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SURVIVORS

INTERNATIONAL



Providing critical
psychological, medical
and social services
to survivors of torture
and gender based violence

no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Survivors International is a non-profit organization providing psychological, medical, and social services to survivors of torture and gender persecution who have fled from their country of origin to the San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California. The mission of Survivors International is to heal the wounds of torture and gender-based violence suffered, and to put an end to torture and discriminatory violence worldwide. Through our multi-disciplinary network of over 50 professionals and volunteers, we provide services at low or no-cost, offering survivors the tools and support to re-establish healthy lives.



Without Survivors International, where would I be? Nowhere. I would be dead, probably.

- Survivors International client

Since 1990, more than 2,200 survivors have come to us from over 100 countries, each having overcome unique challenges to arrive at our door. A Nepali student who fought against the Maoists, a Chinese judge who disagreed with Communist rule, Mungiki women forced into circumcision then marriage and rape, a Mexican transgendered woman held captive by her own family as a slave and beaten regularly – each client has endured countless acts of violence, the effects of which continue to compromise their wellness.



Effects of these abuses range from sleeplessness to nightmares to fear of authority figures or men. However, these adverse effects are counterbalanced by great resiliency and a capacity to heal.

Today, torture continues to be used throughout the world in this way for political purposes by governments against individuals as well as whole communities. Through the Gender Asylum and Recovery Project, Survivors International includes those who have endured systematic violence as a result of being a woman or a sexual minority in this definition. This targeted project supports survivors of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, female genital mutilation, trafficking, and hate violence against gay, lesbian and transgender individuals who are not protected from persecution by their governments.

Direct Services for Survivors include:

- Individual psychotherapy for children and adults, including ongoing clinical work as well as short-term emergency interventions
- Support groups for targeted populations
- Forensic psychological and medical evaluations for political asylum
- Psychiatric medication management and counseling
- Medical consultation and referrals for primary care
- Links to local agencies that provide assistance for food, shelter, education, and employment
- One-on-one support with day-to-day living needs and accompaniment to appointments
- Community-based solidarity events

Education, Training and Research:

We believe that it is not enough to simply provide services for survivors of torture; rather, it is vital to also take a stance against torture and to engage in community education to improve the quality of services and legal representation for survivors, including:

1. Educating the general public about the use of torture and actions to stop it.
2. Training judges, asylum officers, lawyers, physicians, psychologists, social workers and government officials on treatment, documentation and best practices.
3. Developing and disseminating standards of treatment and assessment
4. Supporting the development of policies and proclamations that will aid survivors in their healing
5. Ensuring that US legislation and United Nations Protocols provide adequate protections for human rights, including a US commitment to end the use of torture.
6. Participating in national and state-wide data collection efforts to further the body of research available in the field
7. Publishing books and articles on torture