ASC engaged with over 1,700 people, providing them a combination of information, advice, limited legal services, and full representation. ASC closed 896 cases, which assisted 901 people. ASC conducted a total of 804 intakes. The 300 cases closed with a miscellaneous benefit were cases where we provided HIV+ people who do not qualify for a way to legalize their immigration status with a letter certifying these circumstances so they could qualify for housing and other benefits provided by New York City for HIV+ people living under these circumstances.

African Services Committee (ASC) provides legal services in the areas of benefits, family, housing, and immigration law. The primary target populations for services at ASC are: (1) members of the African diaspora; (2) immigrants of all backgrounds; (3) people living with HIV or AIDS; (4) people who identify as LGBTQ; (5) people that have experienced mental trauma and are seeking counseling and legal services; (6) women who are survivors of gender-based violence because the current level of victim services in the community and (7) existing clients for ASC’s non-legal programs. ASC has also been serving persons who have suffered trauma either fleeing persecution in their home countries, or due to violence they have suffered while residing in the United States as a result of a recent grant from Mother Cabrini which is a combination of both legal and mental health services. Many of these immigrants seeking help from ASC are women from West Africa who have fled female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, African and Caribbean LGBT immigrants fleeing anti-homosexuality persecution in the home countries.

ASC secured a total of $43,820 in direct dollar benefits. ASC secured $50,965.99 worth of fee waivers from USCIS and fee assistance for clients who were either unable to secure a fee waiver or could not afford fees for applications; experts; or specialists.

Population Served: members of the African diaspora; immigrants of all backgrounds, people living with HIV or AIDS; people who identify as LGBTQ; and existing clients for ASC’s non-legal programs; low income populations

Area Served: Bronx, Queens, Kings, New York, Westchester, Nassau, Richmond, Orange, Dutchess

Staffing Full Time Equivalents:
- Total Staff: 14.2
- Lawyers: 2.6
- Paralegals: 1
- Other Staff: 10.6
Direct Legal Services: Cases

Housing:
One of our clients who has previously achieved PRUCOL status and access to Medicaid through an asylum application we had previously assisted her in the filing of, had fallen into more than $5,000 in arrears with her apartment. African Services Committee assisted her with applying for and ultimately being granted funds from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). By working with her landlord and the New York ERAP program, we were able to secure her an award in excess of $10,000 which has taken her out of arrears and prepaid three months rent going forward. Because of this award of $10,020.00 she is longer facing the threat of eviction, and housing stability has been restored to her, her husband and their infant child.
Direct Legal Services: Cases

**Immigration:**
Client is a 21 year old native and citizen of Cameroon. He was born on September 21, 2000 in Yaounde, Cameroon, and came to the United States in October 2016. The client is the son of an existing client with African Services Committee who is seeking asylum in the United States on account of her past persecution in Cameroon, where she was detained and tortured because of her political opinion and political affiliation. Client is a derivative beneficiary of his mother’s asylum application, which African Services Committee filed on her behalf since December 2013. Inexplicably, USCIS has yet to issue a decision on his mother’s asylum application, keeping her and her children waiting in limbo for years regarding the status of their case. Sadly, in January 2020, client’s father passed away from injuries he sustained in an auto accident in Cameroon. From this unfortunate event, client became eligible to apply for an immigration benefit called Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (“SIJS”), which ultimately allows him to obtain Lawful Permanent Resident status. SIJS is an immigration benefit available only to minors. The application for SIJS is a complicated process which requires a two-step process: 1. Obtain an order of guardianship or custody from the Family Court on the basis that the child cannot reunite with one or both parents because of abuse, neglect, abandonment or a similar basis, and a Special Findings Order making certain findings, including that it is in the child’s best interest to remain in the U.S. and not return to their home country. The client became eligible to apply for SIJS because under New York law, the death of a parent is considered a form of abandonment.

The legal staff at African Services Committee worked diligently with the client and his mother to prepare and file his case with the Bronx Family Court, and presented a strong case on his behalf at his trial. The Court ultimately issued the necessary Order appointing client’s mother as his guardian and the requisite Special Findings Order so that client can complete the next step of applying for SIJS with USCIS. The client’s application for SIJS was filed and is now pending with USCIS. We expect with a reasonable degree of certainty that the petition will be granted and he will be able to apply for adjustment of status to that of Lawful Permanent Resident.
**Other Services: Overview**

Unfortunately, we had to temporarily stop in-person KYR presentations due to COVID concerns. We have put information out via our social media and 119 people engaged with our postings. ASC had arranged our first KYR via zoom presentation where the ASC provided a Know Your Rights presentation on immigration issues and our mental health worker presented on the mental toll of the immigration process engaging 19 participants.

ASC has to reach 250 participants via Community Legal Education within 2 contract years. ASC’s goal is to reach not only its clients, but also its target population: (1) members of the African diaspora; (2) immigrants of all backgrounds; (3) people living with HIV or AIDS; (4) people who identify as LGBTQ; (5) people that have experienced mental trauma and are seeking counseling and legal services; (6) women who are survivors of gender-based violence because the current level of victim services in the community. ASC’s goal is to inform the community members of the changes in law that would affect them and their cases, to make sure the community members know and understand their rights and also understand services provided by ASC. ASC’s main strategy is using technology—including social media and websites formatted for smartphones—to facilitate outreach by posting information of social media sites, ASC’s website, and other sites frequented by the target population. ASC has also conducted one KYR using Zoom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of People who Benefitted from Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Legal Education</td>
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**138 People Benefitted by Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation**
Other Services: Technology and Other Innovations

ASC has been actively using various technology improvements to be able to switch to remote work, such as: (i) conducting meetings via zoom; (ii) using whatsapp group for emergencies; (iii) using gchat; (iv) utilizing google voice to make phone calls; (v) utilizing google drive and its applications for collaborative group projects.

Other Services: Trainings

ASC offers training and professional development activities to staff, management, volunteers and board members. ASC provides regular substantive trainings to staff through Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), Practicing Law Institute (PLI), New York Immigrant Coalition (NYIC) and Community Service Society (CSS) Benefits Plus.

ASC also conducts trainings covering topics such as diversity and inclusion, anti-oppression, cultural competency, and HIPAA both in person or as webinars. ASC’s attorneys provide comprehensive trainings to legal interns and externs in areas such as immigration, housing, and benefits law. ASC’s attorneys provide training and mentorship to volunteer attorneys and attorneys at pro bono law firms who accept cases referred by ASC.

ASC has also been able to screen and consult a very large number of callers by increasing our intake capacity with the help of our Intake Manager who participated in and increased recruitment, crafted and recorded intake trainings, perfected training protocols and contributed to the streamlining of the intake and consultation process.
Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

Facing an increased need for additional staffing and resources, ASC was able to successfully utilize various kinds of volunteer help who contributed a total of 15,802.00 hours. ASC engaged 5 attorney volunteers, 18 administrative volunteers, and 27 law student volunteers. ASC has also been able to secure a Boston University Fellow who has been working on the cases that remained pending and unfunded after the low bono clinic closed its doors. One pro bono case handled by pro bono attorneys was closed after the client's green card approval.

ASC enjoyed a sharp increase in volunteers and their efficiency with the help of our Intake Manager who increased recruitment efforts, crafted and recorded intake trainings, perfected training protocols and contributed to the streamlining of the intake and consultation process. We continued to develop a more structured volunteer program and a system to match students’ course requirements with the legal department needs by providing them with comprehensive trainings, regular check-ins and communicating via Whatsapp. ASC also worked with a large number of students from Columbia Law School (“CLS”) who were looking to fulfill their 40 CLS and 50 NY Bar requirement and who helped our team immensely with substantive work during a period of substantial staff turnover and increased volume of work.

5 Attorneys volunteered 183 hours

27 Law Students volunteered 3,537 hours

18 Other Volunteers volunteered 12,082 hours
**Significant Collaborations**

ASC receives referrals from a range of trusted providers, including Action NYC Grants, Safe Horizon, Sanctuary for Families, Catholic Charities, Bellevue Hospital Program for Survivors of Torture, Libertas Center for Human Rights, and the Door.

ASC refers persons from the target population who cannot be served at ASC (e.g., because of a conflict of interest, capacity, or eligibility issue) to ASC’s pro bono partners, including Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP, White and Case and Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, law school clinics and to other legal providers, including: Sanctuary for Families, Safe Horizon, Catholic Charities, Urban Justice Center, New York Legal Assistance Group, Safe Passage Project, and the HIV Law Project. Staff also refers clients to ASC’s comprehensive range of services (including linkage to primary care, COVID-19, HIV/STI/TB and viral hepatitis testing, case management, AIDS housing placement assistance, mental health services, ESOL classes, food and nutrition services, and screening for diabetes and hypertension). ASC’s Legal Department has also developed a strong referral network for a range of health care and social services, as follows: Programs for survivors of trauma: Bellevue Hospital Program for Survivors of Torture, Libertas Center for Human Rights at Elmhurst Hospital, Mount Sinai Center for Human Rights; Hospital HHCS for medical and mental health support: Metropolitan Hospital, Bronx Lebanon Hospital, Montefiore Hospital, Harlem United Hospital, Jacobi Medical Center, Elmhurst Hospital, Kings County Hospital; Social services: Harlem Children’s Zone, AIDS Service Center, The Door, Sauti Yetu, and Sanctuary for Families.

**Sources of Funding**

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<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
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<td>IOLA Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>City and County Funding</td>
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<td>Federal Funding</td>
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<td>State Funding</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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**Pie Chart**

- **State**: 31%
- **City**: 26%
- **Federal**: 27%
- **Foundations**: 11%
- **IOLA Grant**: 5%

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