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10
YEARS of
JUSTICE



FOR TEN YEARS THE MISSION OF THE TAHIRIH JUSTICE CENTER HAS BEEN TO ENABLE WOMEN AND GIRLS FLEEING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE TO ACCESS JUSTICE.

The Tahirih Justice Center is a nationally recognized Washington, DC area-based organization that enables women and girls fleeing gender-based violence to access justice in the United States through high-quality pro bono legal services and bridge-building public policy advocacy. Through its programs, the Tahirih Justice Center protects immigrant women and girls seeking justice in the United States from gender-based violence such as female genital cutting, torture, rape, human trafficking, honor crimes, life-threatening widow rituals, forced marriage, and domestic violence. Tahirih embraces a holistic approach, providing a range of medical and social services referrals in addition to the legal services provided by Tahirih’s staff and network of pro bono attorneys. Tahirih’s public policy advocacy is directly informed by client needs and is designed to create systemic change to ensure that immigrant women and girls receive long-term protection from violence.

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DEAR FRIENDS,

As we mark the end of our first decade of service to immigrant women and girls fleeing violence, we take a moment to reflect on why we do what we do. We take a moment to emphasize how our remarkable achievements have been possible. And we take a moment to share with you our hopeful vision of the future.

The Tahirih Justice Center, from the moment we opened our doors, has been inspired and guided by a vision of a day when women and men are respected equally. A day when both women and girls are safe in their societies, communities, and homes and are truly empowered to live freely as fully valued members of society. This will be the day when humanity as a whole will soar—as a bird with two equally strong wings.

As you read the stories of the courageous women and girls we serve, you will realize that despite our progress, violence against women is still a cruel global reality. This violence is corrosive and deadly and it affects us all, women and men alike. It will not end overnight. It may not end in our lifetimes. It will, however, end when enough people come together to fight it. We invite you to join us in our efforts to overcome cruelty and to achieve justice for women and girls fleeing violence.

We are incredibly grateful for the diverse and committed group of individuals and organizations that have united around a shared vision of justice. Their support and commitment have made our achievements possible. But so much work remains to be done. Together, in a strong voice, we have to tell the world that until the day the violence ends, women and girls may be victimized, but they are not victims. They may be hurt, but they are not broken. They may be abandoned, but they are not alone. They are strong, courageous, and wise. By uniting behind a shared vision of justice and working to assure that this justice is available to all women and girls fleeing violence, we can help create a world we can all believe in—a world that must exist.

With Gratitude and Renewed Commitment,

Layli Miller-Muro, Executive Director

Frank Kendall, Chair, Board of Directors

TAHIRIH: A HISTORIC INSPIRATION FOR WOMEN

Tahirih (TAH-heh-ray) was a prominent figure in Middle Eastern history—an exemplar of women’s strength in mid-19th century Persia during a time and place when most women were kept illiterate and hidden from the public sphere. A member of the persecuted Bahá’í Faith, Tahirih is remembered for her renowned skill as a poet, theological insights, and ability to organize and inspire women to reject their oppressed status. In 1848, as a symbolic pronouncement that a new day was dawning for the status of women, Tahirih became the first woman in recorded Middle Eastern history to publicly remove her veil before an assemblage of men.

1997 BEGINNING

Layli Miller-Muro founded the Tahirih Justice Center in 1997, following a well-publicized asylum case in which she was involved as a student attorney at American University. The case was that of Fauziya Kassindja, a 17-year-old girl who fled Togo in fear of a forced polygamous marriage and a tribal practice known as female genital cutting. After arriving in the United States and spending more than 17 months in detention, Ms. Kassindja was granted asylum on appeal. Her case made legal history and established national precedent, enabling women to receive asylum because of gender-based persecution. Ms. Miller-Muro’s portion of the proceeds from the book she co-authored with Ms. Kassindja, *Do They Hear You When You Cry?* (Delacorte Press, 1998), was used to create the Tahirih Justice Center.

Tahirih hires its first paid staff and begins representing women seeking asylum because of gender-based persecution.

Tahirih, in partnership with the Feminist Majority Foundation, establishes the Afghan Women Project. Through direct representation, the program enables several hundred Afghan women to receive refugee status in the United States, where less than a dozen had received protection in earlier years.

Tahirih begins representing victims of human trafficking. Tahirih receives an Equal Justice Works Fellowship and launches the Battered Immigrant Women Advocacy Project to enable abused wives of US citizen or permanent resident spouses to not have to make a life-threatening choice between further abuse and deportation.

Tahirih launches the Campaign to End Exploitation by International Marriage Brokers to address the abuse of “mail-order brides” by agencies marketing foreign women to American men.

Tahirih launches the Pro Bono Attorney Network to systematize its partnership with area law firms in the representation of immigrant women fleeing violence. Tahirih receives a John Gardner Public Policy Fellowship from Stanford University and launches its Public Policy Advocacy Program.

Tahirih expands its holistic services by hiring an in-house full-time social worker.

Tahirih launches its Family Law Representation Program. Tahirih receives a New Voices Fellowship and begins its Muslim Women Outreach Initiative.



Tahirih receives the Washington Post Award for Excellence in Non-Profit Management.

Tahirih’s organizational budget exceeds the \$1 million mark.

Tahirih launches its three-year strategic plan for national expansion.



INTERNAL MILESTONES

EXTERNAL MILESTONES

1996 FOUNDATION

The highest immigration court in the United States, the Board of Immigration Appeals, issued the landmark, precedent-setting decision Matter of Kasinga, granting asylum because of “female genital mutilation.” This case established gender-based persecution as grounds for refugee status in the United States. Tahirih founder Layli Miller-Muro helped litigate this case as a law student at American University.

1998

1999

Matter of Adeniji—Tahirih litigates a precedent-setting decision that clarifies that the mandatory detention provisions contained in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 could not apply retroactively.

2000

The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act becomes law. Tahirih serves as a consultant to the US State Department to assist in the conceptual development of this law.

2001

Afghan Women and Children Relief Act becomes law. A Tahirih client and former board member, Farida Azizi, at the invitation of the White House, provides remarks on behalf of Afghan women at the signing ceremony.

2002

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), now Department of Homeland Security, establishes new visas for trafficking victims (T visas) and victims of crime (U visas). Tahirih works closely with the INS to ensure law enforcement’s compliance with this law and, as a result, obtains the first recommendation for an affirmative U visa deferred action request in the region.

2004

Tahirih wins the first lawsuit in the United States against an international marriage broker for its role in the abuse of a woman from the Ukraine, resulting in the award of almost \$500,000 in damages (Fox v. Encounters International, US Dist. Ct. of MD).

2005

2006

Drafted by Tahirih, the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act becomes law, enabling foreign women to receive life-saving information before marrying men through these agencies. Fox v. Encounters International is affirmed by the US Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.

2007



DEVELOPING AN INNOVATIVE MODEL THROUGH DIRECT SERVICES, ADVOCACY, AND EDUCATION

To address the acute and growing needs of immigrant women and girls fleeing violence, Tahirih has developed an innovative and comprehensive approach that combines direct legal services, client-based public policy advocacy, and public education. Through this coordinated effort, Tahirih seeks to ensure the protection and safety of its clients, as well as their long-term well-being, by raising their voices in the public policy arena, informing the public of the unique challenges immigrant survivors of violence face, and, ultimately, creating lasting legal and social change.

Tahirih’s legal services programs are grounded in the commitment to provide free, high-quality, and compassionate legal services to vulnerable immigrant women and girls fleeing violence. Women and girls seeking protection in the United States are faced with an ever-changing and complex legal system, language and cultural barriers, and extreme financial burdens. Tahirih provides them with expert legal services to successfully navigate this system and access the protections they are entitled to under US law.

Based on the specific insights our day-to-day work with women and girls fleeing violence provide, Tahirih has developed focused and powerful public policy advocacy programs. An annual strategic planning process allows Tahirih to regularly assess the needs of its clients and to design public policy advocacy around their most pressing concerns. We recognize most organizations focus on either direct services or public policy advocacy; however, Tahirih is uncommon in its commitment to engage in both, providing a critical bridge between direct services and national advocacy organizations.

Sharing the experiences and lessons learned through our direct services and advocacy is the vital link to ensuring long-term protection from violence. Tahirih’s efforts to inform the public of the challenges immigrant survivors of violence face help build a community that is sensitive to the issues facing our clients. In addition, it helps those working with immigrants to more effectively address their needs.

A COORDINATED EFFORT





OUR PROGRAMS ADALET انصاف ПРАВОСУДИЕ DANH TÙ SPRAVEDLNOST ADOLAT ความยุติธรรม JUSTICE RECHTVAARDIGHEID 公 正 法

DIRECT LEGAL SERVICES: ASSURING IMMIGRANT WOMEN’S PROTECTION

Tahirih provides immigrant women and girls with expert pro bono legal representation to ensure that they receive the protection from violence to which they are entitled under US law. Tahirih’s direct legal services, provided both in-house and by outside pro bono attorneys, embrace a holistic approach and offer a range of social and medical services referrals to ensure that our clients can escape violence and rebuild their lives in safety. Over the last decade, Tahirih has developed the following primary service areas:

Gender-Based Asylum

Tahirih provides pro bono legal representation in immigration and federal courts to women and girls fleeing gender-based violence in their home countries such as female genital cutting, torture, rape, human trafficking, honor crimes, widow rituals, forced marriage, and domestic violence.

Battered Immigrant Women Project

Tahirih provides pro bono legal representation to immigrant women survivors of domestic violence seeking to access their right to independent legal status under the Violence Against Women Act so that they are not forced to choose between deportation and remaining in the abusive relationship upon which their legal status depends.

Protection for Victims of Trafficking and Other Crimes

Pioneering the use of the newly created T and U visas established under the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, Tahirih provides pro bono legal representation for immigrant women and girls who have been trafficked to the United States or are victims of other violent crimes and who are willing to cooperate with law enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of the crime.

Family Law Services

Tahirih provides pro bono family law representation to clients who have urgent family law matters such as orders of protection, child custody, and separation or divorce.

Muslim Women Outreach Initiative

Through a prestigious New Voices Fellowship, in an effort to deepen Tahirih’s longstanding commitment to Muslim women, Tahirih strategically serves the needs of Muslim women and girls through direct legal services and community outreach.

MEETING BASIC NEEDS

Safety. Food. Shelter. Clothing. Childcare. Medical Care. Counseling. Support and Training.

Tahirih’s in-house, full-time professional social worker works to assure the urgent daily concerns of our clients are addressed so that they truly find justice and are able to rebuild their lives.

PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY: RAISING IMMIGRANT WOMEN’S VOICES

Through an unusual approach to advocacy that is rooted in direct services, Tahirih seeks to raise the voices of the women it serves to critical public policy debates that directly impact them. Tahirih’s intimate understanding of the abuse suffered provides unique insights that enable the design and execution of effective campaigns for systemic change and the long-term protection of women and girls. Tahirih is an emerging leader in a range of national public policy debates affecting immigrant women. Over the last decade, Tahirih has developed the following primary public policy areas of focus:

Campaign to End Exploitation by International Marriage Brokers

In recent years, the international marriage broker (IMB) industry exploded in response to a demand by some American men for “traditional” wives. The business model and marketing practices of many of these agencies are attracting predators and a growing number of women are paired with abusive men. The Campaign has successfully advocated for the accountability of these agencies through the passage of the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act, signed into law in 2006, and through the successful litigation of the first lawsuit against an IMB for its role in enabling the abuse of a Ukrainian woman.

Initiative to Ensure Police Protection for Immigrant Crime Victims

In response to legislative efforts to compel state and local police to enforce federal immigration law, Tahirih works on a national, regional, and local level to advocate on behalf of immigrant women survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking to ensure their ability to obtain police protection without fear of being deported or placed in detention.

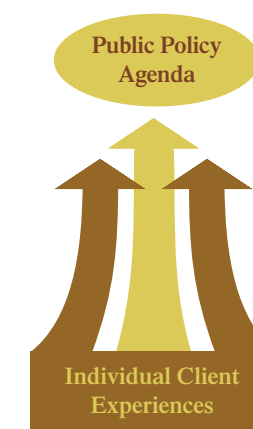
Responsive Advocacy to Protect the Rights of Immigrant Women

Tahirih engages in a range of other advocacy efforts in close collaboration with national immigrant rights organizations to resist initiatives that seek to remove the due process rights of immigrants and limit the ability of refugees and asylum seekers to receive protection in the United States.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Tahirih actively engages in outreach activities to ensure the public and those working on issues of gender-based violence are aware of the unique challenges and obstacles faced by our clients. Tahirih educates others about the issues facing immigrant women and girls and the legal remedies available to them by training police officers, judges, prosecutors, legislators, social and medical service providers, as well as other groups serving immigrant women and girls; speaking at universities and law schools around the country; and raising awareness at community religious institutions such as mosques, churches, and temples.

AN INFORMED AGENDA





OUR RESOURCES SPRAWIEDLIWOŚĆ ШУДАРГА БАЙДАЛ عادل SPRAVEDLNOST ADALET 正義 RÄTTVISA GERECHTIGKEIT न्याय JUSTICE

Tahirih secures resources to pursue its mission by engaging support from foundations; corporations; local, state, and federal governments; and individuals, as well as holding an annual fundraising benefit. In order to most efficiently serve the ever-increasing numbers of women and girls seeking our protection, Tahirih leverages extensive support from professional volunteers in the form of donated professional services. Tahirih's effective use of donated professional services allows it to turn each dollar donated into four dollars of service. In 2006, Tahirih received almost \$3.4 million in donated pro bono services.

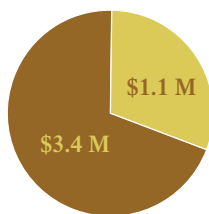
PRO BONO ATTORNEY NETWORK

In order to maximize the number of women and girls we can serve, Tahirih reaches out to top law firms in Washington, DC and recruits attorneys who donate their time and provide life-saving legal representation to our clients. Tahirih's network of pro bono attorneys has grown to include over 400 attorneys. Unlike many legal services organizations, Tahirih actively serves as co-counsel on all cases referred to pro bono attorneys to ensure that immigrant women receive the most knowledgeable legal representation available and continues to manage the clients' social services needs. Seventy-five percent of Tahirih's incoming cases are represented in partnership with outside pro bono attorneys.

Pro Bono Attorney Network member firms include:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP | Maggio & Kattar |
| Arnold & Porter LLP | Marshfield Associates |
| Brand & Frulla | Mayer Brown Rowe & Maw LLP |
| Chadbourne & Parke LLP | O'Melveny & Myers LLP |
| Cleary Gottlieb | Orrick, Herrington, & Sutcliffe LLP |
| Clifford Chance | Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP |
| Cohen, Milstein, Hausfeld & Toll PLLC | Pederson Immigration Law Group, PC |
| Covington & Burling LLP | Perkins Coie LLP |
| Crowell & Moring LLP | Potomac Law Firm |
| Dechert LLP | Robbins, Russell, Englert, Orseck & Untereiner |
| DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary Goodwin & Proctor LLP | Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP |
| Hogan & Hartson LLP | Steptoe & Johnson LLP |
| Howrey LLP | Sullivan & Cromwell LLP |
| Hunton & Williams | Wiley Rein & Fielding LLP |
| Jones Day | Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP |
| King & Spalding LLP | Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale & Dorr LLP |

LEVERAGING PRO BONO RESOURCES



■ Cash Income
■ In-Kind Donated Income
2006 Total Income: \$4.5 million

PRO BONO PUBLIC POLICY & PUBLIC RELATIONS

In order to maximize our ability to advocate on behalf of immigrant women and girls, we have enlisted the pro bono assistance of public policy and public relations professionals from private corporations, law firms, and lobby firms who provide their pro bono advice and expertise to advance our issues.

Companies and individuals who have provided their professional public policy and public relations skills to Tahirih on a pro bono basis include:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Altria Group, Inc. | Jones Day |
| Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP | Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP |
| Arnold & Porter LLP | Prism Public Affairs |
| Cassidy & Associates | Quinn Gillespie & Associates LLC |
| Chevron | Van Scoyoc Associates, Inc. |
| Mike Mihalke | |

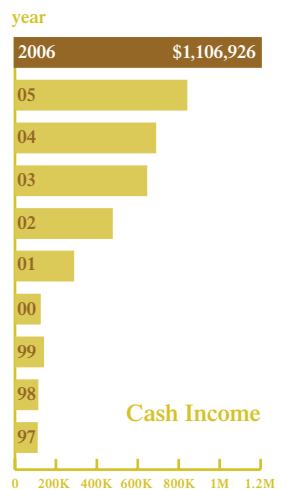
PRO BONO MEDICAL NETWORK

In order to address our clients' urgent medical needs, Tahirih is developing a Pro Bono Medical Network of physicians modeled on our successful Pro Bono Attorney Network. These devoted medical professionals provide services to Tahirih clients for free and serve as expert witnesses in their cases, corroborating their stories of torture and abuse.

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING BENEFIT

Tahirih's annual fundraising benefit is our single largest income-generating event of the year, as well as an important platform for spreading awareness about the plight of women and girls in need. Distinguished keynote speakers and participants have included Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, Senator Joseph R. Biden, Senator Sam Brownback, Congressman James Moran, Assistant Secretary of State Harold Koh, human rights activist Kerry Kennedy Cuomo, Hauwa Ibrahim, and Oscar-nominated actress Debra Winger.

A GROWING ORGANIZATION



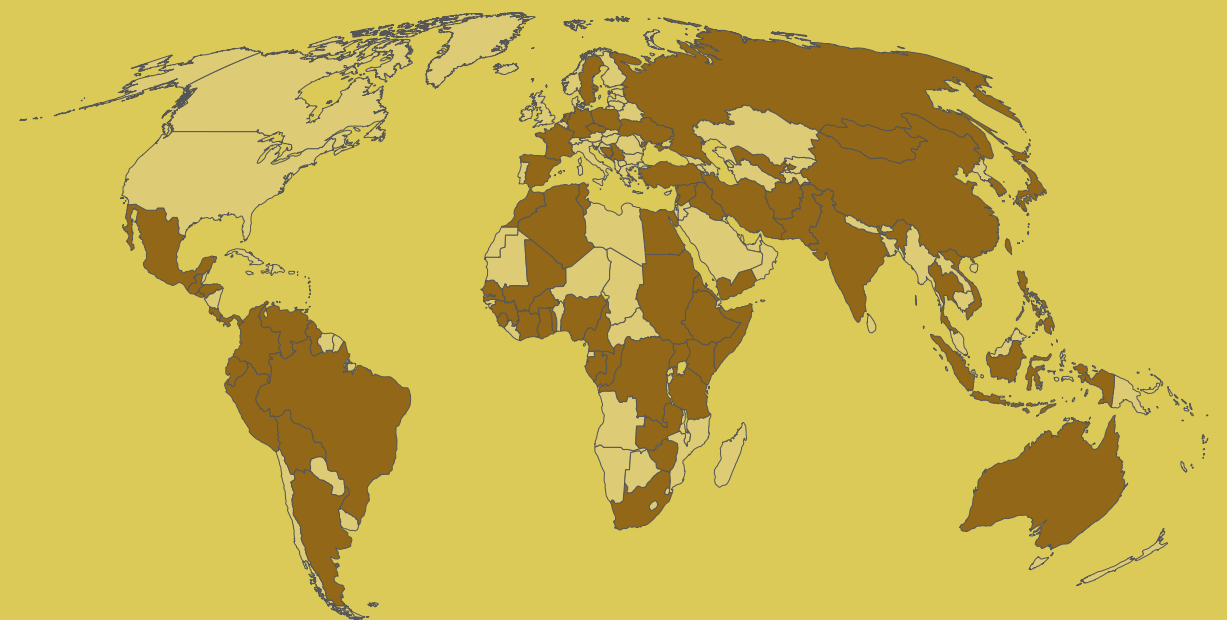
TICE ADALET ПРАВОСУДИЕ 正義 SPRAVEDLNOST ADOLAT 공정 SHUDARᠲA БАЙДАЛ OUR CLIENTS



PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

Since opening its doors in 1997, through direct services and referrals, Tahirih has assisted over 6,000 women and children fleeing abuses such as female genital cutting, torture, rape, human trafficking, honor crimes, life-threatening widow rituals, forced marriage, and domestic violence. In 2006 alone, Tahirih litigated 250 cases, including 487 matters, which directly affected the lives of 402 individuals (typically including the children of affected women). Even as we handle an increasing number of cases, Tahirih maintains a 99 percent success record and has never had a client deported—a measure of our dedication to excellence and to our clients, as well as to the compelling nature of our clients' stories.

TAHIRIH CLIENT DISTRIBUTION



EBUNI'S STORY

When Ebuni*, a native of Guinea, was 23 years old, she was ordered by her family to marry an old man who already had 3 wives and 16 children. Before the wedding, Ebuni was tricked by her family to undergo the painful ritual of female genital cutting. After her wounds were healed, Ebuni unsuccessfully tried to escape and avoid the wedding. Her family beat her so badly for her refusal to marry that she fell unconscious and was hospitalized for a week.

Years into the marriage, Ebuni finally found a measure of peace in raising her children. Then, suddenly, her husband announced that he had accepted a wedding dowry for their oldest daughter, Saran*. The man he had consented to was old and already had three other wives. Saran, like her mother, tried to prevent the genital cutting ritual and forced wedding. Family members ruthlessly beat her for her opposition. Saran suffered a broken leg, a dislocated knee, and a deep head wound. When Ebuni and Saran appealed to the authorities, police said it was a family problem and berated them for going against local customs.

Ebuni could not step aside and let her daughter endure the same suffering she did. Her last chance to protect her daughters was to leave the country. She sold all her possessions and fled to the United States. Once here, Tahirih worked with Ebuni to prepare an asylum application. After more than two years of frustrating court delays, on July 14, 2005, Ebuni and her daughters were granted asylum.

**Name changed to protect privacy*

every 3 seconds

Every three seconds, an underage girl is forced to marry against her will. [In the next decade, more than 100 million girls worldwide will marry before their 18th birthday. Some will be as young as eight or nine and many will marry against their will.¹]

FORCED MARRIAGE

All over the world, women and girls are forced to marry against their will. 82 million girls who now live in developing countries and are between the ages of 10 and 17 will be married before their 18th birthday.² Most of these marriages take place in the world's poorest nations. Parents and families often justify marrying off their younger daughters as a way to gain economic security and status for themselves, as well as for their daughters. Insecurity, conflict, and societal crises also

support early marriage.³ Most of these marriages mean that girls are unable to complete their education and are at greater risk of being exploited, of contracting sexually transmitted infections—including HIV—and of dying or being injured in childbirth owing to the fact that their bodies are too immature to withstand the rigors of birth.⁴ Women and girls who try to escape such a marriage may be ostracized, imprisoned, beaten, or killed by their male relatives.

FRANCA'S STORY

Franca, a native of Nigeria, was an accomplished banker and businesswoman. Franca and her husband had a son and two daughters, the youngest of whom was diagnosed with dwarfism at an early age. Her husband's family blamed Franca's refusal to have her daughters circumcised for her youngest daughter's "disease." They demanded that the child undergo a spiritual cleansing ritual that would involve burying her up to her neck, whipping her legs with a cane, and cutting her genitals. They also demanded that Franca's oldest daughter undergo female genital cutting.

Franca refused to submit to these horrific demands. While she was futilely seeking protection from the government, some of her husband's family members began stalking her. One day, they appeared unannounced at her home, threatening to take her children by force. Soon after, Franca pulled her children from school, fled her home, and stayed with various friends. Local NGOs advised her to leave the country. Franca liquidated all her possessions and purchased plane tickets to the United States.

Franca fled Nigeria in March 2005 and came to Tahirih just days after arriving in the United States, where she was living in a half-finished condo in Maryland with no heat, furniture, or appliances. Tahirih succeeded in getting Franca and her children into a homeless shelter and, with the support of Crowell & Moring, worked to secure justice for Franca and her family. Franca and her children were granted asylum on August 30, 2005. Fearing persecution, to this day, they have not returned to visit Nigeria.

Every minute, nearly six girls endure female genital cutting. [In the world today, there are an estimated 100 million to 140 million women and girls who have been subjected to female genital cutting. Currently, about three million girls, the majority under 15 years of age, undergo the procedure every year.⁵]

every minute

FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING

Female genital cutting (FGC) is the name given to cultural practices that involve the complete or partial removal of the external genitalia. Today, it is mainly practiced in African countries and a few Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Eighteen African countries have prevalence rates of 50 percent or higher, but these estimates vary from country to country and within various ethnic groups.⁶ The cutting can be performed as early as infancy and as

late as age thirty; however, most commonly, girls experience FGC between four and twelve years of age.⁷ An estimated 100 million to 140 million women today have undergone FGC, and an additional three million girls and women are subjected to it each year.⁸ Among its many harmful effects on a woman's body, women who have undergone FGC experience a 50 percent greater likelihood that they or their baby will die during childbirth.⁹

MARIE'S STORY

Marie*, an immigrant girl from Mexico, came home one day to find her mother lying in a pool of blood, unconscious on the floor. She had been severely beaten by her husband, Marie's stepfather. Although Marie's mother had been repeatedly abused by her husband, this time it was more severe than ever before. Marie called 911. The police and trauma team air-lifted Marie's mother, who had sustained a serious head injury, to the hospital.

When Marie's mother was discharged from the hospital, mother and daughter had nowhere safe to stay, so they returned to the only home they knew. Her mother told police that she was afraid of her husband and asked them to remove him from the trailer the family shared. The police arrested Marie's stepfather, but he was only jailed for a month. Upon his release, he went into hiding from the police and secretly returned to the trailer. He was outraged that Marie had called for help. In revenge, he raped her. At age 11, Marie became pregnant.

Marie and her mother were afraid to stay any longer. Tahirih and a team of advocates successfully arranged emergency housing for them at a secure women's shelter, far from Marie's stepfather. Tahirih, with the support of Crowell & Moring, filed a U visa petition for Marie and her mother. On November 17, 2005, it was approved. At 12 years old, Marie gave birth to a baby girl, whom she is now raising with her mother.

**Name changed to protect privacy*

every hour Every hour, nearly 29 women or girls report a rape to the police. [Every year, in 65 countries combined, more than 250,000 cases of rape or attempted rape are recorded by police.¹⁰]

TORTURE AND RAPE

Sexual assault, rape, and torture are often used to oppress, dominate, and punish women and girls worldwide. One out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.¹¹ Rape is also increasingly a weapon of war. In Rwanda alone, up to half a million women were raped during the 1994 genocide.¹² Although rape is a crime in almost every country, many rapes go unreported because of the victim's embarrassment or fear of retribution for naming her assailants. In South Africa, a woman is raped every 83 seconds—only one in 20 of these cases, however, is reported to the police.¹³ Women and girls face other forms of torture as well. In India alone, 15,000 women are killed each year in dowry murders.¹⁴ Worldwide, 5,000 women are killed each year in kitchen fires designed to look like accidents.¹⁵

KHALIDA'S STORY

Khalida*, a native of Pakistan, had just finished medical school when she married Asad* through an arrangement made by their families. Asad was abusive and jealous from the start. Khalida's movement was restricted and she had to be accompanied wherever she went. When Khalida was at the hospital for 24-hour emergency duty, her husband called her a whore, accused her of going to work to attract men, and told her she was dishonoring the family.

Khalida's husband raped her repeatedly. He constantly scolded her for neglecting her "wifely duties"—cooking and cleaning. Asad even threatened to kill Khalida with the guns he kept in the house illegally. Khalida eventually stopped working, hoping that her being at home would calm him down. Even after she left her job and gave birth to two children, Asad continued to abuse her. He was angry that she had given birth to daughters instead of sons. Due to cultural restraints, divorce or separation was out of the question.

After years of trying to escape, with the help of her brothers, Khalida and her daughters fled from her husband in 2002 while they were in the United States visiting family. Tahirih successfully represented Khalida's case and on December 31, 2003, she was granted asylum. Khalida was able to keep both her daughters with her; however, she still fears persecution in the form of an honor crime from Asad and his family for having worked outside the home and having divorced Asad. To this day, her husband and his family do not accept the end of the marriage and threaten to harm Khalida if she returns to Pakistan.

**Name changed to protect privacy*

Every day, nearly 14 women and girls are murdered because they are considered a dishonor to their families. [Every year, 5,000 women and girls throughout the world are murdered by members of their own family in the name of honor.¹⁶]

every day

HONOR CRIMES

Honor crimes are acts of violence, often murder, predominantly committed by male family members against female family members who are perceived to have brought dishonor upon the family. A woman can be targeted for a variety of reasons, including: refusing to enter into an arranged marriage, being the victim of a sexual assault, seeking a divorce—even from an abusive husband, or allegedly committing adultery. The violation of a woman's chastity is seen as an offense against her family's honor and is enough to trigger an attack. Honor crimes are not specific to any religion, nor are they limited to any one region of the world.¹⁷ Worldwide, 5,000 women die as a result of honor crimes each year.¹⁸ In Pakistan alone, more than 1,000 women are killed annually in the name of honor.¹⁹ In Jordan and Lebanon, 70 to 75 percent of the perpetrators of honor killings are the women's brothers.²⁰

SANDRINE'S STORY

Sandrine* and her husband, Patrice*, lived happily in a village in Cameroon. They both considered each other equals in marriage and had joint ownership of their many financial assets. Sadly, Patrice died in a tragic car accident in 2003, leaving behind his wife and three young children. After his death, Patrice's family designated an elder to make decisions on the next steps for the widow and her children. Sandrine was told to marry Patrice's younger brother, Armand*.

The marriage to Armand would have been polygamous, as he already had two wives. When Sandrine refused, his family was enraged and ordered her to marry him because they had already paid a "dowry price" for her and thus had ownership over her. Armand threatened to kill Sandrine and her children if she did not marry him. A few days after Patrice's funeral, his family placed a snake in her house and threw eggs on her car. Sandrine left her home and took her children to her aunt's home to hide.

Sandrine finally had to flee Cameroon and came to the United States with a tourist visa, issued for a vacation she had planned with her husband before he died. Tahirih, with support from Perkins Coie, LLP, successfully represented Sandrine's case and she was granted asylum on August 28, 2004. Unfortunately, because of legal difficulties, Sandrine continues to be separated from her children who, fearful of continued threats from Armand, remain in hiding, under the care of a maternal cousin.

**Name changed to protect privacy*

every week

Every week, over 35,700 women were widowed during the 100 days of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. [A wave of genocide created 500,000 widows in Rwanda. After the genocide, many widows were further victimized by their husbands' male relatives.²¹]

WIDOW RITUALS

Between 7 and 16 percent of all adult women worldwide are widows.²² Millions of widows of all ages endure extreme poverty, ostracism, violence, homelessness, poor health, and discrimination. Some forms of violence against older women are based on cultural practices that specifically target widows, who are often regarded as insignificant without their husbands.²³ A lack of inheritance or land rights, physical abuse, and humiliating and life-threatening mourning and burial rituals are

some of the human rights violations justified by some traditions. Examples of rites that a widow may be forced to endure include sitting with her husband's body until he is buried and drinking the water used to cleanse the body, surrendering all rights to her husband's property to his family, being taken as a wife by her husband's brother (who may have other wives), and being forced to have unprotected sex with a social outcast to cleanse the widow of her husband's spirit.

NATALIYA'S STORY

Nataliya, a native of Ukraine, was a successful civil engineer. She trusted Encounters International, a large international marriage broker (IMB) agency, to find a life partner. Nataliya was paired with James, an American, and was told by the agency that he was "the best of the best," "financially and mentally stable," and "serious about family."

Soon into the marriage, Nataliya realized that James was a violent man. When she confided to the agency that James beat her and went into wild rages, Nataliya was told that this was "normal," that American men were "prone to violence." Further, the agency told Nataliya that she had to stay in the marriage or she would be deported. The violence escalated and became much worse after Nataliya became pregnant. After an especially brutal encounter three weeks after the birth of their child when James put a gun to her head, Nataliya went to the emergency room, where a nurse told her that she had other options.

Nataliya escaped to a domestic violence shelter, where she found safety and was referred to Tahirih. Tahirih successfully represented Nataliya's case and on May 29, 2001, Nataliya's petition under the Violence Against Women Act was approved. Nataliya's suffering led Tahirih to recognize that the role of the IMB agency in facilitating the abuse was part of a larger problem. Tahirih partnered with Arnold & Porter LLP and brought the first lawsuit in the United States against an IMB. In November 2004, after a two-week federal jury trial, Nataliya won, marking the first time an IMB was held responsible for its role in enabling the abuse of a foreign bride.

Every month, up to 1,333 women enter the United States as a result of IMB matches. [An estimated 11,000 to 16,000 women, representing one-third to one-half of all foreign fiancé(e)s admitted to the United States each year, may have met their husbands through IMBs.²⁴]

every month

EXPLOITATION BY INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE BROKERS

In recent years, the IMB industry has exploded in response to a demand by some American men for a "traditional wife" from countries such as the Philippines and Russia. Based on 2005 immigration statistics, between 11,000 and 16,000 foreign fiancé(e)s may enter the United States every year as a result of IMB matches.²⁵ Increasingly, the business model and marketing practices of many

of these agencies are attracting predators, and a growing number of women are paired with abusive men. Unfamiliar with the English language and the US legal system, given little information about their prospective husbands, and misled or not told about their rights by agencies wanting to preserve their profitable matchmaking track records, many women are left in dangerously violent relationships.

JANE'S STORY

Jane*, a native of Ghana, became a domestic servant for Betty*, a distant cousin and a member of parliament, because she needed work to support her family. Betty employed Jane for two years before asking her to go to the United States to help care for Betty's granddaughter. Although Jane would leave behind her husband and four children, she agreed to take the job because she desperately needed the income. Betty arranged all the paperwork for the passport and visa and accompanied Jane to the United States.

From the moment Jane arrived, however, she was treated like a domestic slave. In addition to watching over the granddaughter, Jane was forced to care for nine other children as part of an illegal day-care her employers had arranged, clean the family home, do all the yard work, and cook all the family's meals. Jane worked seven days a week, often until well past midnight. Each time Jane complained about her conditions or asked for her pay, her employers would remind Jane of Betty's political power and threaten Jane with deportation from the United States and jail in Ghana. On several occasions, Jane's family members in Ghana were threatened with death.

When Jane reported her forced labor conditions to the authorities, Betty and her family beat Jane's son in Ghana and had her family banished from their homes. Jane's traffickers were subsequently convicted of multiple criminal violations in federal court. Tahirih successfully represented Jane's case and on December 24, 2003, she received asylum and has been reunited with her husband and four children.

**Name changed to protect privacy*

CAROLINE'S STORY

Caroline*, a native of Uganda, and her husband, Paul*, a military officer in the US army, were newlyweds when Paul was transferred to a different base. They had met through mutual friends and had a romantic courtship before getting married. Once the couple moved and started living together, however, everything changed. Paul became cruel. He repeatedly raped Caroline. He beat her daily, often using spatulas, extension cords, and remote controls. He yelled at her without provocation. He locked doors to trap her in rooms with him so she could not escape.

Caroline first called the police after a particularly painful incident. Paul was arrested and released in 72 hours. The violence continued even after Caroline became pregnant—Paul would choke her, pull her hair, and beat Caroline until she would fall on the floor begging for forgiveness. Caroline was hospitalized for two months of her pregnancy. Paul was arrested a second time. Following the arrest, her husband's superior officer called Caroline to his office, where he explained that she risked getting deported and losing custody of her son if she continued to call the police.

Caroline felt trapped. She sold all her belongings and left the base with her son, returning to her family, ashamed and desperate. A friend referred her to Tahirih. Tahirih filed a VAWA self-petition for Caroline, which was approved on April 5, 2006. Caroline now lives safely with her son in northern Virginia. She is studying to be a nurse because she enjoys working to make people feel comfortable and cared for.

**Name changed to protect privacy*

every year Every year, up to 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States alone.²⁶ [Internationally, 700,000 to two million women are trafficked across borders annually. The volume of trafficking grew by almost 50 percent from 1995 to 2000.²⁷]

TRAFFICKING

Each year, between 600,000 and 800,000 people—mostly women and girls—are trafficked across national borders, which does not count millions trafficked within their own countries.²⁸ Trafficking involves recruiting or coercing a person into forced labor or sexual exploitation. Trafficking victims often find themselves in dangerous, abusive, or exploitative situations such as forced prostitution, slavery-like conditions, sweatshop labor, or domestic servitude. While some women and girls are sold by their families, others are coerced into trafficking situations. Many women around the world want to leave their native countries to seek better economic opportunities and steady work that pays a living wage. These women are often taken advantage of by traffickers who promise good jobs and education in the United States but don't deliver, instead consigning the women to domestic servitude that more closely resembles slavery and sweatshop labor conditions.

right now Right now, one out of every three women in the world is a survivor of gender-based violence or abuse. [Around the world, at least one woman in every three has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Most often, the abuser is a member of her own family.²⁹]

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Immigrant women in the United States are especially vulnerable to domestic violence because they may not speak English, are isolated from support networks of family and friends, and are unfamiliar with their rights in the United States. Abusers may threaten that if they seek refuge from abusive relationships, they will be deported and, once returned to their native countries, will be shunned. In fact, to make these threats real and hold being "illegal" over a victim's head, nearly three quarters of abusive partners never file immigration papers for their abused spouses, and those who do usually do so several years late.³⁰ The Violence Against Women Act protects immigrant women who are victims of domestic violence in the United States by removing the threat of automatic deportation and thus removing an abusive partner's control over a woman's immigration status. Only 45 countries worldwide have any legislation protecting women against domestic violence.³¹



WORKING TO PROTECT MORE WOMEN AND GIRLS

Proud of our successes over a decade, we remain challenged by the distance between the reality of the women we serve and our vision of the future. Every day, we see the profound needs of our clients and are contacted by the countless other women and girls from around the country who struggle to access legal services. We are determined to address their needs for legal representation and to ensure that long-term systemic protections are achieved for women and girls fleeing gender-based violence. To this end, Tahirih's Board and staff have laid out an ambitious three-year strategic plan. This plan is the result of an intensive, year-long planning process that included multiple off-site meetings, was guided by an expert facilitator, and involved both staff and Board. Tahirih's three-year strategic plan seeks to leverage two of our greatest assets: our robust Pro Bono Attorney Network and our effective public policy advocacy. Specifically, our goals for 2010 include:

Expanding Nationally

The effectiveness and strength of Tahirih's direct legal services stem from the over 400 pro bono attorneys from over 30 area law firms that participate in the Pro Bono Attorney Network. Over the next three years, we will develop a sustainable and replicable expansion model for our services that efficiently uses Tahirih's Network and leverages its strong relationship with national law firms. The service model will be informed by Tahirih's case management expertise, as well as best practices in the field.

Growing Public Policy Advocacy

Tahirih's public policy advocacy program, which is unusual in that it is informed by Tahirih's direct client services, will be strengthened to assure greater legislative and policy protections for immigrant women. Through our advocacy efforts, we will work to further amplify the voices of abused immigrant women and girls in US public policy debates.

Strengthening Infrastructure

In response to recent and anticipated growth, Tahirih will improve the internal management infrastructure to ensure that it can effectively manage operating demands while proactively advancing its mission. Tahirih will ensure that an infrastructure is in place to maintain the effectiveness and quality of its programs, that the organization is properly funded and capitalized, and current operations are not eroded.

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ADALET ቍቍ ПРАВОСУДИЕ DANH TÙ SPRAVEDLNOST ADOLAT न्याय
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