is published. In 2025, LCW produced 12 bilingual monthly situation reports documenting violations as they occurred, 32 bilingual urgent action posts responding to individual and collective violations in real time, and 12 public statements on priority thematic issues, all of which were disseminated to local and international media, active states, and international mechanisms. This publishing record ensures that what LCW documents reaches the people with the power to act on it, and that perpetrators cannot rely on silence.



WHAT CHANGED

In a country where perpetrators have long operated without scrutiny, LCW's documentation ensured that 2025 did not pass without a record. Survivor testimony gathered at personal risk was incorporated into ICC proceedings and cited in official governmental and diplomatic assessments of Libya, placing the reality of what is happening on the ground into the formal record of international accountability. Violations that would otherwise have gone unrecorded reached international institutions, concerned states, and global media audiences, with citations from AP, BBC, and Al Jazeera.

“

Libya Crimes Watch played a central role in securing my release after five and a half years of arbitrary detention in Mitiga Prison, run by the Deterrence Apparatus (Al-Raddaa). I was abducted based on my identity in Tripoli because I am one of the displaced people from Benghazi. Fabricated charges were brought against me, and I was subjected to torture and solitary confinement for more than a year. I had no contact with my mother for three years from the time of my arrest. Through your LCW's efforts and its continuous communication with my family, and by submitting my name on a list of detainees to the UN Support Mission in Libya to intervene for my release, I was freed in August 2025, without a single legal charge ever having been filed against me. I thank you for your efforts and for following my case. I hope for the release of all those who are unjustly imprisoned.

”

— Hamza, 34 | Released August 2025 after five and a half years of arbitrary detention



02 | THE SECOND PILLAR REACHING DECISION-MAKERS

For documentation to produce accountability, it has to reach the people with the power to act. In 2025, LCW was present at every major international forum where Libya's human rights situation was on the agenda, and at several where it otherwise would not have been.

We engaged both the 59th and 60th sessions of the UN Human Rights Council. We participated in Libya's 4th Universal Periodic Review cycle and submitted four reports, including three joint submissions with international partners. LCW was the only Libyan organisation present at the Committee on Enforced Disappearances regional consultation on Women, Girls, and Enforced Disappearances, bringing Libyan survivor testimony into a mechanism that would otherwise have operated without it.

At the 24th Assembly of States Parties to the ICC, we spoke at the General Debate and the first-ever session on non-cooperation. We were invited to attend the initial appearance of the first Libyan suspect before the Court. We maintained active briefing relationships with 40+ diplomatic missions and provided 30+ verified updates to UNSMIL. Two of our UPR recommendations were formally incorporated into the official stakeholder summary, directly shaping what states examined during Libya's international human rights review. And the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions issued an official communication in direct response to LCW's urgent appeal, formally placing a documented case before the Libyan authorities.



WHAT CHANGED

LCW's advocacy shaped what states examined during Libya's international human rights review, prompted a response from a UN Special Rapporteur, and ensured Libyan civil society had a seat at every major accountability forum in 2025.

“

Our team's collective efforts over seven years, documenting violations and amplifying the voices of victims and survivors, are what sustain our determination to continue working in a high-risk environment. We carry the voices of those who have lost everything, yet not their faith in justice, and remain committed to ensuring that their cases are not forgotten.

Ahmed Mustafa | Head of Documentation

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03 | THE THIRD PILLAR WALKING BESIDE SURVIVORS

In Libya, there is no safe place to report what happened to you. Filing an official complaint risks further arrest. The national judiciary is unwilling and unable to investigate serious crimes. Lawyers are harassed and detained. Family members of the disappeared fear that any visibility will compound the danger. For most survivors, the question is not whom to turn to for justice. It is whether seeking any form of redress is safe at all.

LCW's victim support and protection work begins precisely there. Before a case file, before a referral, before any formal intake, there is the work of building sufficient trust for a survivor to engage. That trust is earned through sustained presence, confidentiality, and a trauma-informed approach that places the safety and agency of the survivor above all other considerations. It is the foundation on which every protection outcome rests.

In 2025, that work translated into direct, measurable impact. LCW conducted individual needs assessments and protection planning for survivors across all vulnerability groups, prepared 18+ victim referral packages, and coordinated with 18 partner organisations spanning legal aid, psychosocial support, emergency medical care, and humanitarian assistance. More than 15 survivors accessed life-changing protection, legal, medical, and psychosocial services as a result. Women, migrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and religious minorities - the groups facing the most acute structural barriers to protection and redress in Libya - received targeted support, ensuring that compounded vulnerability did not mean compounded invisibility.

Victim protection in a context like Libya demands more than a referral. It demands sustained case management, knowledge of which legal and humanitarian pathways are functional, and a willingness to follow a case through months or years of uncertainty. It demands that survivors be seen as individuals with rights, not as cases to be processed. That commitment to survivor-centred protection is what separates documentation that changes lives from documentation that records them.



WHAT CHANGED

Survivors who had no access to protection, legal recourse, or safe reporting mechanisms found all three through LCW's victim support and referral work. More than 10 people regained their freedom. More than 18 accessed sustained protection and care, including life-changing medical, psychosocial, and legal support that addressed not only the immediate consequences of what they had endured but their longer-term recovery and safety.

“

I reached out to Libya Crimes Watch after a friend advised me to contact them. I was at a complete dead end, facing daily threats and pressure. You took my case seriously and helped me relocate to a safe place and leave Libya, fearing for my life, after two years of detention and prosecution because of my sexual orientation. After my release, I faced daily harassment on the street and had nowhere to go after leaving my family home. Now, thanks to Libya Crimes Watch's support and their referral to organisations that provided financial assistance to help me move to safety, I am living in freedom and security. I continue to receive treatment for the psychological and physical effects of what I endured, with your LCW's ongoing support.

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— **Murad, 26** | Supported to relocate to safety following two years of detention and persecution



04 | THE FOURTH PILLAR CAPACITY BUILDING

Sustainable human rights work requires more than field presence and advocacy. It requires institutions strong enough to deliver quality work consistently, staff equipped to operate safely and ethically in high-risk environments, and a broader civil society ecosystem capable of sustaining independent monitoring and documentation beyond any single organisation. In Libya, where that ecosystem remains fragile and under persistent pressure, capacity building is not a support function. It is a core pillar of the work.

In 2025, LCW invested in strengthening its own institutional foundations. More than 15 targeted internal training sessions, delivering over 50 hours of learning across multiple sessions per training, covered documentation standards, data security, trauma-informed interviewing, and personal security protocols. Four new internal policies, four standard operating procedures, and seven internal guidelines raised standards across case management, ethical compliance, and reporting practices. LCW ensured that every staff member received at least two dedicated individual consultations with a mental health professional in 2025. Sixteen survivors were integrated into LCW's empowerment initiatives, building skills and agency that extend beyond their immediate support needs.

LCW also delivered targeted capacity building for partner organisations and Libyan civil society organisations working in the human rights space. totalling over 15+ hours of direct training, were delivered to local partners and Libyan CSOs, covering areas such as documentation methodology, legal standards, digital security, and safe interviewing practices. In a context where the skills required to document violations safely and in accordance with internationally recognised standards are not widely available, and where human rights defenders face real risks in doing this work, this kind of knowledge transfer directly strengthens Libya's broader capacity for independent human rights monitoring.



WHAT CHANGED

LCW's investment in its people, systems, and partners in 2025 meant that when pressure came, the work did not stop. Staff were better equipped, ethically and psychologically, to support survivors through complex and sensitive cases. Libyan civil society organisations gained skills that strengthen independent human rights monitoring beyond LCW alone. That institutional resilience is what keeps survivors supported, evidence credible, and accountability efforts sustained.



Victims were not merely the subjects of our work; they were partners in shaping it. Their experiences and contributions have helped anchor an approach that places the dignity and needs of victims at the centre of everything we do.

— Anas Helal | Programme Officer



RESILIENCE

REFLECTING ON THE YEAR

2025 was a year of sustained pressure from multiple directions. The political and security environment in Libya worsened materially, increasing the stakes of LCW's work while narrowing the space to do so. International engagement with Libya's human rights situation remained fragmented. And Sudden funding cuts created immediate financial strain, requiring difficult decisions about how to sustain every area of the organisation's work.

These pressures were real and felt. Running a geographically dispersed team while simultaneously managing live documentation, active survivor cases, and sustained international advocacy, with reduced resources and in a deteriorating operating environment, is demanding in ways that are not always visible from the outside. LCW does not pretend otherwise. What carried the organisation through was not immunity to these pressures but the systems, relationships, and institutional culture built over seven years. The commitment of the team. The rigour of the methodology. The clarity of the purpose.

“

Hearing that someone reached safety for the first time, that a family finally knows where their loved one is, that a survivor rebuilt their life after years of silence, that is what sustains this work through every difficult year. Witnessing the life-changing impact of what we do, on real people, in real lives, is not something I take for granted. It is, simply, what keeps me going.

— **Nour Khalifa** | Communications and Outreach Officer, Libya Crimes Watch.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Libya's human rights crisis did not begin in 2025, and it will not end when this brief is published. The survivors LCW works with are still there. So are the violations. So is the need for independent, rigorous documentation that can support the pursuit of accountability and justice, and challenge the culture of impunity that has defined Libya's human rights landscape for too long.

LCW's 2025 to 2030 strategic plan deepens every area of this work: more comprehensive monitoring and documentation, expanded victim support and protection, stronger engagement with international accountability mechanisms, and an institution built to sustain that commitment through whatever the operating environment demands. As ICC proceedings in Libya enter a critical new phase, the importance of credible, verified, survivor-centred evidence in support of accountability efforts only grows.

Ending impunity in Libya is a long-term undertaking. It requires sustained presence, institutional trust, and the kind of evidence that only consistent, survivor-led documentation can produce. Seven years in, that is exactly what LCW is committed to working towards.

PARTNER WITH LCW

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