

Introduction

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mexico has become the migratory corridor with the most significant movement globally (IOM, 2016), as many move through this country to reach the United States. Today, Mexico is a country of origin, transit, destination, and return for many migrants.

In Mexico, transit is risky due to constant mistreatment, discrimination, xenophobia, and racism by Mexican authorities and society. This situation is more difficult for LGBTIQ populations, as they generally decide to move from their countries of origin because they are victims of persecution, violence, death threats, poverty, precariousness, and discrimination and, therefore, need international protection.

History

ORAM began programs in Mexico in 2019 in the border town of Tijuana, supporting LGBTIQ asylum seekers by providing legal support. Our work shifted after the U.S.-Mexico border was closed in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. We began supporting El Jardín de las Mariposas, an LGBTIQ migrant shelter, with emergency support and skills building workshops that included English language learning, digital storytelling, and computer courses.

In 2022, ORAM began working with LGBTIQ refugees in Mexico City. We facilitated in-depth sensitization trainings for staff members at refugee and migrant shelters. The series of trainings had 150 participants, most of whom worked in Mexico City and across the country.

That same year, ORAM provided LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers in Mexico City with three-month English language courses and community workshops. ORAM also conducted a needs assessment of LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers in Mexico City.

Program Initiatives

Identifying resources & building partnerships

ORAM's programmatic work in Mexico City is focused on **building relationships with partners** in order to connect LGBTIQ refugees with tailored services and support. The first step is to identify and collaborate with LGBTIQ and refugee-focused shelters and spaces. We are simultaneously building relationships with key partners, collaborators, service providers, and stakeholders to help better connect LGBTIQ refugees with resources in the community.



150 

Refugee professionals in Mexico trained on inclusive services for queer displaced people.

40 

LGBTIQ refugees received English language courses or attended other educational workshops in Mexico City.

30 

LGBTIQ refugees participated in ORAM's in-depth needs assessment research in Mexico City, which is establish the basis for ORAM's current work in Mexico.

11 

LGBTIQ refugees in Mexico City participated in ORAM's focus group discussion to discuss ORAM's guide for queer refugees.

Connecting with the community

We're building **strong connections with LGBTIQ refugees** to better connect them with specialized resources in Mexico City. Through identifying gaps and needs within the community of LGBTIQ refugees in Mexico City, we are building a referral network for the community of various service providers and key shelters in the city.

Developing a resource guide

In 2023, ORAM began conducting a mapping of LGBTIQ-friendly service providers to **create an orientation guide** for queer people who are refugees or are interested in applying for asylum in Mexico. The guide will provide information and links to inclusive services and support for LGBTIQ refugees, from housing to health and employment. Upon completion, ORAM will share the guide with LGBTIQ refugees and shelters or other service providers for queer asylum seekers.

Amplifying the voices of queer refugees

In 2024, ORAM will design and implement a **campaign to share testimonials** and stories of LGBTIQ refugees in Mexico City. This campaign aims to raise awareness of the community's challenges and generate empathy for the public in Mexico City.



Program Partners

The success of ORAM's programs in Mexico is thanks in part to our committed local partners.

In Tijuana, ORAM continues to partner with **El Jardín de las Mariposas** through providing the shelter with technology, general operating support, and skills training for the residents.

In Mexico City, ORAM is collaborating with **Fundación Arcoíris por el Respeto a la Diversidad Sexual A. C.** and **Casa Refugiados**, local queer and queer refugee organizations, and researchers from **Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales (UNAM)** and **Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO)**, two academic organizations, on the development of a guide for LGBTIQ refugees in Mexico City.