



justiceinmotion™

Protecting Migrant Rights Across Borders



Business is global. People are global. Justice should be global too.

We see the world becoming more connected and global.

But protections and rights guaranteed in one country are difficult to enforce across a border. All too often, justice stops at the border.

When justice is compromised, so are migrants, families, businesses, and you.

Some companies whose products and services we use every day take advantage of these obstacles to cheat migrant workers out of honestly earned wages. This has become business as usual.

People trying to reunite with family or flee from abuses in their home country face hurdles that put their lives at risk.

Justice in Motion is dedicated to exposing and overcoming these injustices. Through a network of on-the-ground human rights partners, Justice in Motion makes sure that wherever migrants go, their rights will follow.

justiceinmotionTM
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**They were promised
the minimum wage.
They received far less.**

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We all know minimum wage is not a living wage.

Even worse, some employers fake paying the minimum wage by demanding kickback payments from workers after the check is cashed. This is what happened to Guatemalan and Mexican workers who were also cheated out of travel reimbursements owed them.

A lawsuit was brought against the unscrupulous employer by US lawyers on behalf of 20 Mexican workers. After learning that Guatemalan workers had suffered the same abuses, a Justice in Motion Defender was engaged to locate the workers who had by then returned to Guatemala.

The Defender traveled to remote villages, locating five workers. He educated them about their rights and helped them with the necessary paperwork to opt-in to the lawsuit.

The addition of the five Guatemalan workers helped strengthen the case for the Mexican workers, and a settlement of \$1,000 to \$2,000 was finally paid to each plaintiff.



© Stock photo

Fifteen years ago, migrant workers from Mexico who came to the US as Christmas tree workers were subjected to substandard living conditions in a dilapidated hotel.

Broken toilets, no heat, cockroaches, rats, and leaking ceilings were just a few of the issues that confronted these workers. Once they returned to their homes in Mexico, there was little hope that they would receive compensation for suffering such squalid living conditions.

Ultimately, a legal aid organization in Virginia stepped in and sued the owners of the hotel and won a housing discrimination lawsuit on behalf of these workers. The organization was then able to distribute the money from this case to all but three workers who had returned to Mexico.

After fifteen years of futile attempts to locate the other workers, Justice in Motion was called in to help facilitate a solution. Through our Defender Network, we were able to immediately identify a local partner who had deep ties to the migrant community in Oaxaca, where these workers were believed to be located. The three workers were quickly found and subsequently awarded the long-overdue damages.



There's a bittersweet story behind that juicy orange.

© Stock photo

Did you know that harvesting oranges can be backbreaking work or that migrants may have been exploited to increase profits?

Mexican farmworkers carrying up to 110 pounds of oranges around their necks were pressured to pick quickly. Guaranteed \$9.96/hour, they ended up being paid by the satchel instead, earning less than promised and less than minimum wage.

A lawsuit was filed in Florida on behalf of the exploited workers. The court required signatures within 15 days but many of the workers had already returned to Mexico. Undeterred by the dangers ahead, a Justice in Motion Defender drove for more than two hours into a remote and politically unstable region of Oaxaca to get a worker's signature. Finding that heavy rains had washed away the road, she continued on foot for another 2 hours until she found the worker.

The Defender's efforts paid off. Damages were awarded to the plaintiffs and working conditions improved. The broader positive outcome was that these and other workers were empowered to speak out against disrespect and abuse.



He saved the forest. And your home.

© Stock photo

Most people think indentured servitude ended long ago in the United States, but that's not entirely true.

A private forestry company recruited dozens of workers from the rural Mexican state of Chiapas to thin and clear forest brush on federal land. The workers were brought to the US and told that they would be able to work for eight months.

Upon arriving, they were housed in a makeshift labor camp and given only a few hours of work each week. When they were paid — for just a fraction of the hours they had been promised — they found that additional deductions had been taken from their wages for rent, travel from Mexico, and other unauthorized and unexplainable expenses. Between the limited hours they worked and these deductions, the wages were so low that they didn't even have enough money to buy food. When the workers complained and tried to remedy the situation with US authorities, the company summarily fired them.

A lawsuit was filed on behalf of the workers. Justice in Motion was called upon to locate a number of the workers in Chiapas to gather information and signed documents from them for the case. After a long legal process, the forestry company finally paid up. The recovered money made a big difference in the workers' lives. One worker used his recovered wages to expand his small grocery business, eliminating the need to migrate again.

Bread on the table.



© Stock photo

From your favorite local sandwich shop to the newest 5-star restaurant, there's likely a hard-working cook or dishwasher in the back of the house. It might surprise you how many of these people are migrant workers and how often they are cheated by restaurateurs to increase profitability. It's called wage theft.

Antonio worked at a restaurant in Arkansas where wage theft was rampant, including unpaid overtime. Learning about the restaurant's practices, students at the University of Arkansas Law School wanted to help Antonio recover his stolen wages. To represent him, they needed his signature on legal documents, but Antonio had already returned home to Guanajuato, Mexico.

The students thought they had reached an impasse but then learned about Justice in Motion and reached out for help. Justice in Motion contacted one of their human rights Defenders in Mexico. The Defender traveled to Guanajuato, met with Antonio, and got the necessary signatures for the case to move forward.

This ultimately led to a large settlement for Antonio involving tens of thousands of dollars. It may also lead to settlements on behalf of other workers at the same restaurant. For the students, this case demonstrated that justice can be served, even across borders. For restaurant workers everywhere, it sends the message to restaurateurs that wage theft will not be tolerated.



If your children were not safe, what would you do?

© Stock photo

Disengaging from an abusive relationship can be difficult and often legal issues just intensify the emotional ones. But in many countries, legal protections on paper do not produce real help in practice. Then what?

A Guatemalan mother fleeing an abusive ex-partner went to San Francisco to seek safety for herself and her three children, ages 10, 15, and 17. Because the father was abusive, the children were eligible for Special Immigrant Juvenile status. A local community organization began proceedings but they hit a snag when a US family court required that sole custody be granted to the mother. For this to happen, the father in Guatemala City had to be informed in person and agree to give up custody.

Having heard that the father might be in prison, and if not in prison, could be dangerous when drunk, the mother was reluctant to send a family member to serve the notice. Instead, the immigration attorney contacted Justice in Motion to send a professional to carry out this crucial part of the process. A Defender from the Justice in Motion Network in Guatemala City tracked down the father, served the notice, and obtained his signature agreeing to give up custody of the children.

As a result of the Defender's efficient actions, the mother won sole custody and the children's petition is now pending before US immigration authorities. Feeling safe and relieved, the children are in school and doing well. Hopefully they will receive their green cards and a shot at the opportunities all children deserve.



He wanted to be a police officer.

© Stock photo

Recreational drugs may seem harmless, but the cartels that supply them harm anyone who gets in their way. To commit their crimes with impunity, the drug cartels even threaten the police, preventing them from doing their jobs.

Romualdo had a dream of becoming a police officer one day. He wanted to help restore order in his home country of Guatemala, and after passing the police exam, was looking forward to living his dream. But when the local cartel heard he was going to become a police officer they initiated a threatening campaign of fear tactics. Eventually, fearing for his life, Romualdo fled to the US and sought asylum in an immigration proceeding. He had only three weeks to prove he was being persecuted for wanting to be a police officer.

The lawyer representing Romualdo knew they would have to produce proof that his client had actually taken the police exam, although he also knew that proof would be difficult to obtain. He reached out to Justice in Motion who contacted a Defender in Guatemala to get the necessary evidence.

The Defender got the critical evidence to the lawyer before the deadline. Upon hearing the good news, Romualdo broke down in tears.



Sally's journey crossed boundaries and borders.

© Stock photo

Being who you are can be difficult, but for some people it's life threatening.

Sally's transition from male to female made her vulnerable to harassment and even attack—she was thrown out of a window, suffering a traumatic head injury in which part of her skull was permanently damaged. As a victim of crime committed in the US, Sally, a Honduran citizen, was eligible for a visa to stay in the US legally but she was never informed of this right.

Sally remained in the US, but years later, was detained for immigration violations. While in detention, an advocacy group realized Sally's eligibility for a visa due to the hate crime. Lawyers initiated the process, but before they could get her released, local immigration authorities unlawfully and forcibly deported Sally back to Honduras.

Those trying to help Sally had no idea where she was and no way to contact her. Knowing Honduras to be hostile to transgender people, compounded by her vulnerability due to the head injury, they were extremely concerned about her safety. That's when they reached out to Justice in Motion for help.

Justice in Motion immediately contacted a member of the Defender Network in Honduras. Within one hour, the Defender located Sally and put her in touch with her lawyers. They are currently fighting to keep her safe and bring her back to the US.



© Photography by David Bacon

THE ISSUES

The problems that we are trying to solve

1 Labor Abuse

Problem

Some employers increase their profits by cheating workers of hard-earned pay and denying them rights protected by law.

Solution

We ensure that legal protections cross borders to stop employers from using, abusing, and disposing of foreign workers.

2 Abandonment, Violence, and Persecution

Problem

People fleeing violence and abuse are often denied a safe haven and sent back to the dangerous conditions they fled.

Solution

We help children in need of safety, asylum seekers, and crime victims by collecting crucial evidence in the countries from which they fled. This evidence is used in proceedings to apply for the various humanitarian immigration protections that the US government extends to survivors. If requirements are met, they no longer need to live in fear and on the run.

3 Human Trafficking

Problem

Slavery still exists today. Traffickers manipulate the US visa system, promising good employment to lure migrants and then enslaving them in exploitative jobs.

Solution

We provide educational programs for migrants and advocate for policy reform to close the loopholes that traffickers use. When migrants know their rights and the resources available to them before they migrate, they have a better chance of preventing exploitation or getting help.

**HOW
WE
DO
IT**

Person abused in the US goes home or
person seeking safety flees to the US



Evidence, testimony, or signed documents needed
from home country for the case to proceed (timing,
cost, security concerns, or lack of knowledge prohibit
US advocates from travelling to home country)



Lawyer or advocate enlists help of Justice in Motion to
get necessary evidence or supporting documents



Justice in Motion reaches out to the Defender Network
and directly connects US advocate to a local Defender



Defender obtains the necessary evidence or
supporting documents in the home country



Critical documents sent to lawyer or advocate
ensuring that the case can advance



Our Defender Network currently includes more than 40 organizations in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.

Justice in Motion provides ongoing trainings to the Defender Network equipping them with the knowledge they need to engage in this cross-border work. The trainings cover many topics such as human trafficking, employment rights, immigration, and recruitment fraud and abuse. Defenders use that knowledge to conduct community outreach and education, positioning themselves as a resource in their communities. They are trained by Justice in Motion to handle legal actions and engage in local policy advocacy on behalf of people from their communities migrating to the US and Canada.

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DEFENDER
NETWORK



Honduras

Nicaragua

El Salvador

Advocacy

A black and white photograph of the United States Capitol building. The dome is the central focus, with its intricate architectural details and the Statue of Freedom on top. To the left, an American flag flies on a tall pole. To the right, a portion of the building's portico with columns is visible. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds. The word 'Advocacy' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font in the upper left quadrant of the image.

© Stock photo

We educate and push governments to protect the workers that employers bring to the US or Canada by ensuring transparency and accountability in the temporary foreign worker visa system.

We work with governments in Mexico and Central America to ensure that the recruitment of their citizens to work abroad is free of fraud and abuse and that they help their citizens achieve justice across borders when their labor is exploited abroad.



Testimonials

“I applaud Justice in Motion for taking on the challenging issues of migrant justice and for their determination in seeking thoughtful and impactful solutions.”

Richard Blumenthal, Senator

“Global Workers has brought the issue of human trafficking, specifically involving temporary foreign workers, to the forefront. They have spurred Congress to focus attention on this problem and create legislation to address it. This innovative organization has the capabilities to identify urgent issues of our time and quickly deploy solutions.”

Jim Himes, U.S. Representative

“Justice in Motion is a valued partner in the fight to combat human trafficking and labor exploitation for domestic workers. From innovative programs to a unique on-the-ground network, they help bring the hidden issues of our economy to the forefront.”

Ai-Jen Poo, Executive Director, National Domestic Workers Alliance

“When it comes to ensuring the rights of migrant workers across borders, Justice in Motion addresses a gap in global justice. Through their creative and innovative work, they have a strong positive impact on the populations they serve.”

Rhonda Brownstein, Legal Director, Southern Poverty Law Center

“For abused migrant workers, returning home no longer means being silenced, thanks to the work of Justice in Motion.”

Rebecca Smith, Deputy Director, National Employment Law Project

“Justice in Motion is a leader in the anti-trafficking movement. Informed by their critical services and outreach, Justice in Motion skillfully advocates for stronger US laws and policies. They bring commitment, determination and purpose to their work. The Alliance to End Slavery & Trafficking (ATEST) is pleased to partner with Justice in Motion and looks forward to working together to create measurable impact in the fight to end trafficking in persons and forced labor. Justice in Motion is an invaluable partner in the fight to end human trafficking.”

Melysa Sperber, Director, The Alliance to End Slavery & Trafficking

“Justice in Motion combines hard-hitting research, powerful advocacy, and a cross-border grassroots network. Justice in Motion is an invaluable partner in the fight to end human trafficking.”

Martina Vandenberg, President, The Human Trafficking Pro Bono Legal Center

Meet The Founder



Justice in Motion was founded by **Cathleen Caron** to challenge a developing and unaddressed crisis in the globalizing economy: abused migrant workers being shut out of the justice system because they went home to their families.

Why did you create Justice in Motion?

I created Justice in Motion because I saw firsthand how some businesses were profiting by cheating their migrant workers and then assuming they would be silenced when sent back across the border.

What is the mission of Justice in Motion?

Justice in Motion is dedicated to exposing and overcoming barriers that prevent migrants from obtaining justice for labor abuses or safety from harm.

How does Justice in Motion help migrants?

We ensure that migrants are educated on their rights and resources before they migrate so that they can avoid abusive situations or get out of one and seek help. We also ensure that if migrants return home after suffering abuses in the United States or elsewhere, they can still access the justice system. We do all of this by leveraging, encouraging, and training a network of advocates and resources that already exists in the migrant communities.

What is the Defender Network?

The Defender Network is the cornerstone of Justice in Motion. With the collaboration of the Defenders we demonstrate every day that cross-border justice can be efficiently obtained in a way that is more effective in the short and long term. The Defender Network is made up of human rights organizations or individual advocates in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.

What is your vision for the future for Justice in Motion?

Employers must know that workers are not disposable. Leveling the playing field is an urgent goal for Justice in Motion so that ethical businesses are not undercut by competition from those who cheat workers and then silence them by sending them home.

How do you fund Justice in Motion?

At the moment we are largely funded by private foundations (80%) and individuals who care about migrants (20%). We are looking for more people who care about justice, fair working conditions, and good employers to join us so that we can help more migrants.

How many people work for Justice in Motion?

We are very lean, with a handful of employees advancing our work in seven countries. Our model is very efficient — all energy is focused on helping to protect the migrants.



**Business is global.
People are global.
Justice should be global too.**

Help us protect migrants from exploitation and injustice.
Go to www.justiceinmotion.org and donate today!

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