



NYC FAMILY
JUSTICE CENTERS:
SUPPORTING OUR
FOREIGN-BORN
CLIENTS



Mayor's Office to
End Domestic and
Gender-Based Violence

CECILE NOEL, COMMISSIONER

NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS: SUPPORTING OUR FOREIGN-BORN CLIENTS

Kristina Arakelyan, Maggie Koneazny, Edward Hill

The New York City Family Justice Centers (FJCs) serve a diverse client base and consistently strive to create an inclusive and accessible environment for everyone. The FJCs provide services to gender-based violence survivors in over 10 different languages and employ interpretation services for all other languages.

As part of the routine intake process, client service specialists record the FJC clients country of birth if they choose to report it. This report provides a closer look at the clients- hereafter referred to as "foreign-born" clients- who reported a country of birth other than the United States, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands.

This information helps the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) understand the circumstances and needs of the FJCs' foreign-born client population and tailor community engagement and service provision accordingly.

Highlights

In 2019, there were 7,261 unique foreign-born clients, representing 152 different countries of birth and 59% of FJC clients served, and 4,969 unique U.S.-born clients who visited the Family Justice Centers, representing 41% of FJC clients served. There were key differences between foreign-born Family Justice Center clients and U.S.-born clients, including:

- foreign-born clients visited the Centers more frequently on average (4.5 vs. 3.8 visits);
- foreign-born clients were more likely to report living in a shelter (36.5% vs. 10.9%);
- foreign-born clients were less likely to report open family court (19.2% vs. 26.7%) and criminal court (27.4% vs. 35.4%) cases in their initial intake at the FJC; and
- foreign-born clients were less likely to report that the police had been called in response to domestic violence (56.7% vs. 69.3%) in their initial intake at the FJC.

Suggested citation: Arakelyan K, Koneazny M, Hill E. NYC Family Justice Centers: Supporting Our Foreign-Born Clients. Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence, New York City Office of the Mayor, 2020.

THE NEW YORK CITY MAYOR'S OFFICE TO END DOMESTIC AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) develops policies and programs, provides training and prevention education, conducts research and evaluations, performs community outreach, and operates the New York City Family Justice Centers (FJCs). We collaborate with City agencies and community stakeholders to ensure access to inclusive services for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence (GBV). GBV can include intimate partner and family violence, elder abuse, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. For more information on domestic and gender-based violence programs and services in New York City, please visit the ENDGBV website at nyc.gov/domesticviolence or NYC HOPE at nyc.gov/nychope.

THE NEW YORK CITY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS

Located in all five boroughs, the FJCs offer survivors of domestic and gender-based violence and their children a safe environment to seek support and access to vital social services, civil legal, and criminal justice assistance. All are welcome regardless of language, income, or immigration status. Read more about the NYC Family Justice Centers.

HISTORICAL DATA ON FOREIGN-BORN CLIENTS (2010-2019)

In 2018, New York City's foreign-born population comprised nearly 37% of the City's total population, totaling over 3.1 million.[1]

From 2014 to 2019, the FJCs received 152,148 total visits from 29,687 unique foreign-born clients[2]. In fact, as shown in Figure 4, the majority of FJC clients reported being foreign-born. In 2019, 7,261 unique clients, (59% of FJC clients served), reported being foreign-born compared to 4,969, (41% of FJC clients served), who reported being U.S.-born.

In 2010, FJC clients reported 130 different countries of birth (Figure 1). This figure increased to 152 countries in 2019 (Figure 2).

Figure 1. FJC Client Countries of Birth (2010)

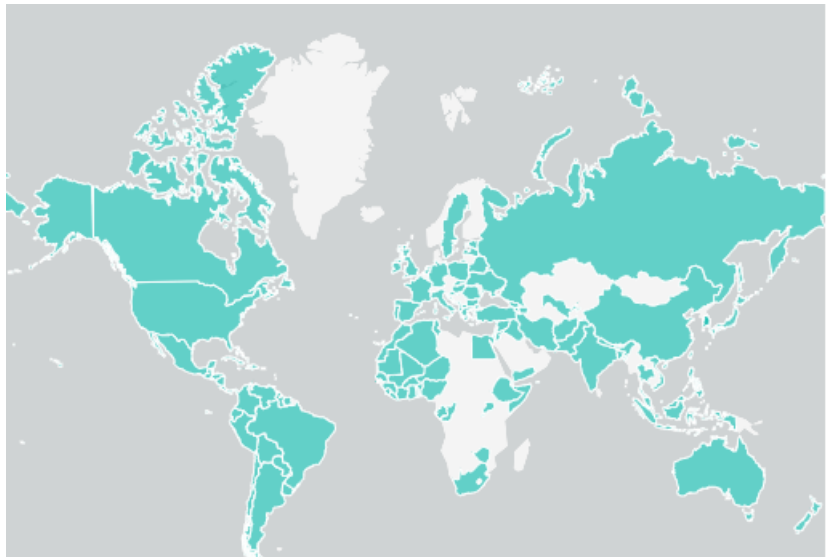
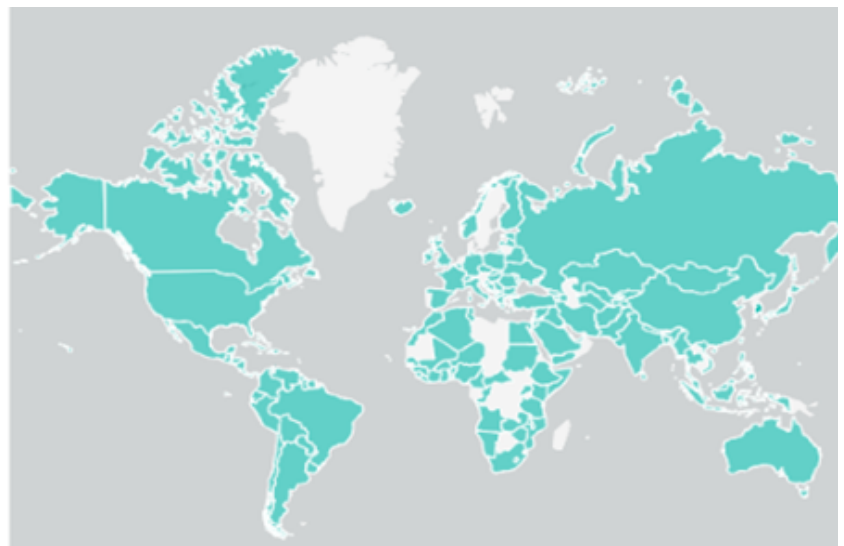


Figure 2. FJC Client Countries of Birth (2019)



[1] U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2017 1-year estimates. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/>

[2] Note: 26% of clients were missing data on country of origin; this statistic excludes any clients with missing country of origin data.

Figure 3. Foreign-born vs total FJC clients by year (2010-2019)

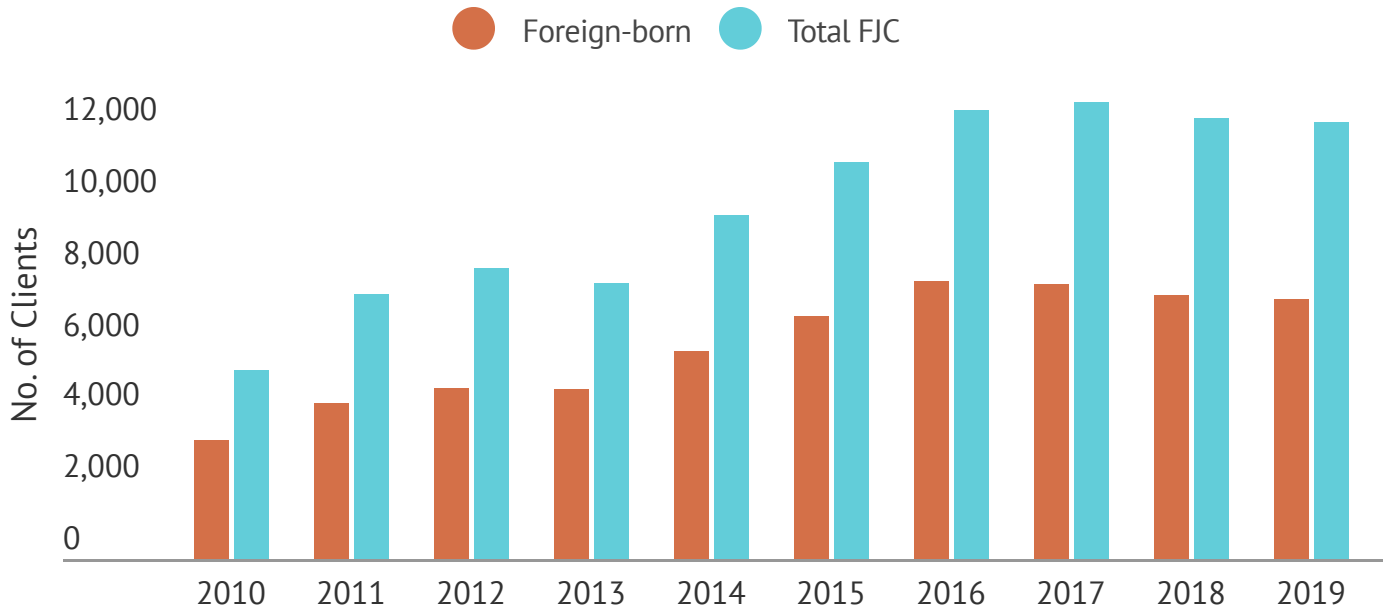
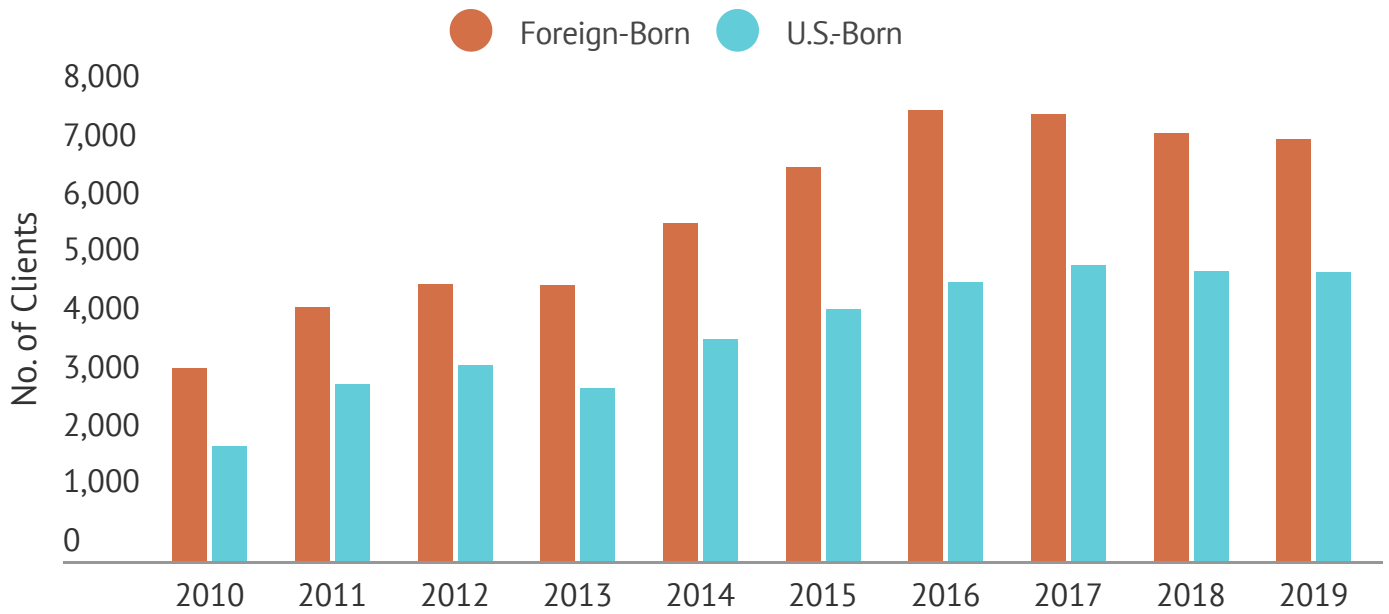


Figure 3. Foreign-born vs U.S.-born clients by year (2010-2019)



CLOSER LOOK AT FOREIGN-BORN CLIENTS IN 2019

As shown in Figure 5, the 2019 FJC foreign-born clients represented a wide range of ages and birth countries, resided in all boroughs of New York City, and spoke a variety of languages. And, over half (51.2%) of all foreign-born clients in 2019 reported a spousal relationship with their abusive partners.

Figure 4. Demographics of Foreign-Born Clients in 2019 (N=7,637)

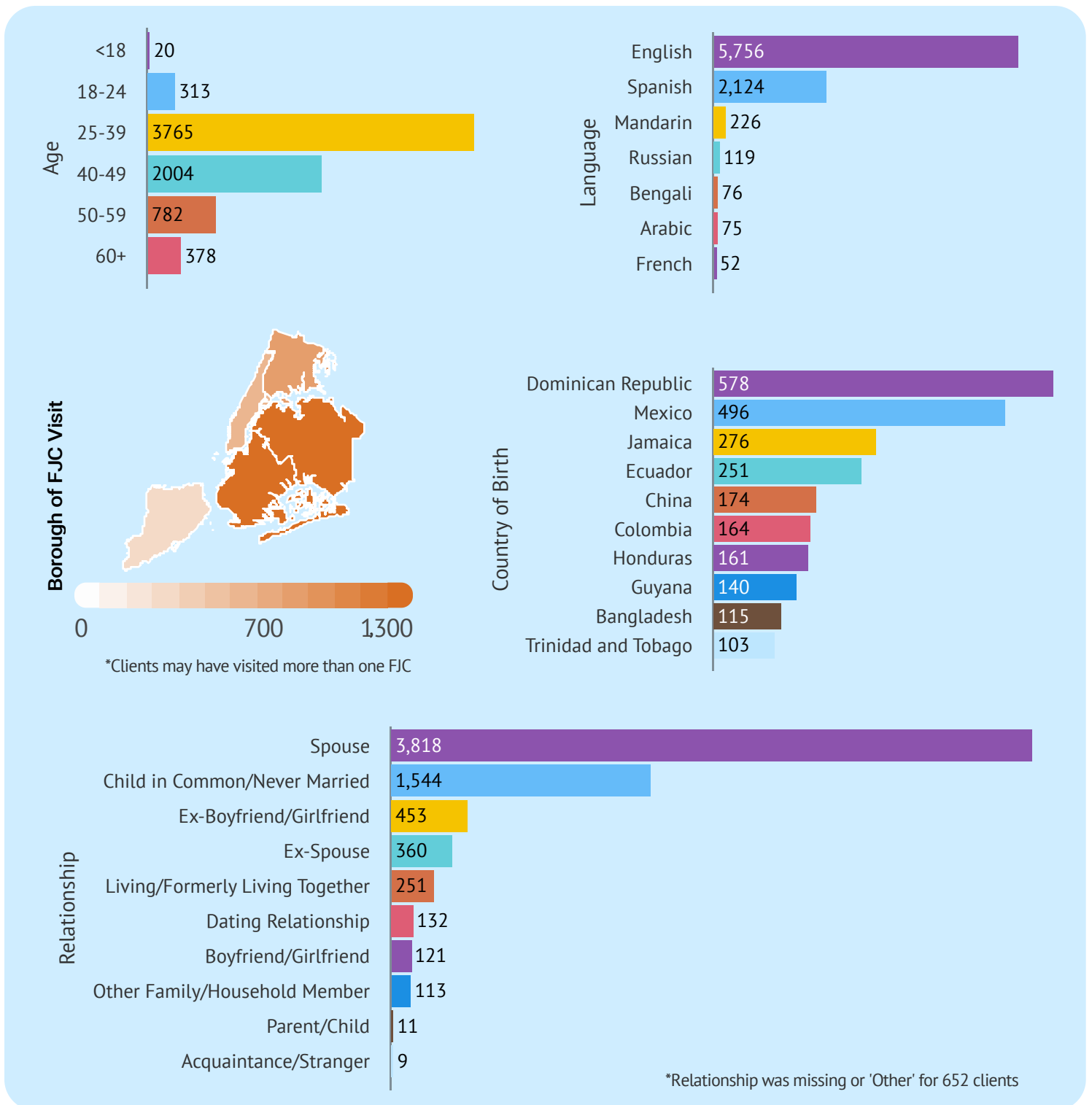


Table 1. Top five FJC services foreign-born clients receive (2019)

Service	No. of Clients	% of Clients
Safety Plan	5,113	91.3%
Counseling/Assessment	3,551	91.2%
Civil Legal	2,982	57.6%
Permanent Housing	613	43.2%
Practical Assistance	557	41.3%

Borough-level foreign-born client data

Table 2 displays a breakdown of the top five countries of birth along with the total number of countries of birth reported by foreign-born clients in each of the five FJCs in 2019.

Table 2. Top five countries of birth and total countries of birth among foreign-born clients by FJC (2019)

	Bronx	Brooklyn	Manhattan	Queens	Staten Island
1	Dominican Republic (n= 304)	Mexico (n= 124)	Dominican Republic (n= 138)	Ecuador (n= 148)	Mexico (n= 67)
2	Mexico (n= 115)	Jamaica (n= 114)	Mexico (n= 64)	Mexico (n= 146)	Honduras (n= 13)
3	Honduras (n= 82)	Dominican Republic (n= 76)	China (n= 34)	Colombia (n= 111)	Dominican Republic (n= 12)
4	Jamaica (n= 61)	China (n= 63)	Colombia (n= 24)	Dominican Republic (n= 88)	Jamaica (n= 12)
5	Ecuador (n= 38)	Haiti (n= 60)	Honduras (n= 23)	Jamaica (n= 86)	Egypt (n= 11)
Total Countries of Birth	75	108	104	86	63

Differences between foreign-born and U.S.-born clients at the FJCs

When comparing characteristics of foreign-born and U.S.-born clients at the FJCs, the data illuminates some important differences. Table 3 shows that in 2019, foreign-born clients visited the FJC more frequently on average compared to U.S.-born clients. Foreign-born clients were also more likely to report less than a high school education level, more likely to be employed, less likely to report living with a disability, more likely to report living in shelter, more likely to be in a spousal relationship with their partners, and more likely to report being engaged in group or individual counseling compared to U.S.-born clients.

When asked how they heard about the FJC, foreign-born clients were less likely to report hearing about the FJC from the District Attorney's office or the police. Compared to U.S.-born clients, foreign-born clients were less likely to report an open family court case, an open criminal court case, or that the police had been called for a domestic violence incident.[1]

Table 3. Key differences between foreign-born and U.S.-born FJC clients (2019)

	Foreign-born	U.S.-born
1) Average number of visits	4.5	3.8
2) Less than high school education level	14.0%	3.4%
3) Employed	46.4%	33.2%
4 Living with a disability	6.6%	19.7%
5) Living in shelter	36.5%	10.9%
6) Among those in shelter: Shelter type - Homeless	17.5%	5.8%
7) Among those in shelter: Shelter type - Domestic Violence	19.0%	5.0%
8) Heard about FJC from District Attorney or Police	29.2%	40.5%
9) Open family court case	19.2%	26.7%
10) Police called for domestic violence	56.7%	69.3%
11) Open criminal court case	27.4%	35.4%
12) Group/individual counseling	53.4%	46.2%
13) Spousal relationship	55.9%	27.9%

[1] This question, "Have the police ever been called for the domestic violence before?" was removed from the FJC intake screening in October 2019.

FJCs and Culturally-Specific Domestic Violence Organizations

ENDGBV maintains strong partnerships with culturally-specific organizations that work onsite at the FJCs, including the Arab American Family Support Center, Violence Intervention Program, Garden of Hope, Sauti Yetu, and Korean American Family Support Services, as well as off-site partnerships with culturally-specific organizations in the community, like Sakhi for South Asian Women, Turning Point for Women and Children, and Womankind.

The FJCs also offer workshops and other group programming in Spanish, including support groups, the Brooke Jackman Family Literacy Program, and the WISE Financial Literacy Program.

Immigration Legal Services Initiative

ENDGBV and the NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA) launched the Immigration Legal Services program in January 2018, an initiative recommended by the NYC Domestic Violence Task Force. The program embeds legal and domestic violence resources in targeted communities with large, underserved immigrant populations and high levels of domestic violence, providing holistic legal assistance that meets victims' linguistic and cultural needs. The program establishes a technical-assistance partnership between organizations with expertise in domestic violence and immigration law, either Sanctuary for Families or Urban Justice Center, and immigrant-serving community-based organizations. By enhancing the ability of immigrant-serving community-based organizations to identify and support immigrant survivors in an environment where trust has already been established, this program seeks to enrich the assets within survivors' own communities and reduce some of the obstacles to creating safety. At the close of 2019, this collaborative initiative served over 400 clients.

Targeted Outreach and Programming Initiatives

ENDGBV's Outreach team is dedicated to bringing resources and awareness to survivors in their communities. Our Outreach team uses NYPD data to target communities with high rates of domestic violence reports and provides information on FJCs and other domestic violence resources, along with workshops on how to recognize signs of domestic violence. The Outreach team's work is integral to reaching immigrant communities, and has formed strong partnerships with houses of worship and faith communities, foreign consulates, the NYC Chamber of Commerce, and a large network of salons and barbershops citywide. ENDGBV's outreach is currently conducted in several key local languages, including English, Spanish, Bangla, Arabic, French, and Haitian Creole.