



## Frequently Asked Questions

### *What is the KBI mission?*

The Kino Border Initiative/Iniciativa Kino para la Frontera exists to be a humanizing presence at the border in Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora, and to foster bi-national solidarity between the U.S. and Mexico on the issue of immigration, through humanitarian aid, education and research/advocacy.

### *Who does the KBI serve?*

The KBI serves a number of populations, most immediately, the deported migrants who have need of food, shelter, and medical and other services. In 2014, the KBI provided 38,667 meals, sheltered 517 women and children, and supplied medical care to 2,034 migrants; clothing and personal care items are available as well as use of phones and referral services. In a broader context, the KBI's educational programs aim to demystify the reality of the border and raise awareness in the communities, congregations and schools near the border and throughout the country. In 2014, the KBI led 29 immersion experiences, conducted 22 presentations and workshops, and hosted 35 visits for interested groups and individuals.

### *What research and advocacy activities does the KBI conduct?*

The KBI runs an ongoing survey of men and women who gather at the outreach center and stay at the shelter, collecting demographic information and documenting all reported instances of human rights abuses. In addition, the KBI hosts visiting scholars and students who are researching immigration issues and the complexities of the border. Past research topics have included service learning, nursing care for women migrants, and the effects of security policies on the U.S.-Mexico border. On two occasions, Father Sean Carroll, S.J., KBI Executive Director, has testified at congressional hearings, once about the humanitarian crisis at the border, and another time about the importance of family unity.

### *Why do people make the crossing?*

Migrants crossing the border are pursuing a better life for themselves and their families, struggling to maintain their dignity and livelihoods, and seeking to be reunited with loved ones. The challenges and dangers migrants face when crossing the Sonoran Desert from Mexico are daunting and often life-threatening—robbery, extortion, kidnapping, extreme temperatures, rough terrain, and border violence—but they are frequently leaving homelands where life has

become untenable, due to record crime rates, lack of opportunity and poverty. As the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees stated in 1992, "It may be assumed that...a person would not normally abandon his home and country without some compelling reason."

*What happens during the deportation process?*

On average, 600,000 to 800,000 undocumented migrants are deported each year, including those apprehended at the border and those already living in the U.S. (based on ICE immigration data). During the process of deportation to Mexico, men, women and children are delivered by bus to the border and walk back into Mexico with little or no money, and oftentimes only with the clothes on their back. Some have been exploited by *coyotes* or fall prey to the drug cartels. Some have been victimized or abused in detention. Many have lived in the U.S. for many years and find themselves far from home and separated from family. Most are frightened, desperate and feeling hopeless. In an environment of increased militarization and criminal violence at the border, women and children are particularly vulnerable.

*Why is bi-national solidarity so important?*

Immigration is a multinational phenomenon and the response must also be multinational. The KBI acknowledges the push-pull factors that cause people to migrate (reunion with family members, economic opportunities) and has coordinated its programming accordingly, fostering relationships with border agencies, human rights organizations, church dioceses, and other groups in both the U.S. and Mexico.

*Why was the KBI established in Ambos Nogales?*

The KBI is located where the need is greatest, right along the Arizona-Mexico border. Though the total number of migrant crossings has decreased since 2007, the number of crossings along this portion of the border has risen sharply, due largely to the tightened border security in California and Texas. The result is that Arizona's border has been the most likely entry point for migrants, and the route is not only fraught with security risks, but also harsh desert conditions (for example, temperatures over 100°F) which can result dehydration, heat stroke, or death.

*What are the KBI's sources of support?*

The KBI relies on the support of churches in Phoenix, Southern Arizona and Northern Sonora to prepare and deliver food to the outreach center, and generous donations from individuals, grants, and some program income to help ensure a steady supply of food, clothing, medical supplies and financial support for this important mission.

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