

IMPACT

AN UPDATE FOR IRC SUPPORTERS

WINTER 2026

Gaza: A Father's Determination

“What keeps me moving forward are my children.”

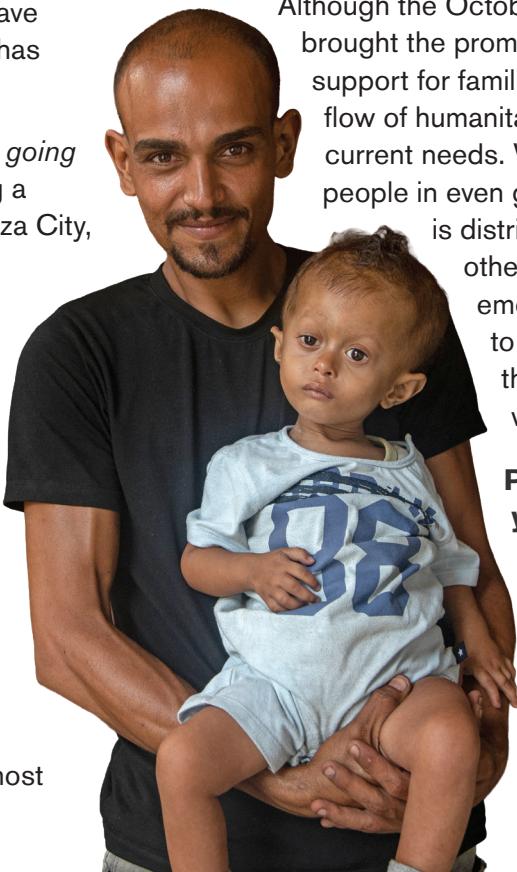
Before October 2023, Rami Al Za'im, 31, was an entrepreneur and internet service provider in Shuja'iyah, Gaza, where he had lived his entire life. Since then, Israeli military attacks have driven him, his wife and their two children from their home nine times.

“What keeps me moving forward in spite of the war are my children,” said Rami. But inadequate access to clean water, food, hygiene, sanitation services and stable shelter has taken its toll. Rami’s son, Shoukat, 2, has suffered the most, as malnutrition and dehydration have exacerbated the medical conditions he has struggled with since his birth.

“I was carrying him, and thought he was going to die,” Rami said, as he recalled fleeing a hospital in Rimal, a neighborhood in Gaza City, where the family took shelter for around 25 days.

Determined to save his son, Rami connected with a local International Rescue Committee (IRC) partner. With their support—and thanks to you and your fellow generous donors—Shoukat received treatment, including a course of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF). A shelf-stable, nutrient-dense, peanut butter-like paste, RUTF provides vital nutrition to children suffering from the most severe acute malnutrition.

“They cared well for him and even made him play. His condition improved. He is now healthy,” said Rami, who uses the hygiene supplies the IRC also provided to keep his family healthy.



Although the October 2025 ceasefire brought the promise of increased support for families like Rami’s, the flow of humanitarian aid is not meeting current needs. With winter now putting people in even greater danger, the IRC is distributing warm clothing, other cold-weather aid and emergency cash assistance to help households meet their needs safely and with dignity.

Please continue playing your critical role with the IRC by making your next gift to help fathers like Rami and families in crisis zones worldwide. 

Rami Al Za'im and his son, Shoukat.

MEASURING HOPE IN CENTIMETERS

Providing Lifesaving Treatment to Malnourished Children



To assess the severity of his malnutrition, an IRC health worker measures Shoukat's mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) with a tape, as Rami looks on.



Treatment includes packets of Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF).



Shoukat is recovering, as indicated by the MUAC tape's green color.

IRC Midwife Supports Her Community in Sudan

“I want the world to pay attention to Sudan.”

Zakia Yaqoup, an IRC midwife, cares for women in Tunaydbah, a camp for displaced Sudanese families. She is dedicated to helping each patient have a healthy pregnancy, birth and recovery. Zakia also provides hygiene and family planning counseling.

Like the women she serves, Zakia endured the trauma of displacement of violent conflict. After a bomb destroyed her home in Khartoum, “my family and I spent 10 days under a tree on a road,” she said.

Grief and health emergencies also marked their journey to safety: Zakia's grandmother died. Other relatives contracted malaria and diarrhea. She also fell ill, but recovered after a blood transfusion and hospital stay.

Joining the IRC in 2021 allowed Zakia to transform her life: “When I received my salary from IRC, I was able to move to a safe place and provide medication and treatment for my family, and manage my life. That moment gave me hope.”

For the third consecutive year, Sudan has topped the IRC's Emergency Watchlist of countries most likely to experience a new or worsening humanitarian crisis. Zakia is determined to shine a light on her people's suffering:

“I want the world to pay attention to what is really happening in Sudan. We need medication, food, health and education. Women and girls are facing exposure to all types of violence. Children are suffering from hunger and malnutrition.”

Please continue to support IRC team members like Zakia as they help people—especially women—who have faced similar hardships survive, recover and rebuild their lives. 



Midwife Zakia Yaqoup presents a delivery kit to Samher (19) as part of the IRC's antenatal care services.



BEYOND SURVIVAL AND RECOVERY

IRC Business Grant Helps Entrepreneur in Ukraine Rebuild

It is a typical day at Olátame, a fashion brand in Bashtanka, a city 300 miles south of Kyiv, Ukraine.

A seamstress guides fabric under the needle of a sewing machine, its motor humming. At a nearby workstation, the intricacies of fine apparel-making are on display as an artisan pinches and aligns the edges of another piece. Across the room, a steam iron hisses.

"It's a family, not just a label," announced a social media post from 2020, the year Alla and her daughters started Olátame. She directed production. They managed marketing and branding.

Across Ukraine, Olátame became a favorite among fashion bloggers and celebrities. Then Russia launched its full-scale military assault in February 2023, forcing Alla to suspend production.

Ready to resume operations in 2025, Alla used a \$4,500 business grant from an IRC livelihood program to purchase fabric and equipment. She has since



IRC Livelihoods Officer Vladyslav Tsololo watches as Alla shows the coats she made after an IRC-supported grant helped her workshop restart production.

launched a new collection, hired employees and developed expansion plans.

By reopening Olátame, Alla enabled her daughters to secure their futures and created jobs for her neighbors. By continuing your support, you can join the IRC in equipping the people we serve with resources not just to survive and recover from a crisis or disaster—but to rebuild their lives.

Thank you for your continued partnership! 

Gaza: IRC Post-Ceasefire Response

Your Generosity Supports People in Rebuilding Their Lives

The crisis is far from over for Palestinians struggling to rebuild their lives after two years of conflict that killed and injured tens of thousands of civilians, triggered famine and damaged or destroyed more than 90% of homes. The region's frequent winter downpours, winds and floods have put families living in flimsy tents and makeshift shelters in even greater danger.

You and your fellow supporters have joined the IRC in helping to rush aid to children and families who need it most. This winter, your support is helping the IRC distribute clothing kits to more than 800 children across Gaza City, Khan Younis, and Deir al-Balah. These kits include coats, sweaters, hats, socks, and thermal layers meant to protect children from the cold. 



CASH ASSISTANCE



NUTRITION CARE



WARM CLOTHING



The IRC team distributes winter clothing for displaced families in Gaza.

Equal Parts Compassion and Proof of Concept

Building Systems to Endure Beyond Our Presence

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is committed to fulfilling our mission with the highest possible effectiveness and efficiency. We also want you to trust that your contributions are the best investment you can make to support refugees and displaced families.

To that end, we never stop asking questions. Is a program working as well as it should be? Can we make it better? How? When? For whom?

We find the answers by combining research and evaluation with on-the-ground experience. This approach enables us to jump-start survivors' recovery, optimize resources and create lasting solutions. To improve our collective work, we share our findings with the humanitarian aid community.

In 2025, the IRC closed our program in Sierra Leone, where we had worked since 1999. Our exit was not an



end but a transition, a handover to in-country organizations with the capacity, resilience and vision to build their brighter future.

It is also an example of why we define success not only by the scale of services delivered. The partnerships we forge are just as essential to building systems that endure beyond our presence and resilience against future crises.

The IRC's work in Sierra Leone is also a demonstration of the power of your generosity—for which we are deeply grateful! 

Supporting Girls Eager To Reclaim Their Futures



Participants in the IRC's EAGER learning program in Sierra Leone take a break from their lessons.

In Sierra Leone, civil war, disease outbreaks and other crises escalated economic insecurity, which exacerbates rates of child marriage and pregnancy. But through the Every Adolescent Empowered and Resilient (EAGER) project, the IRC and our local partners helped reverse that statistic.

Girls aged 13-17 who never attended or dropped out of school learned life skills, including financial literacy. Mentorships connected girls with local women leaders. EAGER also united parents, caregivers and community leaders to learn how to better support adolescent girls. A weekly radio program focusing on issues affecting girls maximized EAGER's reach.

EAGER's 27,000 alumnae are among the 3.5 million people the IRC served in Sierra Leone between 1999 and 2025. Your gift today can support more refugees and displaced families in crisis zones across the world. Thank you! 



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Give with Confidence

