



BORDER RIGHTS PROJECT

HELPING REFUGEES SEEK SAFETY IN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

OVERVIEW

The Border Rights Project works with asylum seekers in Tijuana, Mexico, who wish to present themselves to U.S. officials at the port-of-entry. The project provides legal orientation to educate asylum seekers about their rights in the asylum process, as well as how state actors may seek to violate those rights. The project provides accompaniment for asylum seekers to the port-of-entry to ensure that U.S. border officials do not illegally turn them away or separate families. We assist detained clients by providing legal representation and helping them secure their release. Al Otro Lado documents human rights violations by state actors, engages legislators and media to expose these violations, and files complaints to demand accountability for rights violations, including class action litigation in, [Al Otro Lado v. Kelly](#).

THE NEED



The right to seek refuge from persecution is under attack worldwide, and the United States is no different. At the U.S.-Mexico border, U.S. officials systematically refuse to process asylum seekers in violation of both federal and international law, placing asylum seekers in grave danger. Under the Trump Administration, asylum seekers are now also subject to prolonged and inhumane detention with limited opportunities for release, resulting in increased family separation and individual abuses against detained asylum seekers. More often than not, asylum seekers are housed in for-profit detention centers and cut off from legal counsel, with little knowledge of the asylum process or the ability to gather evidence to support their claims. This inability to

mount a proper defense results in hundreds of asylum seekers being deported back to their death each week. Such a system cannot stand, and it is through individual and broader policy-based advocacy that the Border Rights Project works to address the urgent needs of individuals and families fleeing persecution.

WHAT YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL ACCOMPLISH

\$5,000 Pays for one Refugee Clinic, providing legal orientation for up to 50 refugee families

\$60,000 Pays for one full-time Legal Assistant, drastically increasing program capacity

\$90,000 One full-time Attorney representing dozens of refugee families in court

DONATE TODAY AT [HTTPS://ALOTROLADO.ORG/TAKE-ACTION/DONATE/](https://alotrolado.org/take-action/donate/)



BORDER RIGHTS PROJECT

HELPING REFUGEES SEEK SAFETY IN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

OUR CLIENTS

To date, Al Otro Lado staff and volunteers have accompanied over 700 asylum seekers to the U.S. border, and has advocated before U.S. and international courts, agencies, and human rights bodies to ensure their rights are protected.



Sarai fled Honduras due to threats against her life and the lives of her family members for their refusal to cooperate with the extortion demands of gangs. After fleeing to Mexico, Sarai met another Central American man with whom she began a friendship. However, seeing that Sarai was vulnerable, this man forced Sarai into a relationship against her will, claiming her as his property, and forcing her to have a child with him, while severely abusing her. Sarai made many attempts to escape her abuser,

relocating within Mexico with her child. However, her abuser found her each and every time, beating her for every escape attempt. Despite making numerous reports to police, and going into hiding, her abuser found them. With no other choice, Sarai made her way to the border, arriving in Tijuana at a women's shelter, where she encountered attorneys from Al Otro Lado. Ever persistent, Sarai's abuser found her in Tijuana, and established himself in a men's shelter nearby.

Al Otro Lado worked with Sarai to prepare her application for asylum in the United States. Al Otro Lado staff and volunteers accompanied Sarai and her son to the San Ysidro port-of-entry, but Customs and Border Protection turned Sarai away from the gate and refused to process her as an asylum seeker.

For the next several days, Al Otro Lado staff hid Sarai in safe housing, as her abuser was still searching for her, until we were able to successfully advocate with U.S. officials at the port-of-entry on her behalf, after which she gained entry. After passing her credible fear interview, Sarai and her son have now been released from family detention, and have been connected with pro bono counsel. Her asylum case proceeds through the court system, and she and her son look forward to a future free from violence.