

ANNUAL REPORT



CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP	04
OUR MISSION	05
COVID-19: ADVOCATING FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE AMID THE PANDEMIC	06
ADVANCING AND DEFENDING RIGHTS OF PEOPLE IN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES	08
CONFRONTING CLIMATE DISPLACEMENT	12
PROTECTING HUMANITARIANISM, RESETTLEMENT, AND ASYLUM IN THE UNITED STATES	14
CHAMPIONING THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS	18
PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS	20
MESSAGE FROM THE REFUGEE ADVOCACY LAB	24
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE	25
THANK YOU	26
QUOTE FROM NADIA MURAD	27
OUR BOARD	28
OUR ADVISORY COUNCIL	29
FINANCES	30
JOIN US	31



MESSAGE FROM

LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

We had another turbulent year.

As long awaited COVID-19 vaccines began distribution worldwide, new variants emerged—sending many back into isolation and further threatening the world’s most vulnerable.

Displacement levels reached 84 million people, and violence, war, and famine continued to affect populations across the globe.

But amid an unpredictable pandemic, escalating crises, shifts in political power, and a worsening climate crisis, Refugees International stayed focused on our mission to advocate for and with displaced people worldwide—and to secure solutions that protect basic human rights.


In 2021, we called for a global pandemic response and vaccine coverage to include displaced people; urged action on humanitarian emergencies in places like Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Ethiopia; assembled a task force to make recommendations on climate migration; fought to rebuild asylum and resettlement in the United States; highlighted the needs of displaced women and girls; promoted sustainable solutions for communities in crisis; and worked to ensure refugees are represented at the policy table.

We are proud to present to you our 2021 Annual Report. We hope it reflects our determination and efforts to fight for the rights and well-being of those who have been forced to flee their homes. Our work would not be possible without your generosity and steadfast commitment to creating a more welcoming world. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Eric P. Schwartz
President
Refugees International



Jeff Tindell
Board Co-Chair
Refugees International



Maureen White
Board Co-Chair
Refugees International

OUR MISSION

Refugees International advocates for lifesaving assistance, human rights, and protection for displaced people and promotes solutions to displacement crises around the world. We do not accept any government or UN funding, ensuring the independence and credibility of our work.



Investigate
displacement crises



Create
policy solutions



Advocate
for change

COVID-19:

ADVOCATING

FOR DISPLACED

PEOPLE AMID

THE PANDEMIC

Despite the introduction of vaccines to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, the virus has stayed with us—and continues to exacerbate challenges displaced populations face.

In Peru, for instance, Refugees International found that hundreds of thousands of displaced Venezuelans still lack shelter, face food insecurity, cannot access healthcare, or have lost their jobs as Peru's economy suffers amid the shocks of the pandemic. In April, Refugees International and Peruvian partner Encuentros released, "[The Humanitarian Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Venezuelans in Peru, One Year In.](#)" The report bears witness to the lives and challenges of Venezuelans in Peru as they survive the twin crises of displacement and the pandemic and recommends concrete steps to help.

Meanwhile, the global effort to vaccinate populations around the world—including displaced people and those in humanitarian emergencies—remained woefully inadequate. In September, Refugees International released "[Less than a Lifeline: Challenges to the COVAX Humanitarian Buffer.](#)" to highlight the importance of closing the vaccination gap through the Humanitarian Buffer in hard-to-reach areas and stress that access to vaccines for vulnerable populations needs to be a top priority for stakeholders in the global vaccination effort.

Refugees International is calling for increased humanitarian funding, regularization and inclusion, and equitable vaccine distribution as the pandemic continues to pay a heavy toll on the world's displaced people.



LEFT: Rohingya refugees sit on a Bangladesh Navy ship as they are relocated to the controversial, flood-prone island Bhasan Char in the Bay of Bengal, in Chittagong, Bangladesh on December 29, 2020. © Stringer/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

RIGHT: Health care worker vaccinates a Venezuelan woman at a migrant camp on June 12, 2020 in Bogota, Colombia. © Guillermo Legaria/Getty Images



ADVANCING

AND DEFENDING

RIGHTS OF PEOPLE

IN HUMANITARIAN

EMERGENCIES

Afghanistan in Crisis

Following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan and the U.S. withdrawal of troops in August 2021, millions of Afghans remain at risk, and the humanitarian situation for countless individuals is rapidly deteriorating. In early August, Refugees International convened an internal task force to address the crisis and raise the alarm on the need for increased humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan and for protection pathways for endangered Afghans.

Within hours of the fall of Kabul, Refugees International President Eric P. Schwartz dispatched a letter to President Biden outlining [six immediate actions for the administration](#) to protect the lives of Afghans. And in “[After the Airlift: Protection for Afghan Refugees and Those Who Remain at Risk in Afghanistan](#),” Refugees International offered a comprehensive description of humanitarian policy challenges and offered ten critical sets of actions that the United States, the United Nations, and other governments should take to address humanitarian needs and advance the well-being and the human rights of Afghans. Subsequently, Refugees International highlighted the rollback of rights and the danger faced by Afghan women and girls under Taliban rule in “[Afghan Women and Girls Under Immediate Threat: The Responsibility to Protect and Assist Is Just Beginning](#)” published in October 2021.

Refugees International was also part of an additional funding push for the Afghanistan response, and Congress enacted funding legislation in December 2021. The funding included an additional \$1.2 billion for the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance account (ERMA), which is a flexible fund and has been instrumental in the Afghan response. Humanitarian and immigration coalitions worked on new language on Afghan SIVs and Afghan P2s for the National Defense Authorization Act, but the language was unfortunately not included in the final bill when passed in December.

Refugees International remains focused on these issues as we advocate for the safety and well-being of Afghans at risk.

Famine in Tigray

Civil war in Tigray, Ethiopia, has had devastating humanitarian consequences. In February 2021, just months into the war, Refugees International [sounded early warnings](#) that the conflict was reaching a dangerous turning point. By summer, according to U.S. government estimates, more than 900,000 people in Tigray were believed to be experiencing famine, and 2 million more were living on the brink. As communications were cut and access for humanitarian groups implementing aid on the ground waned, Refugees International took the lead to advocate for action in Tigray and to call attention to the worsening famine with our [Stop Tigray Famine campaign](#).

In early July, Refugees International released “[The Cruellest of Fates: Famine in the Time of War in Tigray](#),” examining the situation in Tigray and recommending action to end the famine. And in September, Refugees International delivered a [joint open letter](#) from 30 NGOs to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and permanent representatives of the Security Council to urge action to end violence and famine in Tigray.

We are confident that our efforts made—and are making—a difference, though the situation remains grave. In 2021, the UN Secretary-General accepted a more public role in the conflict and several UN Security Council Members, particularly African members, echoed our advocacy in public statements. The new UN humanitarian chief took on board Refugees International’s advocacy requests for more fact-based updating on the state of aid delivery, access, and the blockade in public messaging; and the Elders echoed our messaging in advising the UN Security Council to visit Ethiopia to see for themselves the catastrophic result of war.

Refugees International continues to call for an end to hostilities, access for humanitarians, respect for human rights, and a solution to famine in Tigray.

Myanmar and the Rohingya

In early 2021, the advent of the new U.S. administration created an opportunity for renewed U.S. leadership on the Rohingya crisis. In “[Critical Policy Advice for President-Elect Biden: Leading a Global Response on the Rohingya Crisis](#),” Refugees International reiterated its long-term call for the United States to finally recognize the crimes against the Rohingya people for what they are: genocide and crimes against humanity. In March 2022, the United States finally made that determination. The U.S. genocide declaration is a profoundly meaningful step toward justice for the Rohingya people and those who continue to face abuses by the Myanmar military junta to this very today.

But since February 2021, a coup in Myanmar further plunged the country into chaos. The military junta has killed hundreds of civilians, and displacement and humanitarian needs in the country have skyrocketed. Refugees International has [called for bold action](#) to ensure that humanitarian aid can reach those in need and that those forced to flee can access protection as the situation continues to deteriorate. In “[Dire Consequences: Addressing the Humanitarian Fallout from Myanmar’s Coup](#),” Refugees International laid out steps to address the crisis and provide aid and safety to those in need.

In October 2021, Refugees International [welcomed](#) the introduction in Congress of the BURMA Act, which includes many policy recommendations from Refugees International, notably support for further sanctions on the Myanmar military. Refugees International is urging its passage in the House and Senate.

In the context of abuses in Myanmar, the already limited prospects for safe return of Rohingya refugees have greatly diminished, and the humanitarian situation in Bangladesh

has deteriorated in many respects. Bangladesh has moved toward an increasingly restrictive and detention-like response toward the Rohingya. In May, Refugees International released, “[Fading Humanitarianism: The Dangerous Trajectory of the Rohingya Refugee Response in Bangladesh](#),” a report outlining actions to maintain pressure against the Myanmar military and improve the humanitarian response for the Rohingya in Bangladesh.

Atrocities and Displacement in West and Central Africa

In West and Central Africa, Refugees International has focused on displacement resulting from political conflict and violence. In December 2020, presidential elections in the Central African Republic (CAR) were marked by a major surge in violence. At present, more than a quarter of CAR’s population has been displaced, and violence and humanitarian needs continue to spike. In February 2021, Refugees International published “[The Central African Republic in Crisis: Critical Measures to Address Humanitarian and Security Needs](#),” to highlight the challenges confronting the people of CAR and to push for solutions.

In the summer of 2021, Refugees International convened a group of civil society leaders from CAR and researchers to discuss these atrocities. In September, Refugees International published “[Addressing Atrocities and Displacement: A Path Forward for the Central African Republic](#),” summarizing the finding of those convenings and highlighting proposed solutions. Likewise, Refugees International convened a group of civil society leaders from Burkina Faso and international researchers for a meeting on the country’s rapidly deteriorating displacement and humanitarian crisis. In May, Refugees International released “[Atrocities and Displacement in Burkina Faso](#),” presenting perspectives and recommendations shared at the meeting, with a focus on preventing further atrocities. Refugees International continues to raise the alarm on the need for increased international attention and assistance.



TOP LEFT: Graphic that reads #StopTigrayFamine to promote Refugees International’s campaign to call attention to the famine in northern Ethiopia. © Refugees International

TOP RIGHT: A man walks among the remains of his destroyed house in the village of Bisober in Ethiopia’s Tigray region on December 9, 2020. © Eduardo Soteras/AFP via Getty Images

MIDDLE LEFT: Demonstrators make the three finger salute during a flash mob protest against the military coup in Yangon, Myanmar on July 7, 2021. © Myat Thu Kyaw/NurPhoto via Getty Images

BOTTOM RIGHT: A displaced woman walks with a kettle on February 8, 2021 in the Kaya camp in Burkina Faso. © AP Photo/Sophie Garcia

CONFRONTING CLIMATE DISPLACEMENT

For more than a decade, Refugees International has called for global action to address [climate-related displacement](#). We've identified innovative protection pathways for people who are forced to leave their home due to climate. And we've advocated for assistance for frontline communities so that they can be more resilient in the face of climate impacts—and never need to make the wrenching decision to leave home.

Progress has been too slow, as climate change affects displacement trends around the world. Existing refugee and international protection regimes do not fully address climate-related displacement. And global leaders are [failing to meet their commitments](#) to address climate change.

The year 2021 started with a historic opportunity to address climate displacement. Just weeks into his presidency, U.S. President Biden issued an Executive Order (EO) on rebuilding and enhancing the decimated U.S. refugee resettlement system, and calling specifically for U.S. leadership and planning on the issue of global climate change and

migration. Within days of that EO, Refugees International released, [“At a Climate Change Crossroads: How a Biden-Harris Administration Can Support and Protect Communities Displaced by Climate Change,”](#) a report to guide the administration's global leadership on this critical issue.

Refugees International then quickly convened a group of climate and policy experts, NGO leaders, and former U.S. government officials to create a blueprint for the administration on a way ahead. Its July [“Blue Ribbon Task Force on Climate and Migration,”](#) report provides a comprehensive vision for U.S. leadership on climate-induced migration and was briefed to administration officials and experts in the field alike. Much of the analysis and many of the recommendations in the administration's report, issued late in the year, echoes those of the RI-initiated Task Force report. Refugees International is looking forward to working with a new interagency group the White House established in October 2021 to move forward the U.S. commitment to leadership on climate displacement.



BOTTOM LEFT: A man with his child walks through flood water in the village of Gaibandha, Bangladesh on August 19, 2017. © Turjoy Chowdhury/NurPhoto via Getty Images

TOP RIGHT: People in Satkhira, Bangladesh walk across a dried river bed on November 12, 2015. © Zakir Hossain Chowdhury / Barcroft Media via Getty Images

PROTECTING

HUMANITARIANISM,

RESETTLEMENT,

& ASYLUM IN THE

UNITED STATES

Within his first weeks in office, President Biden issued a bold set of executive orders that detailed the administration's intentions to rebuild the U.S. refugee resettlement program and improve the U.S. asylum system. And Refugees International welcomed the U.S. administration's fall 2021 decision to raise the 2022 refugee resettlement ceiling to 125,000, making good on a campaign commitment. Throughout the year, Refugees International called for the creation of legal pathways to the United States and access to asylum for people needing protection. By the second half of the year, this meant [calling for](#) continued evacuations, the use of parole and adjustment, and the refugee admissions program for Afghans. It also meant holding the President to his promise not to [ignore the humanity](#) of those at the southern border.

Focus on Asylum

In a February 2 Executive Order, U.S. President Biden called for a review of the use of expedited removal, a process in which migrants are summarily screened by border officials and interviewed about their fear of return to their home country while being detained, but without access to federal court review if their claims fail. Refugees International warned that, for decades, the process has not only led to mistreatment and forced return of asylum seekers but has also proven inefficient. Refugees International seized the opportunity of the administration's review to arrange a meeting at which a coalition of advocates from several organizations suggested alternative approaches to the Department of Homeland Security and White House policy staff. In May, Refugees International released "[Addressing the Legacy of Expedited Removal: Border Procedures and Alternatives for Reform](#)," a report providing a historical assessment of the use of expedited removal at the border and making the case for policy alternatives.

In early 2021, Refugees International also launched its "[We Can Welcome](#)" video campaign to share the stories of those asylum seekers who have been most impacted by U.S. border policies. Videos also included supporters, such as a pastor and a county supervisor, committed to creating welcoming communities in the United States. The campaign reinforced a message that with smart and humane policies, the United States can welcome people seeking safety and protection. The goal was to create political space for the Biden administration to do the right thing on asylum policy through greater public awareness and support for people seeking safety at our border. The campaign's videos have been viewed hundreds of thousands of times and shared by influencers (including supermodel Christy Turlington and actress Troian Bellisario from *Pretty Little Liars*). As part of the campaign effort, Refugees International also delivered a [petition](#) to the Biden administration on their 100th day in office with a strong message that people across the country agree that #WeCanWelcome people seeking safety. Alongside the videos and petition, Refugees International also led an sign-on letter that included 94 organizations: "[Letter to Biden Administration Welcoming Asylum Executive Order, Urging Swift Rescission of Harmful Policies](#)."

Refugees International is committed to supporting local groups that are working to advocate for and serve displaced people and to providing a platform to affected individuals. In 2021, Refugees International supported Espacio Migrante and Haitian Bridge Alliance in producing a [report](#) on how policies at the U.S.-Mexico border have made communities of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants in Tijuana particularly vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19. The report was based on surveys and focus group interviews the organizations conducted with migrants in Tijuana.

Focus on Congress

Refugees International engaged early in 2021 with colleagues on Capitol Hill and then published “[Priorities for the 117th Congress: Humanitarian Engagement for Displaced Populations](#).” The document outlines additional funding priorities and new policy approaches amid escalating humanitarian and development challenges and expanded global displacement.

Refugees International also advocated to Congress for strong humanitarian and development funding for core accounts while supporting supplemental funding for new emergencies. Following months of individual and coalition advocacy efforts on increasing international COVID funding, the \$1.9 trillion COVID package, which was signed into law by President Biden on March 11, ultimately included \$10.8 billion for international COVID funding. The international funding was primarily focused on global health and food assistance. Congress has also appropriated billions of additional dollars in humanitarian, protection, and resettlement support in response to the U.S. pullout from Afghanistan. Notably, funding includes support for core overseas humanitarian assistance accounts, for Afghan arrivals to the United States, and for the Emergency Refugee Migration and Assistance account (ERMA). Refugees International successfully worked on our own and in coalition during the Trump administration for the survival of this emergency refugee account. This flexible funding account is now playing a critical role in support for the Afghan response.



TOP LEFT: Jose Murillo, a political activist from Honduras who won asylum in the United States, married his wife, Blanca—pictured with their daughter, Zoe—on the bridge by the United States-Mexico border.

MIDDLE: The U.S. Capitol is shown on October 21, 2020 in Washington, DC. © Stefani Reynolds/ Getty Images

TOP RIGHT: Graphic repeats #WeCanWelcome to promote the Voices from the Border campaign. © Refugees International

BOTTOM RIGHT: Mirna Linares is pictured with her family after fleeing El Salvador and winning asylum in the United States.



CHAMPIONING THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN & GIRLS

Refugees International is committed to advancing the rights of displaced women and making sure they are represented in critical decision making. Refugees International started 2021 with [“A Comprehensive Approach for Displaced Women and Girls,”](#) offering a pragmatic agenda for the new U.S. administration to dramatically improve the lives of displaced women and girls and re-establish U.S. leadership and credibility on these issues.

Focus on Tigray

In August, Refugees International published [“Women in Tigray Face Increased Risk of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.”](#) The report raised the alarm that women and girls—many of whom have survived well-documented reports of sexual violence—also faced the increased risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). SEA occurs when someone attempts or succeeds in abusing power for sexual purposes. In the humanitarian response in Tigray, considerable power imbalances exist, combined with other aggravating factors including the increasing scarcity of resources, restricted humanitarian access, and an increase in female-headed households.

Focus on Afghan Women

As the Taliban consolidated power following the fall of Kabul in August 2021, Refugees International raised concerns that Afghan women and girls now face serious risk and have few pathways to protection outside the country. In [“Afghan Women and Girls Under Immediate Threat: The Responsibility to Protect and Assist Is Just Beginning,”](#) Refugees International highlighted the unique challenges facing Afghan women at risk. Refugees International called for greater participation among women in the country’s humanitarian response and for additional pathways for Afghan women and girls to seek protection. Refugees International and partners have continued to [press for urgent U.S. action in Afghanistan](#) to address a worsening situation that will surely impact women and girls and other marginalized groups the most. And in December 2021, Refugees International’s Senior Advocate for Women and Girls traveled to Albania to speak with women leaders who had been evacuated from the country and will advocate with them for protections for Afghan women.

RIGHT: Girls exiting the Afghanistan National Institute of Music in Kabul, Afghanistan on May 18, 2021. © Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times/Getty Images



PROMOTING

SUSTAINABLE

SOLUTIONS

Labor Market Access

In 2021, Refugees International continued its work with the Center for Global Development (CGD) to advocate for refugees' right to work and for greater economic inclusion and respect for the rights of refugees and forcibly displaced people in their host economies. Research by Refugees International and CGD shows that refugee inclusion in the labor market improves economic outcomes, combats xenophobia, and promotes development.

In February 2021, Refugees International celebrated a move by the government of Colombia to [grant](#) ten-year residency permits, the right to work, and access to healthcare and education to [1.7 million displaced Venezuelans](#). Refugees International was encouraged when the government of Colombia cited the importance of our labor market access research in their decision-making, and we have since had various opportunities to provide direct contributions to the policy development process.

On the heels of Kenya's news that the government signed the country's Refugees Act into law in November 2021, Refugees International and CGD released a [report](#) outlining how policies that allow refugees in Kenya the right to work, freedom of movement, and access to financial services could unlock the potential for refugees in the country to contribute significantly to Kenya's economy.

Refugees International and CGD also released "[From Displacement to Development: How Ethiopia Can Create Shared Growth by Facilitating Economic Inclusion for Refugees](#)," in June to provide targeted recommendations to the Ethiopian government, the donor community, and the private sector on ways they can improve economic inclusion of refugees in the country—withstanding the ongoing civil war and humanitarian blockade that is contributing to widespread famine (and creating in itself a profound obstacle to inclusion).

Refugees International also advocated for humanitarian assistance in advance of a June 2021 International Donors Conference on Venezuela, notably through meetings and engagement with the Embassy of Canada (conference co-host) and the U.S. State Department. At the conference, the United States announced \$407 million in additional humanitarian assistance to address the Venezuela regional crisis.

Finally, Refugees International also helped organize roundtable events with civil society organizations and the World Bank in May 2021, which paved new avenues for engagement and influence over how the World Bank considers displacement and economic inclusion in its wider programming.

Asylum in the European Union

The European Union is long overdue to establish an effective, humane, and rights-based regional response to asylum and migration. But the Commission's recently proposed EU Pact on Migration and Asylum focuses disproportionately on keeping people out of Europe rather than on realizing the right to seek protection. And it risks institutionalizing an approach by which states have externalized asylum and avoided equitable responsibility sharing. In June, Refugees International released, "[Undermining Protection in the EU: What Nine Trends Tell Us About the Proposed Pact on Migration and Asylum](#)," which examines the EU proposal, its likely impact, and issues that need attention now. Many of these themes were presented earlier by Refugees International at the 80th Meeting of the UNHCR Standing Committee in March 2021. At that meeting, we led in drafting and delivering the joint NGO statement on Europe.

Focus on Protection in Greece

In statements marking the five-year anniversary of the EU-Turkey deal and the one-year anniversary of the fire at the Greek refugee camp, Moria, Refugees International reiterated calls for Greece and the European

Union to fulfill their obligations to provide access to asylum and dignified reception. Through regular collaboration with a working group of NGOs in Greece, Refugees International supported advocacy to address obstacles to protection and integration for asylum seekers and refugees. In November 2021, the Refugees International Advocate for Europe traveled to Greece on a 2.5-week research trip, visiting refugee camps in and around Athens and on the islands of Samos and Lesbos.

Asylum in Mexico

As more people are on the move than ever before, governments in Latin America and surrounding regions are looking for better ways to manage displacement. In doing so, they should examine practices in the region that work well and can be scaled up or replicated. One interesting model is Mexico’s use of the Cartagena Declaration, a regional instrument adopted in Latin America that broadens the definition of a refugee from that of the 1951 Refugee Convention. While the asylum system in Mexico is far from perfect, this movement toward Cartagena principles is a positive one that can and should be replicated in the region.

In July 2021, Refugees International released “[Mexico’s Use of Differentiated Asylum Procedures: An Innovative Approach to Asylum Processing](#),” to explain the use, benefits, and challenges of implementing differentiated asylum procedures and the application—and benefits—of the broader refugee definition of the Cartagena Declaration in Mexico.

Internal Displacement

Refugees International is urgently advocating for sustainable solutions for the world’s internally displaced people (IDPs). The majority of the world’s forcibly displaced people—around 55 million—are living within the borders of their own countries. Responses to IDP crises are still largely ad hoc and

subject to domestic political imperatives. Glaring divides between relief, development, and peacebuilding actors make long-term solutions difficult to achieve. Various actors respond to internal displacement, but coordination is challenging and funding is patchy. And IDPs are rarely engaged in the development of response efforts and programs that affect their lives.

In addition to country-level reports focusing on IDP populations, Refugees International published, “[Internal Displacement: An Agenda for Progress](#),” to analyze gaps in the global response to ever-growing IDP crises and to make recommendations directly to the UN’s High Level Panel on Internal Displacement. In the lead-up to the public release of recommendations from the UN’s High Level Panel, Refugees International organized a [letter](#) to UN Secretary-General Guterres, urging him to use the full weight of his office to implement the Panel recommendations. Refugees International has also pushed for coordinated messaging from Congress in support of the Panel recommendations.

TOP LEFT: A Central American family is pictured in front of a shelter for migrants in the outskirts of Tapachula, Chiapas state, Mexico, on June 6, 2019. © Pedro Pardo/AFP via Getty Images

MIDDLE RIGHT: Hanan Seif Hassan (left), a refugee from Yemen, prepares samosas in a cooking course at Nefas Silk Polytechnic College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on September 3, 2019. This course is part of a program for refugees and the host community to train together to improve job prospects. © UNHCR/Eduardo Soterias Jalil

BOTTOM LEFT: Migrants from the Moria camp sew handmade protective face masks at the premises of the NGO “Team Humanity” on March 25, 2020 on the island of Lesbos, Greece. © Manolis Lagoutaris/AFP via Getty Images





Following the official launch of the Refugee Advocacy Lab in September 2020, we began 2021 with high ambitions. As we reflect on what this past year has meant for our team and advances in refugee inclusion, we are enormously grateful for everything we have been able to do together in the Lab's first full year.

As you may recall, the Refugee Advocacy Lab is an initiative hosted at Refugees International and co-founded with the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP), International Rescue Committee (IRC), and Refugee Congress. We collaborate with a wide range of partners who power our work. Our mission is to grow the diverse constituency for U.S. leadership on refugee protection. We do so by building partnerships, supporting inclusive policies, and developing communications products for the common good.

In 2021, we helped introduce and pass pro-refugee legislation in states across the country. This included bills that expand language access policies with state agencies; workforce studies to assess the skills and expertise of refugee and immigrant arrivals and determine the barriers to state licensure requirements that prevent them from returning to their chosen professions; policies on school enrollment to help families register their children; policies to expand digital access and funds for programming for vulnerable communities; and funding for universal representation. In total, the Lab efforts secured or helped to secure almost \$5 million in state funds to support these programs in 2021.

We also forged new and critical partnerships: we convinced more than 420 business leaders from all 50 states to unite and show their support for refugees by signing the Businesses for Refugees pledge, and we organized more than 300 state and local officials representing all 50 states to sign a letter to the President calling on him to increase U.S. refugee admissions.

We launched the Refugee Storytellers Collective, a community for individuals who have experienced forced displacement and believe in the power of sharing their stories for social change and to advocate for more welcoming policies.

We convened elected officials, partners, leaders, influencers, and the public to share learnings and advance our mission, and we created policy and communications resources to help advance the cause of refugee inclusion.

None of this would have been possible without the tireless efforts of our partners, and our shared goal to grow the diverse constituency for U.S. leadership on refugee protection. Our team looks forward to all we can accomplish together in 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Sheffer".

Sarah Sheffer

Interim Director of the Refugee Advocacy Lab

DIVERSITY, EQUITY,

INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Refugees International's staff-led Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee works to create a more welcoming, collegial, and collaborative environment for our critical work.

In 2021, the committee focused on ensuring equity and diversity in our hiring practices, examining our partnership with and representation of affected individuals in our work, and making sure that the language that we use to describe our work aligns with our values. The committee also formed a dedicated Decolonization Subcommittee, which will interrogate the role that colonization plays in the humanitarian aid sector and aims to understand and correct for the power imbalances that may occur for Refugees International as an organization located in the United States that works on issues affecting individuals in lower- and middle- income countries.

While it was another challenging year, we are so grateful for the dedicated volunteer work of the committee members and the support of the management team, who have been partners in our journey to foster diversity, equity and inclusion at Refugees International.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sabiha Khan".

Sabiha Khan

2021 DEI Committee Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martha Guerrero Ble".

Martha Guerrero Ble

2021 DEI Committee Co-Chair

THANK YOU

In 2021, we saw the number of displaced people reach the highest levels on record. Violence escalated in places like Afghanistan and Ethiopia, and the COVID-19 pandemic continued to disproportionately impact displaced people. Through these new and persisting challenges of the past year, your support ensured that Refugees International could be there to advocate on behalf of more than 84 million forcibly displaced people worldwide.

As we do not accept any government or UN funding, you made it possible for us to continue our independent research and reporting. We couldn't do this work without your unwavering generosity. Thank you for joining us in the fight to defend and protect the rights of the forcibly displaced around the world.



Lisa Cantu-Parks

Lisa Cantu-Parks

Vice President of Philanthropy

The seminal work of Refugees International in raising awareness of the realities of displacement and its disproportionate effects on women and girls is critical. Your research and advocacy invaluablely advance the human rights of marginalized communities.

— **NADIA MURAD**
2018 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE AND PRESIDENT OF
NADIA'S INITIATIVE

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Elisa Massimino
Juan Mendez
William L. Nash
Augustin Ntabaganyimana
Thomas Pickering
Anne C. Richard
Hiram Ruiz
Hala Al-Sarraf
Paul Spiegel
Shibley Telhami
Joan Timoney
Maureen White
David Wippman
Anne Witkowski

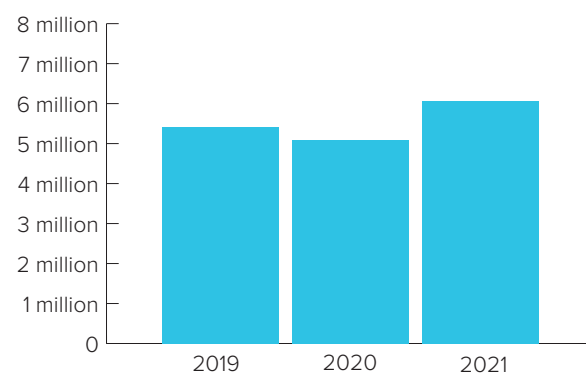
FINANCES

	2019 Total	2020 Total	2021 Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE			
Contributions	2,297,314	2,243,459	2,698,753
Foundation Grants	1,227,023	1,030,525	1,474,301
Contract Revenue	64,528	181,501	256,447
Investment Income	530,940	353,182	402,144
In-Kind Donations	292,677	218,579	147,985
Total Support and Revenue	4,412,482	4,027,246	4,979,630
EXPENSES			
Program Services			
Advocacy	2,670,900	2,431,939	2,624,328
Public Education	1,051,345	827,070	904,859
Strategic Outreach	127,725	442,779	299,027
Total Program Services	3,849,970	3,701,788	3,828,214
Supporting Services			
General and Administrative	239,831	230,650	161,845
Fundraising	676,128	271,110	382,172
Total Supporting Services	915,959	501,760	544,017
Total Functional Expenses	4,765,929	4,203,548	4,372,231
Other Items	(62,651)	(135,604)	357,937
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(416,098)	(311,906)	965,336
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	5,821,326	5,405,228	5,093,322
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	5,405,228	5,093,322	6,058,658

Editor's Note: Please see the 2021 annual audit report on Refugees International's website for details.



End of Year Net Assets



JOIN US

NEWSLETTER

Sign up for our newsletter at refugeesinternational.org/newslettersignup to learn how you can help us advocate for displaced people.

SOCIAL MEDIA

[@RefugeesIntl](https://twitter.com/RefugeesIntl)
[@RefugeesIntl](https://www.instagram.com/RefugeesIntl)
[Refugees International](https://www.facebook.com/RefugeesInternational)

EVENTS

Stay tuned for upcoming events on our website: refugeesinternational.org/ri-events.

FUNDRAISE

Ask your friends and family to join the movement. Start your own fundraising campaign on Facebook or contact donations@refintl.org to set up a personal fundraising page.

DONATE

Give online at refugeesinternational.org/#donate or by mail to:

Refugees International
 Attn: Lisa Cantu-Parks
 PO Box 33036
 Washington, DC 20033

Refugees International also accepts gifts in the form of stocks. For more information, please contact development@refintl.org.

FUTURE GIFTS

Ensure lasting support for displaced people through a bequest to Refugees International. Contact lisa@refugeesinternational.org for more information or to indicate that you have already included Refugees International in your estate plan.

COVER PHOTO

CENTER: A volunteer welcomes an asylum seeker who was officially allowed to cross from a migrant camp in Mexico into the United States on February 25, 2021 in Brownsville, Texas. © John Moore/Getty Images

PAGE 3 OPPOSITE CONTENTS

TOP LEFT: A Syrian member of a local NGO inserts seeds amid straw at a make-shift cultivation center in the rebel-held town of Douma, Syria. © Abdullah Hamman/AFP via Getty Images

MIDDLE RIGHT: A man from Cuba enters the United States at the Paso del Norte International Bridge in El Paso, Texas on March 11, 2021, after waiting for two years in Migrant Protection Protocols in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. © Paul Ratje/AFP via Getty Images

BOTTOM LEFT: Silhouette of a former Afghan female journalist in Kabul, Afghanistan. © Wakil Kohsar/AFP via Getty Images



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Aviva Shwayder, Designer

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