Capital punishment around the world

- 35 countries have executed someone in the past 10 years (light blue)
- 48 countries retain the death penalty in law, but have not executed anyone in the past 10 years (dark blue)

In 2020: over 200 executions by at least 12 countries (as of August 2020)
Key issues relating to capital punishment
Inadequate training for capital defense lawyers

• Many lawyers around the world do not receive adequate training on topics such as mitigating evidence and the relevance of mental health to capital sentencing

• Lawyers in francophone African countries with civil law systems are often excluded from regional trainings due to differences in legal systems and languages
Lack of accessible information about the death penalty

- Information about capital punishment is often considered a state secret
- Unreliable record-keeping of death penalty practices
- Written laws often differ from actual practices

Lack of transparency hinders capital defense, legal analysis, and advocacy
Fair trial concerns

• Including...
  • Intersectional axes of discrimination in the legal process, including:
    • Socioeconomic background
    • Gender
    • Race/ethnicity
    • Foreign nationals
  • Barriers to court access
  • Inadequate legal counsel
  • Presumptions of guilt
Projects
The Makwanyane Institute

- Annual training for capital defense lawyers in Africa
  - Strengthen skills in developing a strong defense
  - Lectures on topics such as mental illness/intellectual disability, international law, wrongful convictions

- Institute for francophone lawyers postponed until summer 2021

- Staying engaged with Institute participants
  - Translation work
  - Identify secure online platforms

2018 Makwanyane Institute with anglophone African lawyers—we hope to have a similar in-person event in summer 2021
Database and Publications

**Database:**
up-to-date information on death penalty practices and legislation around the world

**Articles:**
research on international legal issues, including discrimination and access to courts

**Reports:**
upcoming report on female death row prisoners convicted of drug offenses

**Social media:**
spread information about research and projects to the public

Increase transparency on the death penalty to support capital defense lawyers, legal analysts, and human rights advocates
Community Engagement

- Ongoing collaboration with lawyers who attended past Makwanyane Institutes
  - Working with lawyers on campaign to raise international attention about fair trial concerns
  - Wrote article about collaborative resentencing project in Malawi

- Interview practitioners to learn more accurate information for research

- Compiling reading list about solidarity in human rights advocacy
Future Plans

- **Makwanyane Institute** scheduled for summer 2021
  - Virtual engagement/preparation with participants

- Continue **research** for database, articles, and reports
  - Report on women on death row for drug offenses: scheduled for publication in 2021