


TAHIRIH
JUSTICE
CENTER®

2019 IMPACT REPORT

supporting

IMMIGRANT SURVIVORS ON THEIR
JOURNEYS TO SAFETY AND JUSTICE

A close-up portrait of a young woman with vibrant red braids, smiling broadly with her hands framing her face. She is wearing a dark plaid shirt. The image has a blue tint and serves as the background for the text.

The Tahirih Justice Center is a national, nonprofit organization that supports immigrant women and children fleeing violence such as rape, domestic violence, female genital mutilation/cutting, forced marriage, and human trafficking.

Our holistic, interdisciplinary model for service combines free legal services and social services case management with bridge-building policy advocacy, and research-based training and education.

Our programs efficiently and effectively leverage donated professional services from a vast network of attorneys, medical professionals, and other experts to serve as many immigrant survivors as possible.

By amplifying the voices of survivors seeking justice in communities, courts, and Congress, Tahirih's mission is to create a world where all may enjoy equality and live in safety and with dignity.

WE ARE SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE THROUGH

direct services

Since 1997, Tahirih has answered nearly 29,000 calls for help from women and children fleeing violence, providing free legal services needed to achieve the immigration status to which they are entitled under U.S. law and vital social services needed to rebuild their lives.

IN 2019, WE:

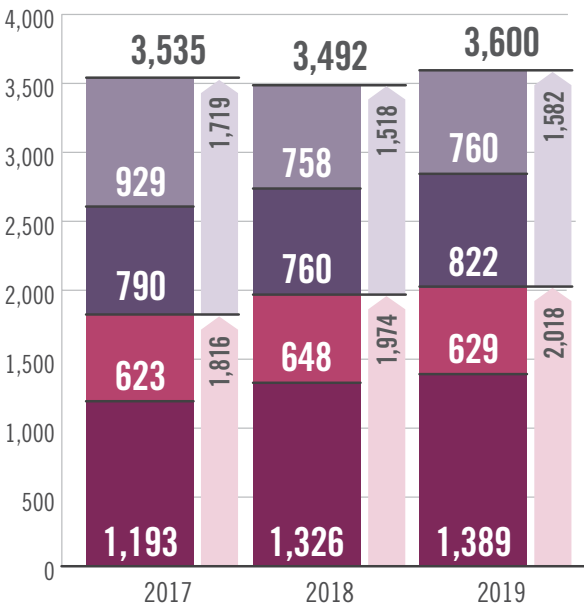
Provided free legal services to **2,018** immigrant women and children and **1,582** of their family members

Connected **530** clients and their family members with vital social services including emergency shelter, food and clothing, and healthcare

Mobilized **2,750** attorneys from **473** top law firms in our Pro Bono Network to leverage donated resources and maximize our capacity

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED THROUGH FREE LEGAL SERVICES

- INDIVIDUALS PROVIDED DIRECT REPRESENTATION
- INDIVIDUALS PROVIDED BRIEF ADVICE AND COUNSEL
- FAMILY MEMBERS ALSO IMPACTED THROUGH DIRECT REPRESENTATION
- FAMILY MEMBERS ALSO IMPACTED THROUGH BRIEF ADVICE AND COUNSEL



ODDS OF
WINNING ASYLUM
DEPEND ON LEGAL
REPRESENTATION

97%

If represented
by Tahirih

33%

If represented
by others

16%

If unrepresented

WE ARE ENABLING COMMUNITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SURVIVORS THROUGH

training and education

Tahirih's outreach programs provide thousands of frontline professionals and community members with an understanding of unique obstacles that immigrant survivors face in the wake of violence, as well as the essential tools needed to help.

IN 2019, WE:

Trained and educated **13,747** frontline professionals and community members, including attorneys, judges, police officers, healthcare staff, and social service providers

Responded to calls from **312** lawyers and service providers from **17** countries and **20** states who needed expert advice

Educated the public and framed the national dialogue on how asylum policies are discussed, providing contextual analysis through **6** reporter briefings attended by top immigration reporters at the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Associated Press*, *NBC News*, and *Vice*.

Welcomed **128,414** users to Tahirih.org and **21,448** users to PreventForcedMarriage.org, connecting more people than ever before to our urgent mission

Surpassed **3.28 million** views on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube, sparking vital conversations about issues that impact the safety and dignity of survivors

Saw **1,677** page views of our Pro Bono Attorney E-Library (an online resource with practice tips and guidelines)



Chriselle Raguro (far left) and Skadden Legal Fellow, Nikki Endsley (third from right), at an event hosted by the Asian American Bar Association's Civil Rights Committee



Tahirih Senior Policy Counsel, Jeanne Smoot, and Atlanta Office Executive Director, Shana Tabak, with survivor, Sherry Johnson, at Governor's signing of a new Georgia law to end child marriage.

WE ARE FOSTERING LASTING CHANGE THROUGH

non-partisan advocacy

Tahirih's policy team amplifies the voices of immigrant survivors in communities, courts, and Congress to bring about systemic change, ensuring that laws and policies protect survivors from violence and exploitation.

IN 2019, WE:

Achieved House passage of a bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act in coalition with partner organizations and advocated for passage in the Senate

Educated members of Congress and influenced hearings of Administration officials by submitting testimony and questions

Drafted bill text to better protect refugees fleeing gender-based violence

Stalled 13 proposed policies that would harm immigrant survivors by filing written opposition

Litigated on behalf of immigrant survivors through 4 major federal impact lawsuits, 15 supportive legal briefs, and 2 federal lawsuits for clients who were unfairly denied protection



Casey Swegman and Hellitz Villegas of Tahirih's Forced Marriage Initiative present at the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence's annual conference.

WE ARE WORKING TO END

child and forced marriage in the united states

Tahirih's Forced Marriage Initiative (FMI) leads the national movement to protect the rights of individuals fleeing forced marriages and is a vehicle to address systemic issues that leave hundreds of women and girls (and men and boys) vulnerable to this human rights abuse every year.

IN 2019, WE:

Won strong reforms to help end child marriage in Georgia and Ohio, working closely with survivor-advocates, pro bono partners, bipartisan champions, and other allies, and helped inspire reforms in **7** other states

Triaged **237** emergency requests for assistance from survivors and individuals at risk as well as advocates, allies, and other professionals helping those facing forced marriage — from **18** states and nearly **every region** of the globe

Equipped **1,246** frontline professionals with critical tools to identify forced marriage and support victims

Launched our **first ever** virtual Survivors Forum to provide confidential chat room space where former and current clients of the FMI could share in community and provide support to one another with facilitation from the FMI team

ANA'S STORY

I was raised in a Honduran village that had little economic opportunity. I went to school until 6th grade and then had to work to support myself. When I was 23 years old, I met a man named Wilmer and we moved in together. Initially happy, everything changed when Wilmer became abusive. He forbade me to leave the house by myself.

I tried to separate from Wilmer several times, even moving in with my brother, but Wilmer came after me. I could not even contact the police because Wilmer had a friend on the force who would make sure nothing was done to help me.

After years of living in fear, I knew that I had to leave Honduras for my safety. I first attempted to seek asylum in the U.S. in 2010, but was caught by Mexican authorities and returned to Honduras.

Wilmer found me again and the abuse continued. I fled to the U.S. for the second time in 2011, but was immediately detained and placed in removal proceedings.

While detained, I was introduced to the Tahirih Justice Center whose staff and pro bono partners were able to provide the legal support I needed as I fought for asylum in the U.S. In July of 2013, two years after fleeing my home, I had a hearing with an immigration judge who would determine whether my fear of violence was credible enough to warrant asylum. Although he believed me and found me credible, he denied my asylum case because he felt that survivors of domestic violence like me did not qualify for asylum. Tahirih appealed the ruling and it was another two years before a decision came from the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA).

During that time, I could not apply for a work permit and could not get an ID. I struggled to support myself and, as a non-English speaking immigrant, relied on my Tahirih legal representatives and social service case workers for guidance.

In August of 2015, the BIA granted my appeal and sent my case back to the same immigration judge. Tahirih helped me apply for a work permit while waiting for the new trial. Then, in April of 2016, six years after my initial escape from the violence and persecution I endured in Honduras, I was finally granted asylum.



A portrait of Julie Carpenter, a woman with short dark hair, wearing a leopard print top and a pearl necklace. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue overlay on the left and bottom.

UPHOLDING THE *rule of law*

Over the past few years, we have witnessed an unprecedented level of attacks on legal protections for immigrant survivors of gender-based violence. The pace of executive orders, new rules and regulations, and other policies have made it all but impossible for survivors to obtain the safeguards they merit under U.S. law.

Within the rapidly changing legal landscape, Tahirih has built a specialized team focused on federal litigation, challenging harmful policies in court, and advocating for our clients and other immigrant survivors. We are fighting back with newly forged tools to uphold the rights of all immigrant survivors to access justice. Here's a look at what we accomplished in 2019 with your support.

► We are co-counseling a class-action lawsuit on behalf of U visa applicants who have been denied their legal rights.

Right now, thousands of survivors of violence and other victims of crime are waiting four or more years just to get on a wait list, after which they'll wait another several years to receive a U visa. **Tahirih is leading the suit** so that all immigrant survivors have fair access to the benefits Congress provides in the U visa program.

“WE GO TO FEDERAL COURT TO DEMAND THAT OUR CLIENTS—AND ALL SURVIVORS—BE ABLE TO SAFELY CLAIM THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS UNDER THE RULE OF LAW. WHERE CONGRESS HAS OPENED THE DOOR TO SAFETY, AGENCIES CANNOT LEGALLY SLAM IT SHUT.”

JULIE CARPENTER
Senior Litigation Counsel

- ▶ **We filed lawsuits challenging three major policy changes to asylum to ensure that all individuals may have access to a fair process.**



“Remain in Mexico” — Implemented in January 2019, the “Remain in Mexico” policy forces individuals who want to apply for asylum to wait in dangerous conditions in Mexico as their cases continue, without access to legal counsel or trauma-informed services. The right to seek asylum is enshrined in U.S. and international law, but this policy makes it nearly impossible.

Transit asylum ban — Implemented in summer 2019, the transit asylum ban barred everyone approaching the southern border from applying for asylum, with limited exceptions.

Use of Border Patrol officers to conduct credible fear interviews — Beginning in April 2019, the administration allowed Border Patrol officers to interview asylum seekers on their fear of persecution and past harm. The policy wrongly puts the fate of survivors in the hands of law enforcements officials who do not have expertise in asylum law. We filed a lawsuit to uncover information about this change which has been kept secret.

- ▶ **We litigated to defend constitutional rights and legal protections for immigrant women in federal court, submitting legal briefs in 15 different cases and bringing two cases on behalf of Tahirih clients who were denied justice.**

“IN AMICUS BRIEFS, WE TELL OUR CLIENTS’ STORIES TO JUDGES SO THEY WILL UNDERSTAND THE REAL-LIFE EFFECT OF POLICIES THEY ARE REVIEWING. THAT MATTERS WHEN AGENCIES HAVE IGNORED THOSE EFFECTS EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO CONSIDER THEM.”

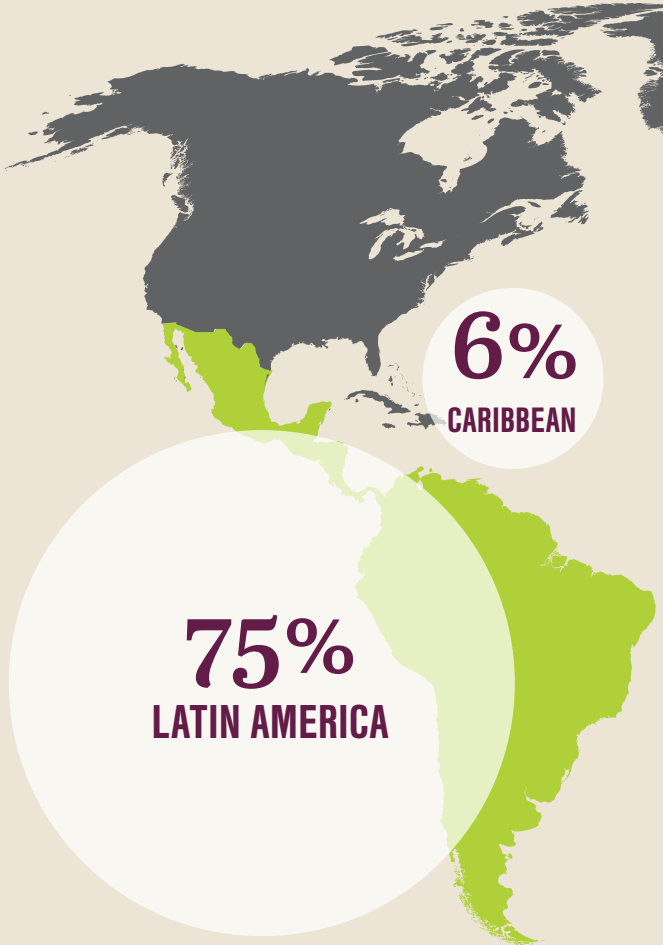
RICHARD CALDARONE
Litigation Counsel

OUR CLIENTS COME FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE, BUT NOW LIVE IN THE UNITED STATES

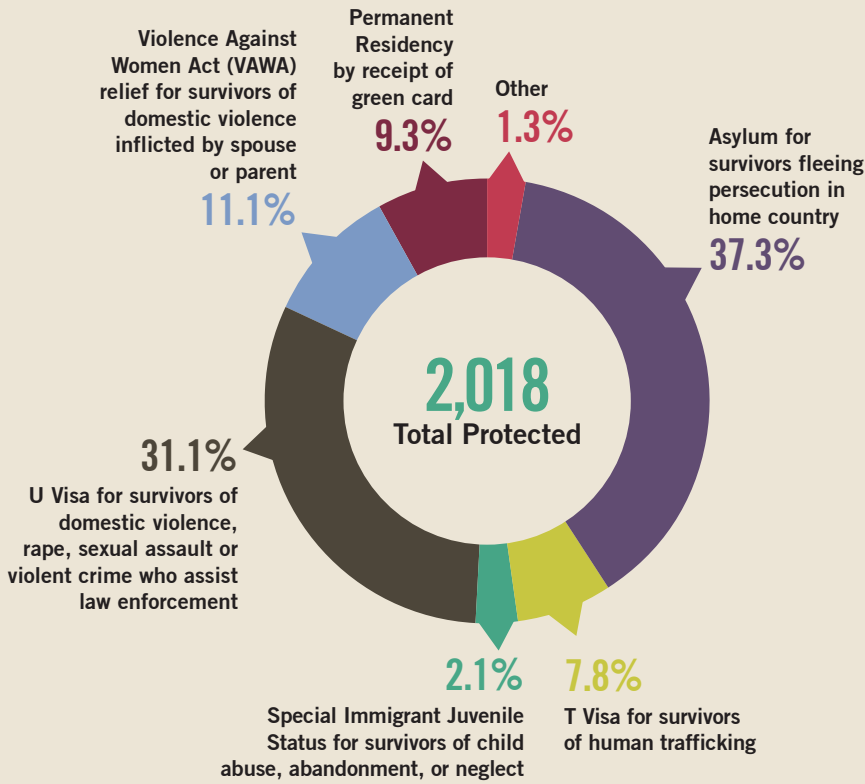
In 2019, our top 5 countries of origin were:

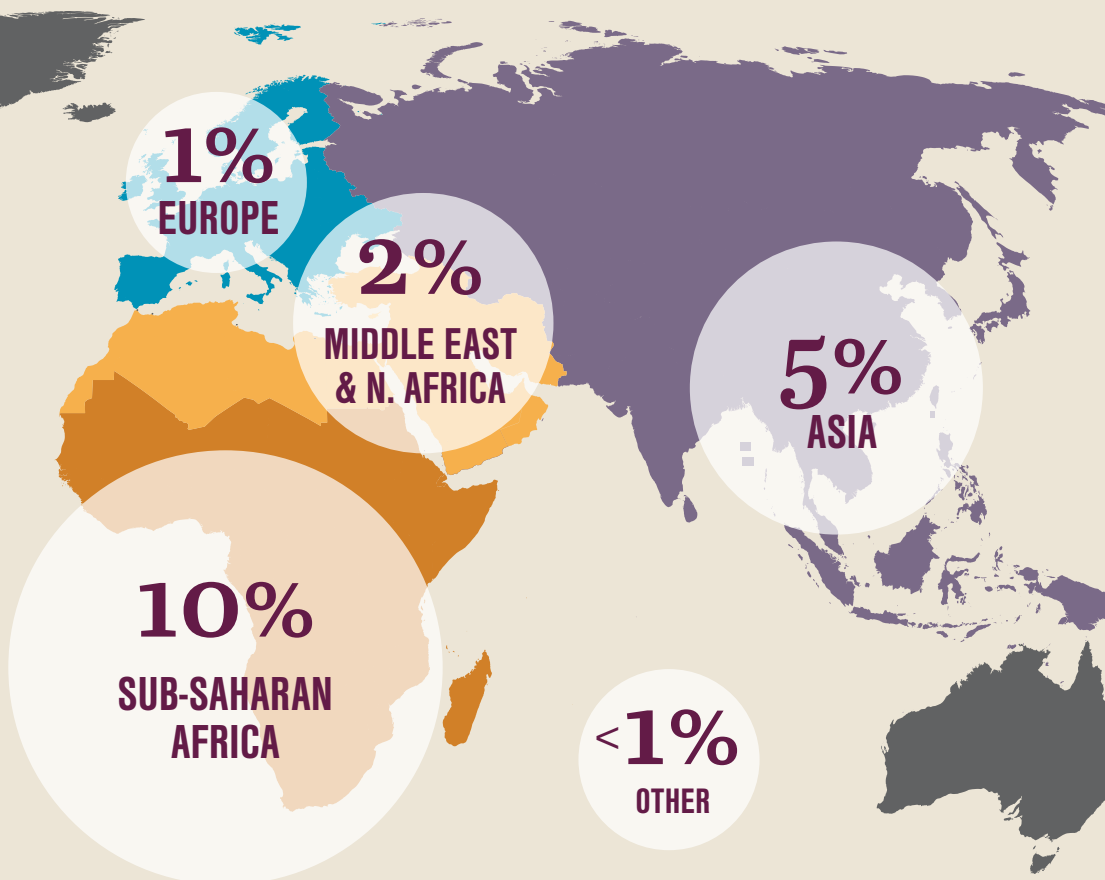
- 1. Honduras
- 2. El Salvador
- 3. México
- 4. Guatemala
- 5. Nigeria

In addition to experiencing violence in their origin country, about **58% of our clients have also experienced violence** since coming here to the U.S.



TYPES OF IMMIGRATION PROTECTIONS IN 2019





2019 TRENDS

Individuals provided direct representation services increased by

↑ **5%**

Individuals provided Forced Marriage Initiative case management services increased by

↑ **3%**

Individuals provided support in family law cases increased by

↑ **35%**

“I ALWAYS HAD THE WILL TO BE FREE, BUT I DIDN’T HAVE THE WAY. THROUGH TAHIRIH, I GAINED ACCESS TO THE LEGAL ASSISTANCE, SUPPORT, AND RESOURCES I NEEDED TO BE FREE. I HAD THE WILL AND TAHIRIH PROVIDED THE WAY.”

AICHA

former Tahirih client, survivor of forced marriage and domestic violence



TORN APART: SEPARATED AT THE BORDER

In October 2019, HBO released *Torn Apart: Separated at the Border*, a documentary featuring Tahirih Atlanta client, Vilma Carrillo, and her journey to reunite with her daughter, Yeisvi.

In May 2018, Vilma Carrillo and her then 11-year-old daughter, Yeisvi, escaped to the United States from Guatemala after years of severe domestic violence at the hands of her daughter's father. When they arrived at the border, they were immediately separated.

Yeisvi, a U.S. citizen, could not be held in detention, so she was placed in foster care in Arizona while Vilma was put in detention in Georgia — 2,000 miles away. In addition, because Vilma could not be with her daughter, the state of Arizona began dependency hearings against her, putting her in jeopardy of losing her parental rights permanently.

Finally, after 246 days of separation, Vilma was released and reunified with her daughter.

To help viewers better understand and discuss the impact of recent policies that are eroding legal protections for immigrant survivors of gender-based violence, Tahirih developed a watch guide to accompany the documentary:

Vilma's Story: Learn more about Vilma's search for safety and journey to be reunited with her daughter.

A Guide to Understanding Asylum in the United States:

Get background information on asylum law and other immigration policies that impact asylum seekers.

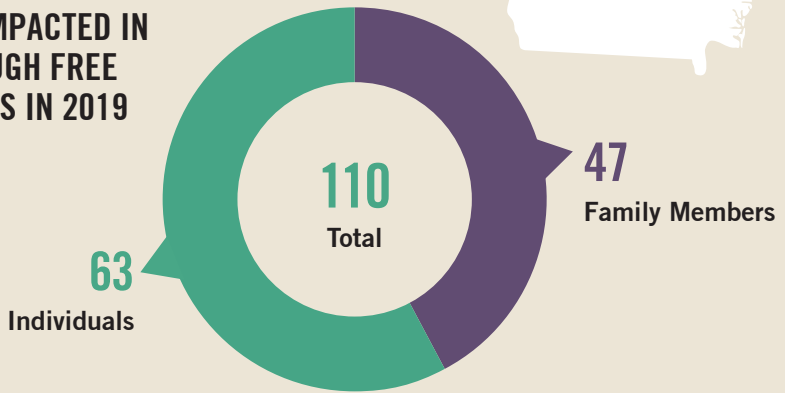
Torn Apart: Separated at the Border Discussion Questions: Use these questions to spark conversation about how we can all be better advocates for women like Vilma.

▶ tahirih.org/tornapart

OUR AWARD-WINNING MODEL FOR
SERVICE SUPPORTED CLIENTS IN
FIVE, HIGH-NEED LOCATIONS

Atlanta

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED IN
ATLANTA THROUGH FREE
LEGAL SERVICES IN 2019



ATLANTA BY THE NUMBERS

41

Clients and their family
members connected to
vital social services

17

Attorneys in
Pro Bono Network

1,401

Community members
and frontline
professionals trained

IN 2019, ATLANTA:

Was profiled in HBO documentary, *Torn Apart: Separated at the Border*, which explores the traumas and triumphs of our client, Vilma Carrillo, who fled life-threatening violence in Guatemala to seek safe haven in the United States, only to be detained and separated from her daughter, Yeisvi, for eight months

Responded to the humanitarian crisis at the U.S.–Mexico border by sending bilingual staff on three separate trips to defend immigrant and refugee rights

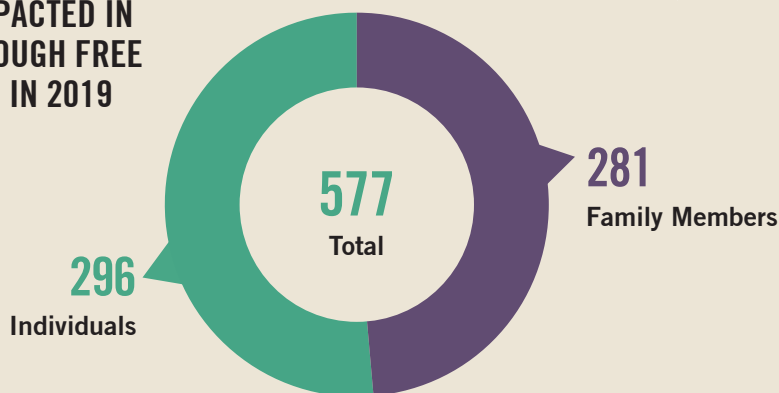
Challenged inhumane and illegal immigration policies through Tahirih’s Atlanta Appellate Project’s litigation in 8 appeals at the Board of Immigration Appeals and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, as well as two amicus briefs

Engaged in broad-based coalition work to advance a bill, signed by Georgia Governor Brian Kemp, to raise the legal age of marriage in Georgia, preventing child marriage

Partnered with the National Center for Civil and Human Rights to organize a delegation to the U.S.–Mexico border led by former Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin, taking a first-hand look at the impact of current U.S. immigration and refugee policy

Baltimore

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED IN BALTIMORE THROUGH FREE LEGAL SERVICES IN 2019



BALTIMORE BY THE NUMBERS

95

Clients and their family members connected to vital social services

16

Clients provided family law services

120

Pro bono attorneys who co-counseled cases

807

Community members and frontline professionals trained

IN 2019, BALTIMORE:

Expanded our capacity by hiring a Staff Attorney and a Development Associate

Hosted an interactive housing workshop for clients in both English and Spanish that touched on important subjects such as apartment searching, tenant rights, understanding credit, and buying a home

Presented an overview of Tahirih's services for 60 law enforcement professionals and other service providers at a meeting of the Baltimore City Human Trafficking Collaborative

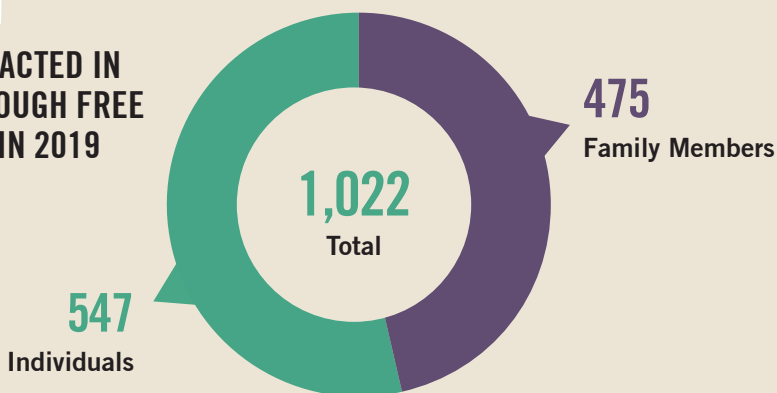
Created a bilingual Family Preparedness Toolkit and mailed Know Your Rights materials to clients under increased risk of deportation due to the expedited removal policy

Conducted 20 training and outreach events that reached more than 800 professionals and community members throughout Greater Baltimore



Greater DC

**INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED IN
GREATER DC THROUGH FREE
LEGAL SERVICES IN 2019**



GREATER DC BY THE NUMBERS

104

Clients and their family members connected to vital social services

75

Clients provided family law services

332

Pro bono attorneys who co-counseled cases

1,976

Community members and frontline professionals trained

IN 2019, GREATER DC:

Established new partnerships with House of Ruth and the Victim Legal Network of DC to better address mental health, housing, and additional legal service needs for immigrant survivors of violence in the Greater DC area

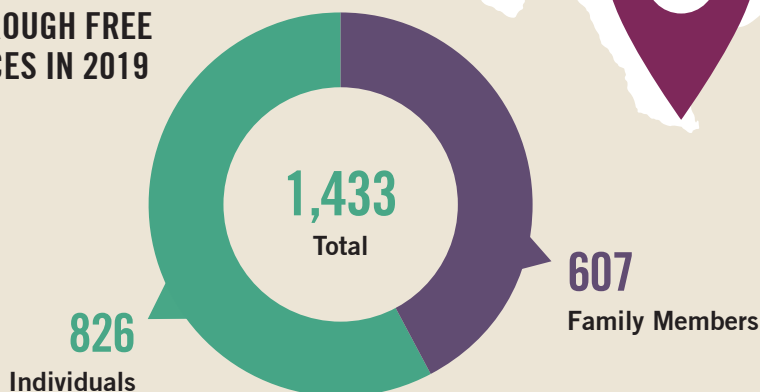
Presented at the National Sexual Assault Conference and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Conference on interdisciplinary, holistic legal and social services for immigrant survivors

Published a scholarly article featured in the Center for Migration Studies, "Access to Justice in a Climate of Fear: New Hurdles and Barriers for Survivors of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence"

Hired a Community Engagement & Strategic Partnerships Manager and a new Managing Attorney

Houston

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED IN HOUSTON THROUGH FREE LEGAL SERVICES IN 2019



HOUSTON BY THE NUMBERS

227

Clients and their family members connected to vital social services

16

Clients provided family law services

244

Pro bono attorneys who co-counseled cases

5,324

Community members and frontline professionals trained

IN 2019, HOUSTON:

Commemorated 10 years in the Houston community, growing from a staff of two in 2009 to a staff of 25 today

Hit the ground running on Houston's local public policy initiative (launched in 2018), working to transform local and regional policies and practices that directly impact immigrant survivors of violence and assisting Tahirih's national policy team with federal advocacy efforts wherever possible

Celebrated the impact of Tahirih's 2018 anti-child marriage bill in Texas with data that shows a 90% reduction in the number of minors married in Texas (18 minors married compared to 175 in a similar time period before the law was passed)

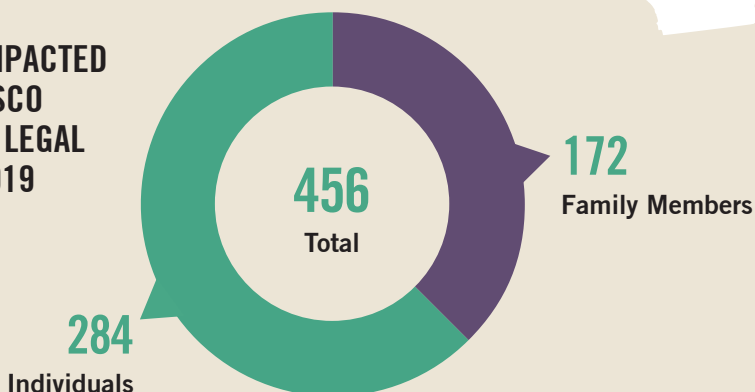
Established partnerships in outlying counties to provide much-needed services to immigrant survivors, as well as holistic training for local officials to better meet their needs

Developed a pilot program to address complaints of inefficiencies and biases by judges in immigration court by utilizing staff and volunteers to conduct a rigorous evaluation of Houston immigration courts, the data and results of which can be used in local policy advocacy efforts in 2020

San Francisco Bay Area



INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED
IN SAN FRANCISCO
THROUGH FREE LEGAL
SERVICES IN 2019



SAN FRANCISCO BY THE NUMBERS

63

Clients and their family members connected to vital social services

2

Clients provided family law services

120

Pro bono attorneys who co-counseled cases

2,035

Community members and frontline professionals trained

IN 2019, THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA:

Partnered with Airbnb; Asian Law Alliance; Bay Area Legal Aid; Cisco; Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom; and many more to multiply the impact of our clinics

Launched the Silicon Valley Pro Bono Immigration Network (SVPBIN) to connect law firms and corporations to pro bono opportunities serving immigrant communities in Silicon Valley and the Bay Area

Redoubled our efforts in addressing social impact by increasing our social services team to better meet survivor needs

Responded to the humanitarian crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border by sending half our team to Tijuana, Mexico and McAllen, TX to collaborate with other organizations defending immigrant rights

Challenged inhumane and illegal immigration policies in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit through individual and impact litigation



A very special thanks to our donors who made our work possible through generous financial support in 2019:

CORPORATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Airbnb
BNY Mellon Wealth Management
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Continuum Analytics, Inc.
Crowell & Moring LLP
Delivering on the Dream
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Women's Bar Association Foundation

World Bank Community
Connections Fund

Zanvyl and Isabelle Krieger Fund

Zellerbach Family Foundation

GOVERNMENTS

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of Criminal Justice Services

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County of Santa Clara

Department of Health and Human
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Resettlement, via USCRI subgrant

Department of Justice,
Office for Victims of Crime

Department of Justice,
Office on Violence Against Women

District of Columbia, Office of
Victim Services and Justice Grants

Government of District of Columbia

Maryland Legal Services Corporation

Maryland Victims of Crime Act
Fund (VOCA)

Maryland Victims of Crime Fund (MVOF)

State of Georgia, Criminal Justice
Coordinating Council

State of Maryland, Governor's Office
of Crime Control and Prevention

State of Texas, Department of
Health and Human Services

State of Texas, Office of the
Attorney General

State of Texas, Office of the Governor

State of Texas, Victims of Crime
Assistance Program

Texas Access to Justice Foundation

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USCRI Trafficking Victim
Assistance Program TVAP

Virginia Department of
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Wilmer Cutler Pickering
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Zavala Law Firm, PLLC

INDIVIDUALS

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Laura and John Arnold

\$100,000+

Julian and Kim MacQueen
Holly and Jeremy Taylor

\$50,000 – \$99,999

Molly Gochman
Payam and Gouya Zamani

\$25,000 – \$49,999

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Lisa Hale
Christine Hallen-Berg and
Vincent LaBarbera
Harry Heiman and Abby Friedman
Carelle Karimimanes
Frank Kendall and Elizabeth Halpern
Laura Loeb and Howard Morse
Kerry Mogharebi and Domenick Flory
Dawn Oh
Kim, Laurie, and Claire Peterson
Beverley and Gary Seehoff
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Paul and Sharon Strain
John Tweed
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Sarah and David Vanderveen
Dawn Vermilya

\$5,000 – \$9,999

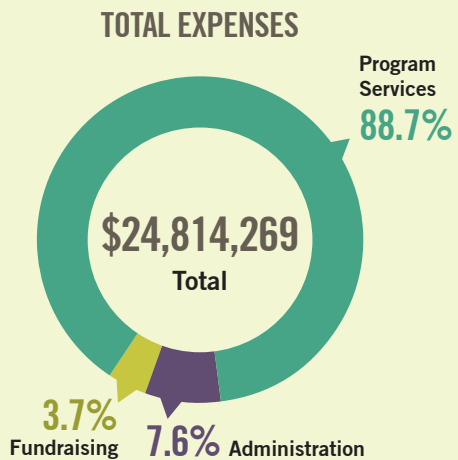
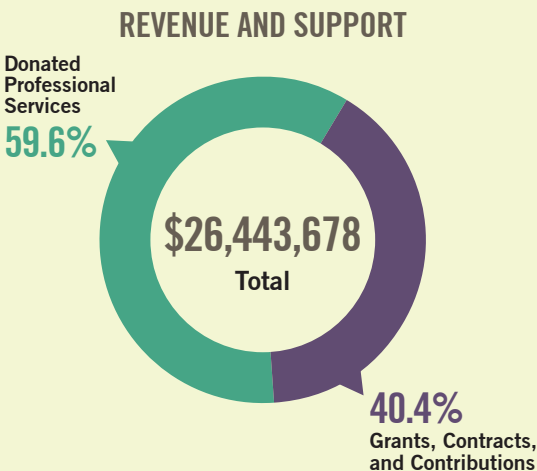
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Parul and Jeremiah Anderson
Penn Badgley
Stephen A. Bonovich
Iris Bourne and Glenn Rogers
Jan and Jerry Buck
Constance Chen
May Chen and Yabo Lin
Robert and Kim Christiansen
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Erin Gibson Cunningham and
Sean Cunningham
Judy and David Hall
Tijana and Paul Hamilton
Charles and Christine Henck
Dasha and Ryan Hodge
Ron Kern
Michael and Tracy Kollin

Roger and Helene Krone
Michael Lainoff and Kathryn Kincaid
Brett Lambert and
Janet Lynch-Lambert
Cathie and Mike Lawler
Ruthy Mata
Clare McCamy
Lawrence Miller and Nadia Saad
Joanne Moore
Daniel and Bahia Muriello
Laura and Andrew Murphy
Karen Pierce
Elissa Preheim
Matthew Quinn
Karyn and Adam Roberts
Hamid Samandari
James Sandman and Elizabeth Mullin
Kylie and Doug Schuyler-Hodge
Francoise Sibi-Levine and David Levine
Hannah Sibiski and Stuart Nance
Mitra and Barry Solomon
Robin Steele
Roy Steiner
Laila and Mehran Taslimi
Susanne Taslimi
Mona and Shane Tedjarati
Dave Thompson
Jennifer Tomsen
Maricarmen Trujillo-Cano
Kelly Tullier and Hugh Johnston
Bijal Vakil
Kirsten Vangsness
Navid and Marjan Yavari

2018 Financials

In 2018, Tahirih had an operating budget of **\$9M**. Thanks to the generosity of our Pro Bono Network of attorneys, medical professionals, and other experts, the value of in-kind donated services was **\$15.8M**, bringing our total budget to **\$24.8M**.

	2018		
	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
REVENUE AND SUPPORT			
Donated (In-Kind) Professional Services	\$ 15,763,451	\$ 0	\$ 15,763,451
Grants and Contributions	8,732,118	1,910,784	10,642,902
Investment Income	34,382	-	34,382
Other Income	2,943	-	2,943
Net Assets Released from Program Restrictions	1,934,032	(1,934,032)	-
Net Assets Released from Time Restrictions	275,000	(275,000)	-
Total Revenue	26,741,926	(298,248)	26,443,678
EXPENSES			
Program	-	-	-
Services	19,610,413	-	19,610,413
Advocacy	2,400,239	-	2,400,239
Total Program Services	22,010,652	-	22,010,652
Supporting Services			
General and Administration	1,887,764	-	1,887,764
Fundraising	915,853	-	915,853
Total Supporting Services	2,803,617	-	2,803,617
Total Expenses	24,814,269	-	24,814,269
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	1,927,657	(298,248)	1,629,409
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	3,764,813	3,150,677	6,915,490
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 5,692,470	\$ 2,852,429	\$ 8,544,899



Our full 2018 financial statements and Independent Audit Report issued by Marcum, LLP can be viewed at tahirih.org. Our 2019 financial statements and audit report were not available at the time of this publication, but will be available online upon completion.



our staff

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*Not until we reach full
equality will we all soar.*

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