

HEALTH

You are caught in the middle of violent conflict. In which direction do you head for safety? Are you wounded? Where do you find water? Where is your grandmother's medication? What do you eat? Where do you sleep? How do you cross the river? Do you have warm clothes when the chill of night comes?



Photo: IRC/Frank Ishman

Panther and Simon's Story

When Panther got off the plane in New York City, he still wasn't sure that it would really be his old, dear friend, and fellow Lost Boy, Simon meeting him there. It had been six years since these best friends – friends like brothers – had last seen each other, in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya where they found refuge after a treacherous journey over 1,000 miles together from Sudan – the home they'd been driven from over 20 years ago by a bloody civil war. Since then, Panther had been living in Boston, attending Brandeis University; Simon had made his new home in Atlanta, working toward his degree and U.S. citizenship.

It was really Simon, and after they broke out of a tight embrace and much laughter, they sat down to reflect on the meaning of friendship, freedom, and the word they're called by: "lost." As Simon puts it: "You are never lost until you don't know where you came from..."



To learn more about refugees' journeys or to make a donation, please visit FromHarmToHome.org

IRC: Saving Lives

When catastrophe hits, the International Rescue Committee is often one of the first aid organizations on the ground, providing critical assistance that saves lives, reduces suffering and jumpstarts recovery. Always prepared to deploy to the scene of a crisis, the IRC maintains an Emergency Team with specialists who can mount a fast and effective response and deliver lifesaving medical care.

Our mobile relief teams reach even the most remote, insecure areas, where aid is often most scarce. By boat, road and helicopter missions IRC brings emergency services to the hardest-hit villages where we set up and stock clinics and train health workers and volunteers to provide basic health care in their communities.

Water, essential to life, is critical in these situations and survival without these basic necessities would be impossible. IRC brings in emergency water supplies, constructs sanitation facilities and disinfects wells and stop the spread of disease. In arid, rural areas, we work with local communities to identify water sources, plan and build wells, and rehabilitate failing hand pumps. Overall, IRC health programs help approximately 13 million people in 42 countries.

The human capacity to survive is astounding. But there are countless threats to the lives of uprooted people. Their vulnerability to death and disease grows even after they escape the immediate dangers of war. In crisis, help is critical.