



INTERNATIONAL  
**RESCUE**  
COMMITTEE



# Annual Report 2021

The IRC helps people whose lives have been shattered by conflict and disaster. We get help to those who need it most, despite politics, hostilities or harsh climates. When acute crisis abates, the IRC stays as long as we are needed.



Haida, a midwife, holds a small child at an IRC-supported health clinic in Kabul, Afghanistan.

**COVER:** A young Afghan woman waits at an IRC health clinic in Afghanistan.

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# Message from the President and Chairs of the IRC Board of Directors and Advisors

Dear Friends,

2021 was enormously challenging for much of the world. Above all, there was a shift to the “new normal” of the pandemic, with new variants and new waves colliding with the reality of vaccine inequality and vaccine hesitancy around the world. It was the year when new conflicts arose in Ethiopia and Myanmar, and when there were telling milestones in protracted conflicts in Syria and Yemen. And last year was the beginning of a new presidential administration in the United States, with welcome recommitment to the country’s refugee resettlement program.

2021 also marked the end of one era of instability in Afghanistan, with the U.S. military withdrawal, and the beginning of a new one under the rule of the Taliban. This was a sobering moment for our staff given the more than 30 years the IRC has been delivering humanitarian programming in Afghanistan, particularly to women and girls. But in the response to the fall of Kabul, this crisis also showed the best of IRC staff around the world who helped Afghans seeking protection in Afghanistan, where our programs didn’t just continue but expanded, aided Afghans arriving in countries like Uganda and Mexico where our teams supported their asylum requests, and helped resettle more than 11,000 Afghans who came to the United States through our resettlement network of offices across the country. The work to

support Afghans—both those left behind and those who have fled to safety—is far from over.

Our work in 2021 was testimony to deepening trends towards impunity around the world. As we write in 2022, the conflict in Ukraine provides a capstone to those trends. IRC is on the ground in Ukraine and neighboring states, and is determined that these efforts add to rather than divert from our efforts in other parts of the world.

In all of these crises, we have kept clients at the center of our focus. Their resilience, their fortitude, and their individual stories inspire our mission and ground our work. Throughout 2021 our teams have pushed ourselves to be a better, more efficient, more impactful humanitarian organization because that is what our clients deserve. By always keeping our clients in focus, we can understand where we have work to do and where we should be headed as an organization.

This year we kicked off the implementation of our Strategy100, building off of the successes and learnings of our previous organizational strategy. Strategy100 is built around five key goals: continuing to raise the impact of our programs, growing our scale, strengthening our teams, using our ideas to influence the sector, and ensuring we have the right funding to deliver. The strategy has an important

place for our work on Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Across the strategy, we pledge bold initiatives to take our values and drive them through our decision-making, in the way we organize ourselves, design programs and deliver on our promises to our clients.

In this report you will find powerful stories and unique insights into how the IRC is serving the needs of clients in more than 40 countries around the world. In the first section you’ll see how the IRC leverages our global scale in close collaboration with local partners to maximize our impact. In the second section you’ll see how the IRC is not just improving our own practice, but raising the standard across the humanitarian sector by sharing our programmatic expertise through data, research

and technical solutions. In the final section, you’ll see what this work means for the lives of individual clients, who are the ultimate arbiters of our success or failure.

You, our supporters and partners, make this work possible through your generous support for the IRC and the people in crisis we serve around the world. 2021 brought a record level of humanitarian need around the world, but resignation and hopelessness in the face of calamity is not a luxury our clients can afford. Keep these individuals at the center of your focus and you will see hope in renewal and in rebuilding. We urge you to stand with our inspiring clients and the more than 17,000 IRC staff around the world who support them.



*Timothy F. Geithner*  
**Timothy F. Geithner**  
Co-Chair  
IRC Board of Directors



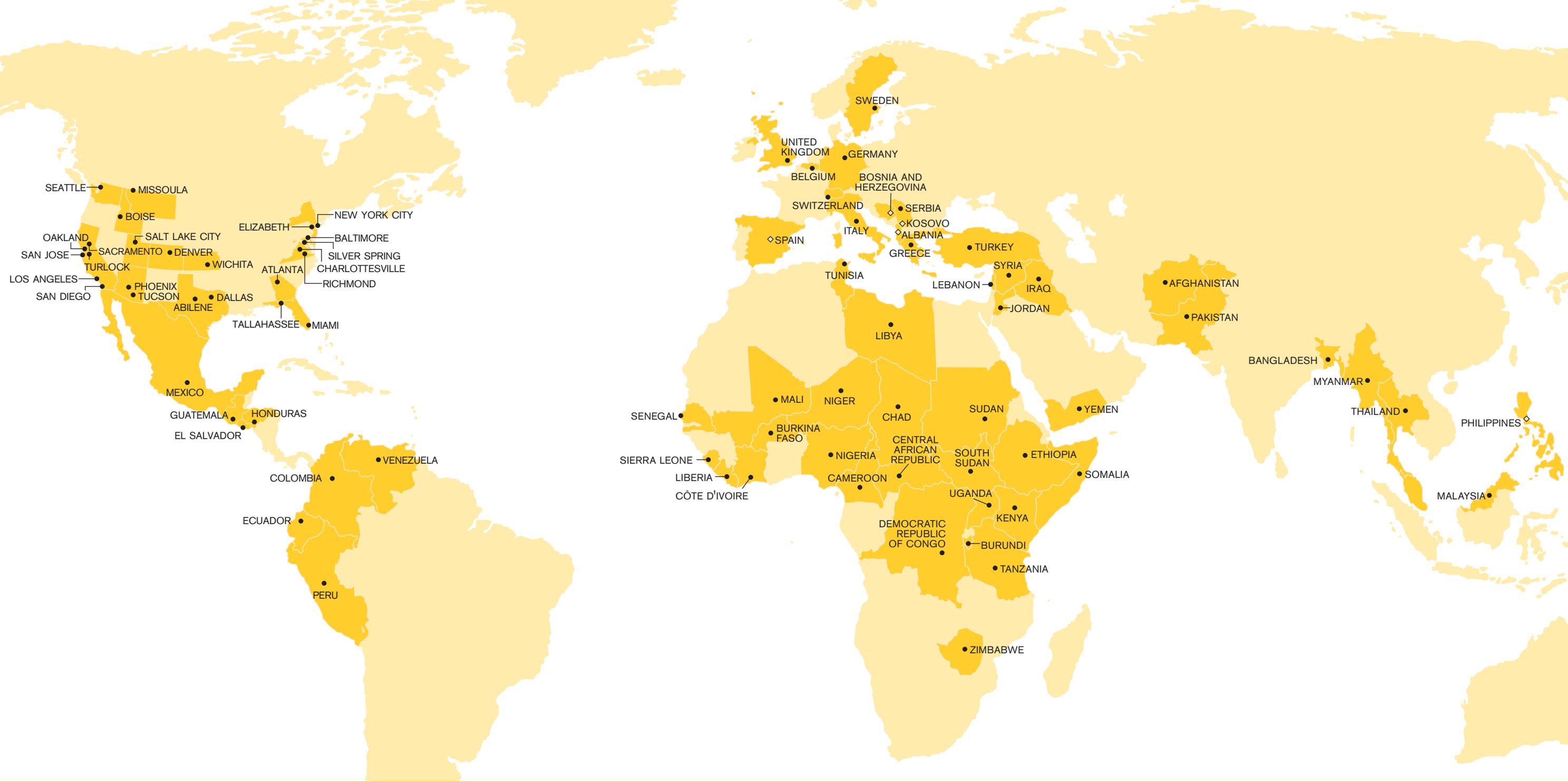
*Sally Susman*  
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IRC Board of Directors



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**Eduardo G. Mestre**  
Chair  
IRC Board of Advisors



*David Miliband*  
**David Miliband**  
President and CEO



# Where We Work

The IRC helps people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster, including the climate crisis, to survive, recover and regain control of their future. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, we work in over 40 countries worldwide.

Together with our supporters, we help people in some of the toughest places on Earth, including Venezuela, Myanmar, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Syria. In the U.S., we are leaders in resettling refugees, and worldwide, we help families integrate into their new communities.

## LEGEND

◇ Partner Support Programs



**31.5M**

people served in countries affected by crisis

**370,771**

children and youth enrolled in learning programs



**1,335,609**

people reached with malnutrition prevention assistance

**155,528**

children under 5 treated for severe acute malnutrition



**2,700,629**

people served from water sources the IRC built or fixed

# Snapshot of IRC Impact in 2021

## RESETTLEMENT, ASYLUM & INTEGRATION PROGRAMS: EUROPE

We have programs in

**Greece, Italy, Serbia, Germany, and the U.K.**



We also support partner organizations in Albania, Kosovo, Romania and Bulgaria

## RESETTLEMENT, ASYLUM & INTEGRATION PROGRAMS: UNITED STATES

Resettled people from

**32** 

countries in the U.S.

**85%**

of the arrivals were from Afghanistan, DRC, Syria and Iraq



**34,826**

individuals served across the U.S. with asylum and protection programs

Fourteen-year-old Maryam Abdo Hamid Ali wants to be a doctor so she can help prevent women in Yemen from dying during childbirth.



# How the IRC Operates

The IRC's value is found in more than our program outcomes. We focus on the most vulnerable communities of people whose lives have been shattered by conflict and disaster. We prioritize working in the places where our experience and expertise are needed the most. This disciplined approach helps makes the IRC successful. At the IRC, decisions are guided by an ambitious strategy and enacted through principles around gender, equality, diversity and inclusion.

# Strategy100

Strategy100 sets out the IRC's enduring mission and the organization's vision for where it wants to get to by 2033—the 100th year of the IRC's work. Our plan ensures that the impact of our programs and the influence of our ideas empower people caught in crisis to make lasting changes in their lives. The Strategic Plan is centered around five goals: continuing to raise the impact of our programs, growing our scale, using our ideas to influence the sector, strengthening our teams, and ensuring we have the right funding to deliver.

## OUR PROGRESS

IRC's new strategy was approved in June 2020. The first year was dedicated to implementation planning and we prioritized four of the strategic goals. We made concrete progress against these four, including most of the IRC's program offices developing their own Strategy Action Plans.



### Raising the quality of our programs:

We prototyped eight new approaches to sexual and reproductive, maternal and newborn health, designed two new innovative approaches to education in emergencies and had 25 peer-reviewed journal articles based on our work.



### Expanding our scale:

We secured funding that will allow us to take our high-impact work on treating child malnutrition to scale across five countries—reaching 159,000 children by 2024. We doubled the amount of funding we provide to local partners across our programs.



### Investing in our people:

We developed our Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and set ambitious Diversity Leadership Goals for different parts of the organization.



### Strengthening our funding:

We grew both our private and public funding relative to previous years and launched important initiatives to diversify our donor base, strengthen funding from sustaining supporters and grow our long-term funding.

## MISSION

To help people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster, including the climate crisis, to survive, recover and gain control over their future

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### IMPACT

Raise program quality

### SCALE

Reach more people

### PEOPLE

Strengthen our teams

### INFLUENCE

Innovation for good

### FUNDING

Flexible, diverse, stable



### HEALTH

### SAFETY

### EDUCATION

### ECONOMIC WELLBEING

### POWER

Tackling gender inequalities in and through all our work

## OUTCOMES

After 100 years of service, we want the impact of our programs and the influence of our ideas to empower those caught in crisis to make lasting change in their lives.

## VISION

# Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the IRC

## OUR VISION

At the IRC, our diverse clients, partners and staff have the power, voice and agency to shape programs and operations. Within the IRC, we actively work to end all forms of systemic discrimination and foster an inclusive working environment where everyone feels respected, heard, valued and supported. Our programs seek to reduce disparities in outcomes which are driven by systemic inequality.

## Guiding principles

- > Client centered
- > Intersectionality
- > Decoloniality
- > Accountability
- > Engagement

## BACKGROUND

In 2020, we began deeply exploring the importance and role of diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) in the IRC's work. While we had already begun prioritizing and centering gender equality in our programs and operations, it was clear that there were additional elements that needed to inform our work. As a result, in 2021, after digging deeper into diversity, equality and inclusion and gender equality as separate concepts and practices, we brought together these concepts to create a "GEDI" action plan, incorporating our DEI strategy and our gender equality commitments to provide an intersectional lens to our initiatives and to address systemic inequalities.



## A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

### A new position created

Between the end of FY2021 and the date of this publication, the IRC hired a Chief Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion officer: Cica Dadjo.

### Recruitment

We improved recruitment practices to attract more diverse talent and hired a recruiter to focus on interns, early career, and diversity efforts.

### Funding to local partners

We increased our funding by 50% to local partners compared to FY20, which is a significant first step toward our ambition to maximize the power of people and organizations affected by crises to drive response and recovery.

## FY22 GOALS

- > Launch our three-year GEDI action plan and a fully staffed GEDI team to support implementation
- > Embed GEDI priorities in our country and regional strategic action plan to drive progress
- > Complete the IRC's People Survey, HR Equity Assessment, and International/National Compensation Review and integrate findings into our GEDI initiatives
- > Expand GEDI learning opportunities for staff and managers
- > Expand our translation capacity

## DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP

**Goal:** By 2026, 50% of our global and regional senior leaders identify as races/ethnicities underrepresented in global power structures.

**Progress:** Between FY20 and FY21 the IRC grew representation of national staff in country management roles by 10% and increased women in country management roles by 2%.

### NATIONAL STAFF IN COUNTRY MANAGEMENT ROLES



### WOMEN IN COUNTRY MANAGEMENT ROLES



**LEFT:** Belqisa, 22, came to the United States from Afghanistan when the government changed hands in August 2021. Someday, she wants to be a professional skateboarder.

**ABOVE:** Gabriel is a champion for disability rights. He is motivated by the 262,000 refugees and returnees (and their caregivers) with disabilities in Tanzania and Burundi.

Muna and Khamis Tutu aren't just sisters—they're best friends. They have lived in a refugee camp in South Sudan for the past five years.

## REGIONAL PROGRAMS INTEGRATING GEDI INTO THEIR TRAININGS AND WORK

**In the United States,** a refugee advisory council was established to inform resettlement initiatives.

**In Europe,** a Diversity and Inclusion Innovation Fund was established to provide seed money to test and pilot staff-led GEDI initiatives.

**In Asia,** the program is increasing awareness on GEDI through a peer-led collective learning process where participants engage in intensive and creative self-reflection.

**In Latin America,** GEDI principles have been integrated into hiring practices.

**In the Middle East and North Africa region,** the program launched listening sessions and surveys to develop their GEDI goals and action plan.

**In West Africa,** the Nigeria country program developed a gender equality training for staff, and 300 staff members participated.

**In the Great Lakes region,** our Tanzania country program has established a highly active GEDI committee.

**In East Africa,** the program has partnered with a local nonprofit to support LGBTQI+ refugees.





# Delivering Impact & Scale

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Impact and Scale go hand in hand. Impact is about meaningful change in people's lives through high-quality programming. Scale is about reaching more people now and in the long term. Both are at the core of the IRC's strategy.

Dr. Mohammed Isa Goni examines 10-month-old Ali at a nutrition clinic in Borno, Nigeria.

# Raise program quality and reach more people

The IRC is making a greater impact by giving clients more influence over program design and delivery and using research and evidence to power our decisions. One of the best ways we increase scale and impact is by working with more local partners.

## PLAY WELL IN COLOMBIA AND BEYOND

Play Well is a LEGO Foundation-funded emergency program aiming to build children's social-emotional skills through playful, interactive audio stories and activities.

Play Well was launched in the fall of 2020 in direct response to the need of children out of school due to the pandemic. The program's innovative approach delivers audio-based content that promotes social-emotional learning skills through play, and through a cast of characters.

The IRC partnered with Click Arté, a local Colombian creative agency. Click Arté had already created a world of characters that were known and loved by thousands of teachers and students, facilitating adoption and scale when the Play Well program expanded the story of a particularly relevant character, Enrique the migrant chameleon.

The content is designed to be delivered via radio, phones and digital platforms such as WhatsApp so as to reach all listeners, including those with limited internet or connectivity. For the first phase of the project, Play Well content was produced and distributed to refugee children ages 6-12 and their caregivers through these modalities

in Colombia. Engaging in-person sessions with a trusted local partner took place in Venezuela using the same content.

Play Well in Colombia has been picked up for a second season and will be expanding programming to include video and in-person services as well as caregiver-facing supplemental material. Conversations are ongoing with Colombia's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture to explore incorporating "On Air with Enrique" into their own programming, which would significantly expand accessibility and reach.

### PROGRAM EXPANSION

In 2022, Play Well was expanded to Uganda and Tanzania with unique content for the East African context. **Initial reports from Uganda show a peak listenership of 2.7M people in one week.**

### IRC Impact

# 3.6M

radio listeners reached through Play Well in Colombia

## CASH ASSISTANCE

### Afghanistan

Thanks to the generous help of our supporters, the IRC is providing families in Kabul with emergency aid, including cash assistance. Providing cash is not only an efficient delivery method, it provides dignity and agency to heads of households, who are best situated to know what their families need most.

With money in their pockets, Afghans in need begin to have some hope. "We had to leave our home because of war," says Noor, 38, who fled Kunduz

Yofrayner is a student in Colombia. He accesses Play Well content via a mobile phone.



## DELIVERING IMPACT & SCALE

Province with her son and two daughters when the regime changed. “We had no choice. Except for our clothes, we took nothing. Later, I learned that my husband was killed.”

“Cash relief is vital in the prevention of hunger and hardship,” says Vicki Aken, IRC country director in Afghanistan, “and is a proven and efficient tool to deliver humanitarian aid directly to the people who need it most.”

For Noor, emergency cash assistance was lifesaving. “It means that my kids will not starve to death,” she said. “I can get them medicine if they are sick.”

The IRC has delivered aid in Afghanistan for over 30 years, reaching thousands of communities with vital services and economic recovery programs. But more support is needed from humanitarian agencies and world leaders to prevent famine and address the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

Almost 23 million Afghans, more than half of the country’s population, face acute food insecurity. One million children are at risk of the most severe form of malnutrition. Unaddressed, the current crisis could claim more deaths than 20 years of war.

### Bangladesh

In 2021 a flood hit Bangladesh causing widespread damage in Cox’s Bazar. Rabiya is a 42-year-old mother of eight: six sons and two daughters. Her husband died of a heart attack during the flood in July 2021, and she needed to support her family of nine by herself.

Thanks to funding from SIDA-HFA, the Swedish government’s humanitarian aid agency, the IRC was able to provide cash assistance to Rabiya and others through Young Power in Social Action, a local partner.

“I wish to become independent by purchasing two goats with BDT 14000 that I have received. I also want to expense the money properly on food, clothing and education of my children, and give them a better life.”

While it doesn’t solve all of their problems, cash is one of the most effective forms of direct aid in emergency contexts. Today, Rabiya is earning a bit of money by doing housework for families in the area.

### IRC Impact

In Bangladesh, a total of

**1,300 households**

were reached with cash and of dignity kits after the flood

### PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

The IRC is making a greater impact by partnering with local organizations in Uganda like Karamoja Women Umbrella Organization (KAWUO). Local organizations understand the challenges facing a community, know what kind of programming is most effective, serve local economies and, perhaps most importantly, have already earned the trust of community members.

Local women’s organizations have a unique ability to reach and empower women and girls within their own communities. That is why the IRC is prioritizing and elevating programs where women can gather and talk about their concerns, staff can offer support for those who want to report gender-based violence, and men take classes on how they can better treat the women in their lives.

The IRC-Uganda team and our long-term partner KAWUO are responding innovatively to a dramatic



**“We had no choice. Except for our clothes, we took nothing.”**

Noor

Noor wraps her daughter in a warm blanket that she purchased with cash assistance from the IRC.



### DONOR SPOTLIGHT

## George Sarlo & Family

### Crisis response in Afghanistan

George Sarlo, a refugee and survivor of the Holocaust in Hungary, was deeply affected seeing the tragic humanitarian crisis unfold when Afghanistan’s government collapsed in August 2021. As a supporter of the IRC for over 20 years and a dedicated IRC Advisor, he knew what these families were going through as their lives were upended and many were displaced from their homes—all on top of decades-long critical needs in Afghanistan. Knowing that the IRC was uniquely positioned to respond, George was moved to make his largest-ever gift to the IRC of \$1M in support of our Afghanistan emergency appeal through the George Sarlo Foundation, where his family is actively involved in philanthropic decisions and goals. George and his family trust that the IRC is making a transformative impact not only in Afghanistan, but in crisis-affected countries across the world.

## DELIVERING IMPACT & SCALE

increase in the number of intimate partner violence and gender-based violence (GBV) cases reported in the context of COVID-19 lockdowns. KAWUO established remote case management capacity to provide psychosocial, medical and legal support to survivors.

The KAWUO team was trained and regularly coached by the IRC's technical team via bi-weekly teleconference calls during the COVID-19 lockdown on key topics requested by KAWUO, such as GBV guiding principles, data management and protection, survivor-centered case management, collaboration and networking. The IRC also continues to provide technical support as required.

KAWUO's 617 women's groups and volunteer community-based case managers effectively sustained awareness-raising efforts and advocated for GBV services to remain high on the local district agenda, despite COVID-19.



**ABOVE:** Women from Togoletta group, one of the women's groups that the IRC supports in Uganda, discuss an upcoming meeting.

**BELOW:** In northwest Syria, Abed, 8, hugs his father.

**OPPOSITE:** Ali and his family fled Afghanistan in 2021. Here he sits with his wife and two kids in their new home in the United States.



### **INCLUSIVE, CLIENT-CENTERED PROGRAMMING IN SYRIA**

Bringing together standards on client-centered programming and inclusion of persons with disabilities, the IRC-Syria team amended their existing channels to reach a wider population and become more accessible to all, including persons with disabilities, and available to collect client feedback remotely. As a result of these community outreach efforts using diverse channels, the IRC team has reached a total of 475 persons with disabilities during COVID-19, which is almost 35% higher than the client reach data prior to the pandemic.



### **DONOR SPOTLIGHT** **Airbnb.org**

#### **Temporary housing for displaced people**

Since 2015, the IRC and the Airbnb.org team have partnered together to provide temporary housing to people who have been displaced by conflict and disaster. This partnership has helped to streamline resettlement efforts by providing a revolutionary way to support refugees and asylum-seeking families with temporary housing. In response to the crisis in Afghanistan in the fall of 2021, Airbnb.org provided housing to over 20,000 Afghan refugees worldwide through partnerships including the IRC, which received increased annual support for its resettlement efforts. Additionally, Airbnb.org has funded and facilitated accommodations for other IRC clients and humanitarian workers around the world. We are grateful for Airbnb.org's ongoing support of the IRC and their commitment to expand temporary housing for displaced people.

Tabetha is an IRC case manager at the women and girls safe space in South Sudan. She helps women and girls understand their rights.

# Sharing Our Expertise

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The IRC is committed to sharing our best ideas and raising our voice to improve the lives of all people affected by crisis. We aim to accelerate innovation and launch campaigns on topics where we can influence better outcomes for our clients and the humanitarian sector as a whole.



# Transformational Education Opportunities for Marginalized Girls in Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, gender disparity becomes pronounced in adolescence, when early marriage or pregnancy effectively end a girl's education.

During the 2014-2016 Ebola crisis, adolescent girls experienced a particularly high level of violence and an increase in early and forced marriages. Teenage pregnancy rates were high and caused girls to leave school. Self-isolation and quarantine during COVID-19 resulted in further isolation for this already marginalized population.

**“If girls are shown that they have value...they can become great in society.”**

Hajah\*

It is within this context that the IRC and our partners—Restless Development, Concern Worldwide and BBC Media Action—designed the Every Adolescent Girl Empowered and Resilient Project, or EAGER, in collaboration with the IRC's Airbel Impact Lab, an innovative group of researchers and planners located in over 40 countries who are committed to the rigorous design, evaluation and cost-effective

scaling of innovative solutions to chronic problems confronting the humanitarian community. EAGER aims to serve 27,000 of Sierra Leone's most marginalized girls.

Girls attend the EAGER Learning Program for 30 weeks in female-only, community-based Safe Spaces and/or Learning Spaces, where they are supported to build their knowledge, skills, confidence and social networks.

During the program, girls learn literacy, numeracy, financial literacy and life skills. Next, the girls work with their mentors to set self-defined learning, household, community and financial goals. After graduation, this plan guides girls to use the different skills they have learned to work toward their goals.

EAGER works with communities through Community Dialogues that open discussions with community leaders and caregivers on how they can actively support adolescent girls in their community. EAGER also broadcasts a weekly radio program that focuses on a wide range of issues that impact adolescent girls.

Hajah\*, 19, had to drop out of school at a young age to help earn money for her family. When Hajah enrolled in EAGER, she didn't know how to read or write or work with numbers.

Through her active engagement, Hajah learned about herself and her potential to grow and contribute to her family and community. “I can now help my children study at home, and I am now volunteering in the preschool. Knowing that I have value and strength has also given me the confidence to always



A group of girls participate in a literacy and numeracy session in an EAGER safe space in Sierra Leone.

she trusts. She wants everyone to know that, “If girls are shown that they have value, and are taught how to be independent and make smart choices, they can become great in the society.”

Some of the specific skills she feels have empowered her the most are assertive communication, stress management, negotiation skills and talking to people

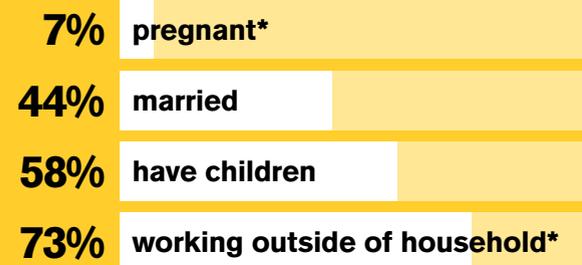
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\* A pseudonym is used for the client's protection.

## EAGER'S FIRST COHORT

**7,432 girls**

(Average age: 15.7 years old)



\*At time of enrollment

## EAGER'S SECOND COHORT

**19,881 girls**

(Average age: 16.6 years old)



# Policy and Advocacy

Through its global advocacy efforts, the IRC vigorously advocates on behalf of refugees, displaced people and marginalized populations. Here are some of the ways we advocated for systemic change in 2021.

## IRC Impact

After IRC advocates sent more than

**10,000**

emails to the White House, the Biden administration **increased the refugee cap from 15,000 to 62,500 in FY21 and up to 125,000 in FY22**

**1,000**

**policymakers, advocates and refugees** participated in the IRC's first-ever state-level advocacy summit

IRC advocates made over

**110,000**

connections with legislators in support of refugees and asylum seekers

**In the U.S., IRC advocacy helped result** in a strong series of international aid funding packages for COVID-19 that totaled

**\$18.5B**

An IRC staff member talks to a woman in Kabul, Afghanistan, to see if her family meets the criteria for cash assistance.





**ABOVE:** Ikram Ismail, 33, holds her baby daughter, Myria. Ikram's family fled Syria and now lives in Greece.

**OPPOSITE:** Rahima, an Afghan refugee and IRC volunteer, has lunch with her family in their tent in Lesvos, Greece.

### CRISIS IN AFGHANISTAN

In August 2021 amidst the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, the IRC's advocacy team quickly took action to create a policy environment in the U.S. and Europe that enabled nearly 70,000 Afghans to flee the crisis and ultimately enter the U.S. As Afghans arrived and were processed in the U.S., the team pursued and gained policies that would help Afghans integrate into U.S. society, including having access to federal benefits.

The EU parliament passed a resolution on Afghanistan in support of those evacuating the country with a particular focus on the needs of women and girls that aligned closely with IRC's policy asks. As the humanitarian situation unraveled inside Afghanistan, the IRC's advocacy team worked in Washington, D.C., and New York to clear humanitarian exemptions to U.S. and U.N. Security Council sanctions to help facilitate a response at the adequate scale.

### REFUGEE CONTAINMENT IN GREECE

Almost five years after the establishment of five EU-funded reception and identification centers on the Greek islands, nearly 15,000 people remain stranded

### THE IRC ON THE GROUND IN GREECE

Data from four years of IRC programming reveals consistent accounts of severe mental health conditions, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and self-harm among people of all ages and backgrounds. IRC Hellas started a mental health and psychosocial support program on the island of Lesvos in March 2018, providing services to asylum-seekers that reside in the local reception and identification center. This later expanded to the islands of Chios and Samos to meet growing and evident needs.

in these camps. Having survived harrowing journeys to Europe, they find themselves trapped in dangerous, overcrowded and inhumane living conditions for months, and many for as long as two years.

The IRC released a report exposing the mental and physical health dangers of the current EU policies around refugees in Greece. The publication of this report helped secure funding to continue crucial mental health and psychosocial support programs on the islands. The IRC advocacy team in Europe continues to seek fundamental policy change around containment.

The IRC program includes individual and group counseling sessions by psychologists. The sessions are held at the IRC mental health centers which are located in the towns of the three islands, away from the camps. This helps ensure confidentiality and safety, as well as providing people with the chance to escape the difficult environment of the camps, even for a short while.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, most individual support services were provided remotely in order to continue offering services while adhering to public health guidelines.



### DONOR SPOTLIGHT Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF)

In late 2016, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) made a five-year, \$15M grant to the IRC to support our programs in Greece, our IT operations throughout the organization, and our Emergencies and Humanitarian Action Unit. Over the last five years, this generous support to the IRC has been hard at work, reaching crisis-affected families in Greece and in some of the toughest places on Earth with the tools they need to survive, recover and regain control of their futures. The Emergency Response and Infrastructure & Systems Strengthening grant has provided transformational support to the IRC across key strategic and mission-critical priorities, ultimately helping us reach over 240,000 individuals with services across 20 countries. This partnership has transformed the way the IRC conducts business, advanced our programs in Greece and changed the way we respond to emergencies.

Teenage girls in Sierra Leone participate in an education program intended to build confidence, knowledge, skills and friendship.



# Focusing on Our Clients

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Clients are at the center of the IRC's strategy. They are our partners and the motivation for every decision we make. Their perseverance is what inspires and compels us at the IRC to strive for always-better programming.

Brothers Mehdi and Ali embrace at the airport after a separation of 10 years.



# Clients in Focus

Every client we meet has different circumstances, needs and dreams. Here we highlight a few powerful stories of people who engaged with one or more IRC programs and found their lives changed for the better.

## **TWO AFGHAN BROTHERS REUNITE AFTER 10 YEARS**

When Ali\* was 14 years old, he and his older sister almost drowned in the Evros River, which hugs the border between Turkey and Greece. They were migrants packed into an unsafe boat that sank. "I know how to swim, but my sister could not," Ali recalls. "She was pulling me down, I would sink, go under the water, and then come up again. It was like that for about an hour."

The Turkish police rescued them, and the harrowing incident became just another episode in Ali's fraught childhood.

Born in Iran to Afghan parents who had fled their country, Ali had no identification papers. Unable to attend school, he worked 16-hour days, often cheated of his wages. His older brother, Mehdi\*, left for Germany to apply for asylum.

After Ali's father died and his mother was deported to Afghanistan, he went with his sister and her family to Turkey and, after eight tries and one shipwreck, to Greece. Unfortunately, things did not get better for Ali. He was separated from his sister, and as a minor without parents or a legal guardian, he was placed in a holding center where he would remain for a year, harassed by guards and living in a kind of suspended animation.

\* A pseudonym is used for the client's protection.

**“She was in hospitals as a child and now she wants to be a doctor to treat children.”**

**Maasom, speaking about his daughter, Nasrin**



Since 2016, the IRC has been providing child-protection services for asylum-seekers, refugees and other migrants in Greece and since 2018, supported-independent-living (SIL) services for teenagers in Athens. SIL apartments are in residential areas with easy access to public transport, schools, health facilities and recreational activities. Teenagers are assisted by teams of professionals, including educators, interpreters and lawyers, who facilitate the integration of unaccompanied children into society.

Eventually, Ali was transferred to SIL housing in Athens. The IRC connected him to social workers as well as lawyers who helped him with his immigration case.

Ten years after saying goodbye, Ali’s support team was able to reunite him with Mehdi, who was still living in Germany. The brothers hope their mother will soon be able to join them.

**MAASOM’S FAMILY FINDS A HOME IN ENGLAND**

In the United States, 84 percent of refugees enrolled in IRC employment programs became economically self-sufficient within 180 days. Integration support is essential to their success, which is why the IRC is leveraging its experience resettling refugees in the U.S. to launch innovative initiatives around the world, including in the United Kingdom, where RISE—

short for Resettlement & Integration in Southeast England—is helping hundreds of resettled refugees gain the knowledge and confidence to thrive.

RISE aims to funnel the strength and resilience of refugee families into inclusive, tailored community activities—from cultural orientation workshops to peer mentorship programs—in order to lower barriers and ensure the full and equal participation of new arrivals.

Maasom and Hiba, Kurdish-Syrian refugees living in the market town of Andover, exemplify how refugees can benefit from RISE. In 2017, while living in a camp in Iraq, the couple celebrated the birth of their second child, Nasrin, only to discover she suffered from a life-threatening heart condition. Fortunately, the family was accepted by the U.K.’s resettlement program and, after 40 days and two day-long operations, Nasrin recovered and the family began their new life in their new country.

Initially, Maasom and Hiba received support from the Hampshire County Council, which introduced them to the IRC, which enrolled them in the RISE Cultural Orientation program.



**ABOVE:** A healthy Nasrin plays in the family’s home in Andover. **OPPOSITE:** Maasom and his daughter Nasrin, 4, on her first day of school in the U.K.

“We learned about our rights and obligations,” says Maasom. “We had a better idea of how to book appointments with the GP [general practitioner], how to get a driving license, how to apply for a job.” Maasom started volunteering at the British Heart Foundation, both to make friends and improve his English.

Their daughter, Nasrin—now 5 years old—is a confident girl who makes friends easily and has big dreams. “She always tells me that she wants to be a doctor,” says Maasom. “She was in hospitals as a child and now she wants to be a doctor to treat children.”

**A TRANSGENDER WOMAN FROM EL SALVADOR FINDS COMMUNITY IN MEXICO**

“You could say that I was the only trans woman in my community, or the only one who had the courage to come out, and that’s how I started to be singled out and discriminated against,” says Fernanda Levin, a 28-year-old transgender woman from El Salvador. She was fired from a well-known chain restaurant because she started dyeing her hair and identified as a gay man, although she was not comfortable with that identity.

“The harassment against my family began, against my mother and my father—they started getting hate messages. Thank God, I have the support of my parents and my siblings.”

Fernanda decided to leave her home for safety in the United States, setting out with just \$200. She traveled by foot, bus, and even crossed a river in a makeshift raft. “Once I arrived in Mexico, I felt safe enough to dress as a woman,” she says, and she met other trans women. When they reached Ciudad Juárez, they found shelter at a triage hotel supported by the IRC before moving into what would become the Casa de Colores.



**ABOVE:** Fernanda, 28, is photographed in Mexico after fleeing discrimination in El Salvador.

**OPPOSITE:** Fernanda poses for a selfie with three other migrant trans women who are working to help trans women and LGBTQI+ people on the move.

**“I try not to think too much about my past, but about what awaits me in the future.”**

**Fernanda**

Casa de Colores (House of Colors) is a shelter created by Fernanda and other trans women where asylum seekers and other migrants from the LGBTQI+ community can feel safe, comfortable and accepted. Founded by eight trans women who had been expelled from other shelters, it was hosting more than 40 residents when we met Fernanda.

The IRC supported inhabitants of Casa de Colores with money from our Economic Recovery and Development program. Residents received housing stipends (three months rent plus deposit), cash transfers (which recipients can spend on food, medicine, furniture, or other pressing needs), and GBV prevention and security kits that included items such as secure locks.

Fernanda has since entered the U.S., despite the barriers imposed when the Trump administration invoked Title 42, a public-health emergency statute, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Immigration officials have used the law in nearly 1.9 million encounters since 2020 to expel asylum seekers. After extending it several times, the Biden administration had proposed to end Title 42 in May 2022. As of this writing, a federal judge in Louisiana has extended the order indefinitely.

“My dream upon arriving in the United States was to find a decent job, to have an income to help my parents,” says Fernanda. “I want to feel like a productive person for society.”



**DONOR SPOTLIGHT**  
**Nynke Fortuin**

**Partners for Freedom Legacy Society member**

Born four years after the end of WWII in the Netherlands, a country that had gone through a brutal occupation, Nynke was raised in a family acutely aware of the perils of war. “When reading and hearing about conflicts elsewhere I always had the thought that, ‘there but for fortune, go you, go I.’”

“My first experience with people that were actually displaced was in 1956, when Russia invaded Hungary, and thousands of refugees came to the Netherlands. My parents were involved in the resettlement and they were supporters of the IRC, so I was 7 when I first heard of the organization. Having been a donor my entire adult life, it was a natural choice to put the IRC in my estate plan.

I enjoy volunteering in the San Diego office through the yearly tax program, which is for anybody under a certain income, not only refugees. Preparing a return for a recently arrived Afghan family I was struck by how resilient, positive and full of hope they were. They had been scattered in the diaspora, with a daughter in Dubai and a son in Germany, both of whom had already found work, and there did not seem a moment of doubt that all of them would be successful. It was a good reminder of how diverse the refugee population is, and how often only the ‘failings of the system’ get attention.”

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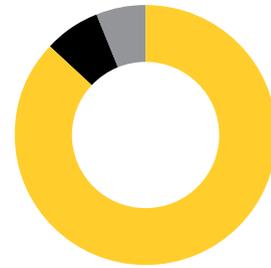
# Financial Report

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year ended Sept. 30, 2021 and Sept. 30, 2020 (Amounts in thousands)

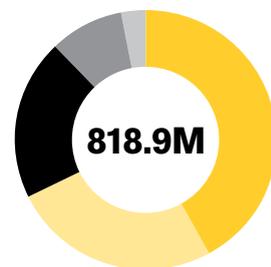
	2021	2020
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>		
Contributions	\$ 219,474	\$ 184,349
Contributed goods and services	10,670	9,010
Grants and contracts	686,574	581,783
Foundation and private grants	53,566	41,143
Investment return used for operations	5,218	5,537
Loan administration fees and other income	4,010	3,750
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>979,512</b>	<b>825,572</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
<b>Program Services:</b>		
Crisis Response, Recovery & Development (CRRD)	685,579	580,944
Resettlement, Asylum & Integration (RAI)	133,310	125,774
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>818,889</b>	<b>706,718</b>
<b>Supporting Services:</b>		
Management and General	63,932	54,431
Fundraising	56,881	47,114
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>120,813</b>	<b>101,545</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>939,702</b>	<b>808,263</b>
Excess (deficiency) of operating revenues over operating expenses	39,810	17,309
Excess without donor restriction	1,411	8,809
Excess (deficiency) Funds with donor restriction*	38,399	8,500
Endowment, planned giving and other non-operating activities (net)	25,074	(1,267)
Increase in net assets	64,884	16,042
Net assets at beginning of year	245,790	229,748
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 310,674</b>	<b>\$ 245,790</b>

\* Unspent temporary restricted funds are carried forward and therefore may produce deficits in the years when expanded. Complete financial statements, audited by KPMG LLP, are available at [Rescue.org](https://www.rescue.org).



### THE IRC'S EFFICIENCY

- Program Services **87%**
- Management and General **8%**
- Fundraising **5%**



### PROGRAM SERVICES\*

- Health **42%**
- Safety **26%**
- Economic Wellbeing **20%**
- Education **9%**
- Power **3%**

\* Organized according to the outcomes defined in the IRC's Strategy100. See page 12.

## How You Can Help

### DONATE

Online: Visit [Rescue.org](https://www.rescue.org)

By phone: **1-855-9RESCUE**

By mail: Donations International Rescue Committee  
122 East 42ND Street  
New York, NY 10168-1289

Donations are tax deductible. The IRC also accepts gifts in the form of securities. For more information, please contact [Stock.Gifts@Rescue.org](mailto:Stock.Gifts@Rescue.org).

### ADVOCATE

Text RESCUE to 40649 to sign up to the IRC's online global family and receive important advocacy alerts and news about the humanitarian issues that are important to you. Visit [Rescue.org/act](https://www.rescue.org/act) to see our latest actions.

### VOLUNTEER

Volunteers help refugees and asylum seekers adjust to their new life in the United States. For information, visit [Rescue.org/Volunteer](https://www.rescue.org/Volunteer).

### FUNDRAISE

Start your own fundraising campaign to support the IRC and make a difference. For information, visit <https://irc.donordrive.com/event/fundraiseforirc>

### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

@RESCUEorg

@RESCUEorg

@InternationalRescueCommittee

@InternationalRescueCommittee

### FUTURE GIFTS

Support refugee families in the future through a bequest to the IRC and become a Partner for Freedom. Contact [PlannedGiving@Rescue.org](mailto:PlannedGiving@Rescue.org) for information or to indicate that you have already included the IRC in your estate plans.



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