

1989-2019  
**30**  
YEARS



# Penal Reform International

[www.penalreform.org](http://www.penalreform.org)

**Penal Reform International (PRI) is an independent non-governmental human rights organisation that develops and promotes fair, effective and proportionate responses to criminal justice problems worldwide.**

**We believe in a fair and effective criminal justice.**

## Fair

Respect the rule of law

Detention as last resort

Proportionate sentencing

Humane treatment and conditions for prisoners

Strong international human rights standards implemented nationally

## Effective

Uphold rights of suspects and defendants

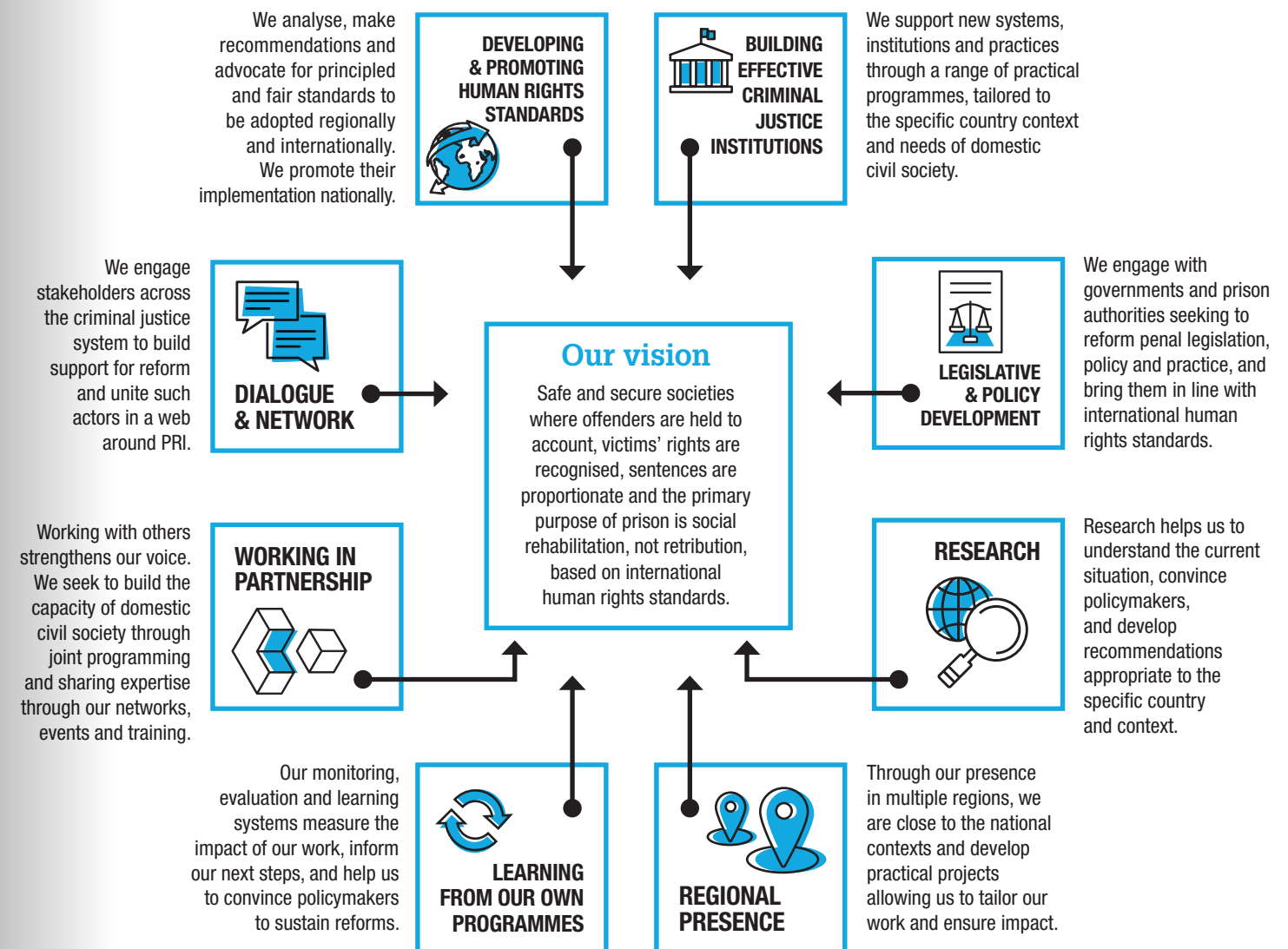
Prevent unnecessary use of pre-trial detention

Train prison staff, law-enforcement and government officials

Build safer communities through rehabilitation

**We use advocacy as well as practical programmes.**

We work as a catalyst for systemic change through a smart mix of advocacy and practical programmes for reform. We work nationally, regionally and internationally.





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## We operate throughout the criminal justice process.

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Through our advocacy and practical programmes, we operate in ten priority areas throughout the criminal justice system to make it fair and effective.

### WOMEN IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

We promote gender-sensitive criminal justice and penal policies, as well as greater use of non-custodial alternatives.

### LIFE IMPRISONMENT

We advocate that no one should be imprisoned for life without the possibility of one day at least being considered for release.

### JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

We promote child-friendly justice systems which use detention only as a last resort and recognise the right of children to special protection.

### DEATH PENALTY

We campaign for the abolition of the death penalty and for humane alternative sanctions.

### PRISON CONDITIONS

We advocate for humane prison conditions as a prerequisite of fair criminal justice systems.

### PRE-TRIAL JUSTICE

Pre-trial detention is often unnecessary and can prejudice a fair trial. We campaign against its excessive use and promote alternative measures.

### REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION

We promote rehabilitation as the primary aim of all criminal justice systems.

### TORTURE PREVENTION

Torture destroys a person's dignity, body and mind. We seek to establish and improve safeguards against torture and ill-treatment in detention.

### ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT

We promote fair and proportionate sentencing and greater use of non-custodial measures.

### GLOBAL ADVOCACY

We contribute to the development and implementation of human rights and criminal justice standards.

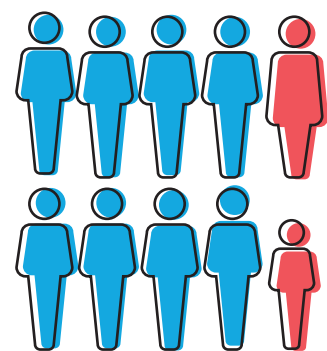




Why is our work needed?

More than  
**10 million**

Men, women and children are  
**IN PRISON WORLDWIDE**

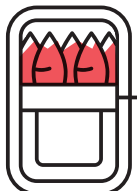


Around  
**1 million**  
**CHILDREN**

are **DETAINED**  
around the world

**30%**  
are **AWAITING TRIAL**,  
presumed innocent

**CRIME**  **BUT** **PRISON POPULATION**   
rates are in **DECLINE**  is **INCREASING**

Prisons are  
**OVERCROWDED**  
In at least  
**120**  
**COUNTRIES** 

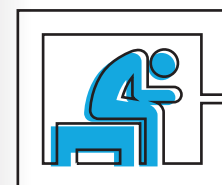
The number of  
**WOMEN** and **GIRLS**  
in prison rose by  
**+53%**  
Between  
**2000 >>> 2017**

For the sources of the information and statistics  
on this page, see our Global Prison Trends 2018  
publication, [www.penalreform.org/resource/  
global-prison-trends-series](http://www.penalreform.org/resource/global-prison-trends-series).



The number of  
**PEOPLE** in **PRISON**  
rose by  
**+20%**  
Between  
**2002 >>> 2015**

Prisons often become  
**SCHOOLS  
OF CRIME** 

**SOLITARY  
CONFINEMENT**



is still  
**WIDELY USED**  
Despite research  
showing its severe  
detrimental effect  
on mental health

   
The use of the  
**DEATH  
PENALTY**  
is **DECREASING**

**BUT**



this is linked to  
**LIFE-LONG  
SENTENCES**  
**INCREASED USE**

The number of prisoners  
serving **LIFE SENTENCES**  
rose by  
**+84%**  
Between  
**2000 >>> 2018**

In many countries  
**PRISONERS**  
are still  
**PREVENTED**



from having regular  
**CONTACT**  
with the  
**OUTSIDE WORLD**

We believe in a **fair and  
effective** criminal justice.

# Case studies

## We've helped probation officers adopt a gender sensitive approach

The emotional, social and economic consequences of imprisonment experienced by women are acute and enduring and extend to their families – and particularly to their children. Non-custodial sanctions offer the potential to avoid imprisonment, but they have been almost exclusively created for men, and the differing needs and experience of women have

“ Before, I thought an offender is an offender, and it doesn't matter if they are male or female. My thinking was there is no excuse for committing a crime. But after I have gotten a change of perception. Now I take a little more time to dig deeper and find out more and what really caused them to offend. ”

A probation officer, Kenya.



largely been overlooked. PRI led a pioneering project in Kenya that explored ways of adopting a gender-sensitive approach to non-custodial sentences, such as community service and probation orders. As part of this project, PRI worked with the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Service to amend pre-sentence reports – produced by probation officers to inform magistrates of the background of an offender and recommend sentencing options such as community sanctions – so that they better reflect women's realities and backgrounds. Probation officers received training on using the adapted tools and implementing a gender-sensitive approach to their work.

## We've launched the first prison radio station in the MENA region

In collaboration with the British Embassy and Morocco's General Delegation for Prison Administration and Reintegration, PRI launched the first ever prison radio station in the Middle East and North Africa

“ I am very happy to have the opportunity be able to voice my needs and listen to programmes and experts' opinions about things that are important, I feel that it will help me be part of the community even when I am inside the prison. ”

A female prisoner at Oukacha prison.

region. Idmaj Radio, which is based at Casablanca Oukacha prison, will provide both prisoners and prison staff with the opportunity to discuss important issues related to prison, offending and rehabilitation, as well as increase prisoners' contact with the outside world – a key factor in improving mental health and reducing feelings of isolation. The radio will initially be broadcast from Oukacha prison and will then be launched at other prisons in the country.

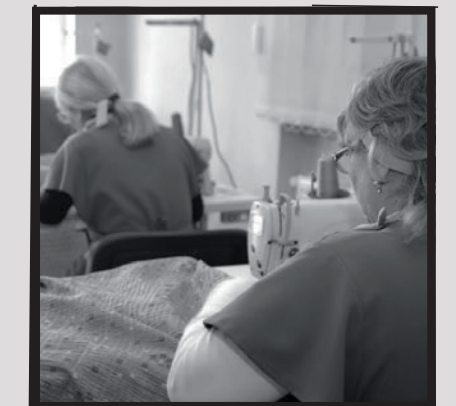
## We've helped women offenders reintegrate back into society

Stigma and discrimination towards those who have been in prison are still prevalent in Georgia, and unemployment is high – making it difficult for women to find jobs upon release. PRI works in partnership with four Georgian NGOs to help female offenders access support services that will help them

reintegrate into their communities, such as legal aid, psychological counselling, medical services, vocational training, start-up grants for small businesses, and work opportunities. Legal aid and psychological counselling have proved pivotal in the rehabilitation process for some women, allowing them to overcome long-term problems such as obtaining custody of children or a lack of confidence

“ I lost my parents at a young age. After the release from prison... I stayed homeless. I became dependent on alcohol. Now I live in temporary shelter for former prisoners. With the assistance of PRI, I have been treated for overcoming alcoholism. My situation has improved. I studied the profession of a tailor and currently work in a social enterprise. This is the beginning of my new life. ”

Former female prisoner, Georgia.





due to the stigma faced by having been in prison. Skills training has had a therapeutic effect, helping women regain their status as carers for their families and providing structure to their daily routines in prison.

### We've helped reduce violence against children in detention

Children in closed institutions across the world are vulnerable to violence, both from their peers and from staff. PRI's three-year project in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan aimed to reduce incidents of violence against children in detention, as well as reduce the use of solitary confinement – which can have severe and adverse effects on mental health.

In Kazakhstan, PRI was an active member of the Working Group on Reform of the Criminal Executive Code, providing technical assistance to the Group to help draft new legislation. This resulted in the maximum period of solitary confinement for children being reduced from seven to three days, with children allowed to leave solitary confinement to participate

in classes; PRI continues to advocate in the region for the strict prohibition of solitary confinement for children. In Kyrgyzstan, a pilot counselling programme in a juvenile correction facility for boys had positive results, and children demonstrated improved emotional and psychological well-being. Training for staff on child rights and the use of non-violent disciplinary measures was also held across the three countries.

“ When I was initially appointed, the school had some major problems: children were breaking the furniture and the staff were not trained to deal with their behaviour. [Now] we have established good discipline to deal with difficult boys. We use democratic policies (e.g. class president) and provide rewards for good behaviour. ”

Director of a closed institution for children in Kazakhstan.



Page 8: Community Service Order in Kenya  
© Omar Phoenix Khan.

Page 9, left: Launch of Idmaj Radio at Casablanca Oukacha prison, Morocco.

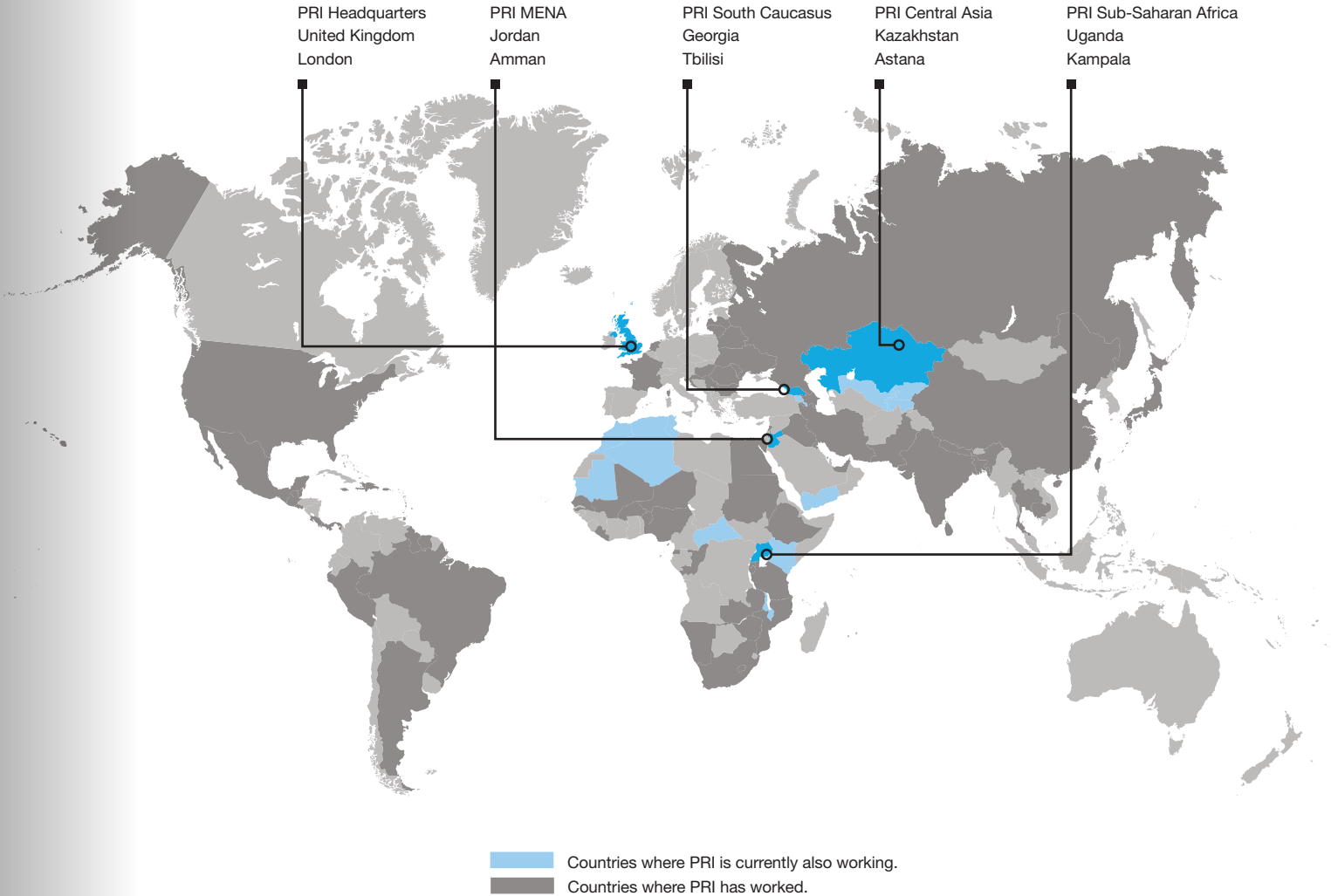
Page 9, right: Sewing workshop at the women's prison © Georgian Association 'Women in Business'.

This page: Boys exercising at a closed institution for children, Kazakhstan.

### We act locally and globally.

Since PRI's creation 30 years ago, we have worked in over 90 countries and territories – always aiming at long-term engagement and impact, remaining flexible and seizing opportunities to reform criminal justice systems.

Today, we run four regional offices close to the national contexts and develop practical projects allowing us to tailor our work and ensure impact.



**Penal Reform International  
Headquarters**

1 Ardleigh Road  
London N1 4HS  
United Kingdom

+44 (0) 207 923 0946  
info@penalreform.org

 @PenalReformInt  
 @Penalreforminternational

**Penal Reform International  
in Central Asia**

Karaotkel District  
2 Sharbakkol Street  
Astana 010000  
Kazakhstan


++7 7172 79 88 84  
pricentralasia@penalreform.org

 @PRICentral Asia  
 @PenalReformCA

**Penal Reform International  
in South Caucasus**

25 Kazbegi Avenue  
3rd Entrance, Apt. 262  
0160 Tbilisi  
Georgia

+995 32 2370 270  
tchanturia@penalreform.org

 @Penal Reform International  
South Caucasus Regional Office

**Penal Reform International  
in Middle East and North Africa**

22 Amro Bin Dinar  
Amman  
Jordan

+962 6 582 6017  
priamman@penalreform.org

 @PRIMENA1  
 @Menaregion

**Penal Reform International  
in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Plot 8, Kisozi Close  
Kisozi Complex  
Nakasero  
Kampala  
P.O. Box 11455  
Uganda

+256 3920 01139  
doreenn@penalreform.org