



# INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE IN MISSOULA COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

# 2023

OCTOBER 1, 2022 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2023



## Update from the Deputy Director

Over the last fiscal year, the International Rescue Committee in Missoula celebrated triumphs, faced challenges, and continued to welcome new Americans to Missoula. Through eight unique programs tailored to provide language-accessible, culturally-appropriate services, our dedicated staff served over 350 refugees, asylees, humanitarian parolees and other new Americans in Missoula. Among those we served were 120 new Americans who were resettled as refugees from five countries around the globe.

**“...we remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission of helping those we serve to rebuild their lives and gain control of their futures.”**

Fiscal Year 23 (October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023) included significant milestones. The IRC in Missoula saw incredible growth in total staff rounding out the year with 37 staff members. We outgrew our original office space and moved to our current location on Russell Street. With more meeting and private spaces, as well as a Wellness Room where visitors can observe prayer and mothers can breastfeed, our new office space means we can better meet the needs of those we serve. We also established the IRC Missoula Stop and Shop, an area in our office where newcomers can “shop” donated household goods.

Over the year, IRC’s efforts to address the housing crisis truly tested the resiliency of our staff and our partners. With a brief pause on the arrivals of refugees to Missoula, we persisted as a community working together to ensure that families experiencing long temporary stays in hotels and Airbnb’s were able to access critical services and resources while IRC’s housing staff worked tirelessly to find safe and affordable long-term rentals for newly arriving families. By developing and leveraging key partnerships with hotel/Airbnb owners and landlords/property management companies, locally raised funds, and private grants, we were able to bridge the growing gap between the limited federal funds we receive to secure housing for families and the increasing costs of both temporary and long-term housing.

As we look to the future, we know there are more challenges to come. The ongoing housing crisis, a polarized political climate, and the upcoming presidential election present a great deal of uncertainty. Come what may, we remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission of helping those we serve rebuild their lives and gain control of their futures. As we welcome refugees to Missoula, we will continue to build new partnerships, strengthen existing ones, and conduct critical advocacy efforts at the local, state, and federal level to bring the best possible outcomes for our newest neighbors. We sincerely thank you for your dedication to our work and look forward to standing shoulder to shoulder with you and the people we serve to celebrate moments of success and joy this year.

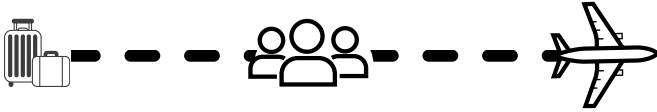


Sincerely,

**Eamon Fahey**  
Deputy Director

# RESETTLEMENT

The IRC in Missoula works to ensure all newly arrived refugees receive a breadth of services as they work hard to become self-sufficient, including housing stability, case management, health & wellbeing, education, and immigration.



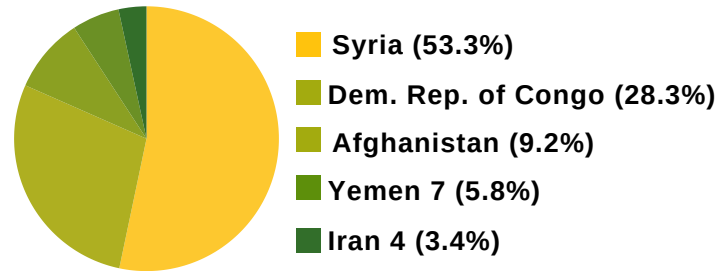
**120** NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES RESETTLED

**31** NEWLY ARRIVED INDIVIDUALS WERE REUNITED WITH FAMILY

**5** COUNTRIES INDIVIDUALS CAME FROM



## COUNTRIES RESETTLED IN MONTANA LAST YEAR



## CASE MANAGEMENT

An IRC Caseworker is the first person a newly arriving refugee family meets when they come to Missoula. During the first 90 days, IRC Caseworkers, along with other staff, provide at least 70 hours of direct service to each family. Greeting families at the airport, home visits, enrolling children in school and daycare, attending medical appointments, enrolling adults in ESL classes, and opening bank accounts are just a few of the services IRC provides during those 90 days.

**350+** rides provided to and from medical appointments

**100%** were seen by a primary care doctor within 30 days of arrival

**10** psychosocial support group meetings hosted for adult women

**2000+** hours of direct service provided by IRC staff

**310** hours of bus training to key locations in Missoula

**186** home visits conducted by IRC caseworkers

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

Consistent access to holistic health leads to improved long-term outcomes for refugees. From initial healthcare access to education and navigation support through learning a complex new healthcare system, the IRC ensures care with support from essential partners. Health programs implement a gender equity lens to ensure that information and resources reach refugee women and children. The IRC trains healthcare providers in the community on cultural humility and cultural norms for the communities we serve.

# HOUSING

Securing housing is a critical part of resettlement; employment for adults and school enrollment for children follows getting settled into a leased apartment or house. The IRC works to secure housing for all newly arriving families. IRC staff furnish homes with donated furniture and necessary household items and establish utilities services. IRC staff provide education for families around leases, rent, utility bills, and conduct a thorough safety review of the home when a family moves in. Ongoing support is provided for many months after families move into leased options to support them as they learn and navigate their rights and responsibilities as renters and tenants. The IRC helps clients with continued rental assistance and affordable housing applications as well.

**31** home setups conducted for newly arrived families

**12** property management companies and private landlords rented to refugees

**\$721** Average dollar value of donated furniture and household goods supported each home setup



“

It's been so easy to work with the IRC. All tenants have been very respectful of the space, there's been no damage or incidents. [A previous tenant] was a journeyman carpenter in his home country, so he even helped with some maintenance projects!

”

-Private Landlord renting to refugees in Missoula



George Lindbom, Senior Education Specialist, makes a bed with donated bedding supplies during a home setup.

# YOUTH & EDUCATION

Enrollment in day-care, schools and recreational opportunities is crucial for refugee youth to begin integrating into a new community. The IRC works with each newly arriving family to enroll children in daycare programs and school, conduct school visits so families can get acquainted with teachers and locations, and provide ongoing support as families learn to navigate this new system. When school is out for the summer, the IRC supports families in accessing full-time summer programs so that youth can continue to integrate in our community and parents can continue to work and become financially stable.

**72** refugee youth enrolled in school and daycare

**33** school tours conducted with families

**71** refugee youth enrolled in a summer camp program with IRC's support

# ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

## MATCHING GRANT EARLY EMPLOYMENT

The Matching Grant (MG) program assists refugees in overcoming barriers to achieve financial self-sufficiency early on in their resettlement experience. For up to eight months, the MG program provides intensive case management, financial assistance, job readiness training, employment placement support, and ongoing support as people navigate employment in Missoula with the overall objective of enabling families to become financially self-sufficient, or able to meet their financial obligations. The IRC also works directly with employers in the community so they can better support refugees entering the workforce.

**\$15.80** average starting hourly wage for refugees in Montana who found jobs through Matching Grant

**79%** of newly arriving families were enrolled in Matching Grant

**90%** of individuals enrolled in Matching Grant became financially self-sufficient after just 6 months



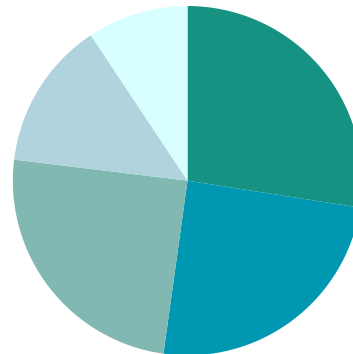
**47** Adults were employed through the MG program

**109** Adults and children were supported through the MG program

**30** new employers in Missoula partnered with the IRC to hire refugees

## Top 5 Employment Industries for Refugees in Missoula

- Manufacturing (10)
- Restaurant (9)
- Retail (9)
- Carpentry (5)
- Housekeeping (4)



**“We have people that didn’t speak a word of English that are now shift supervisors, and they are improving and showing how amazing of employees they truly are.”**

-Current Employer of Refugees in Missoula

# LONG-TERM SUPPORT

## SUPPLEMENTAL CASE MANAGEMENT

The Supplemental Case Management (SCM) program provides additional support for those who need it. Program participants are often facing unique or challenging circumstances, such as mental or physical health instability or single headed households. Program services focus on addressing the challenges or barriers, such as food insecurity, navigating health or legal systems, and challenges integrating into the community through referrals and intensive case management. IRC staff additionally conduct mental health screenings for all refugees over 18 at the conclusion of the initial 90 day resettlement period.

**73**

individuals enrolled in the RSS program

**28**

new job placements that aligned with individuals' employment goals

**11**

individuals obtained certifications that expanded their employment opportunities in the fields of construction, childcare, and healthcare

**8**

families enrolled in SCM services

**120+**

hours of therapy provided by local clinicians to 30 individuals

**6**

mental health clinicians partnered with the IRC to provide mental health services to refugees

## REFUGEE SUPPORT SERVICES

The Refugee Support Services (RSS) program is a comprehensive support service program available to individuals and families. RSS provides additional employment and training support for those pursuing new career opportunities. Through this program, IRC staff can provide assistance with resume building, job search and applications, new hire paperwork, provide transportation to interviews, offer financial assistance for new uniforms or supplies, provide interpretation during job interviews, and mediation to support clients and employers with any challenges that may arise.



# IMMIGRATION



The IRC is committed to supporting the efforts of refugees and other new American communities to influence decisions that impact their lives. One way to realize this goal is to support families' next steps on their immigration journey, ensuring the people we serve can positively integrate into their new community. For many years, the IRC in Missoula has employed a Department of Justice (DOJ) accredited representative, a non-attorney who can provide limited immigration legal services to support refugees in filing for green cards, family reunification, and eventually applying for citizenship. In addition to the DOJ accredited representative, in FY23 we welcomed a Managing Attorney to our staff with the goal of growing our offering of legal services and programs to new Americans in Missoula.

**126** FREE LEGAL CONSULTATIONS PROVIDED TO REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

**55** GREEN CARD APPLICATIONS FILED

**6** NATURALIZATION APPLICANTS FILED



# IN-KIND DONATIONS



In-kind donations from individuals, community drives, and corporations make the core work of the IRC in Missoula possible. In spring 2023, Gallatin Refugee Connections in Bozeman delivered 286 Welcome Kits from their annual Welcome Kit drive. These kits contain household essentials for bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms along with toiletries and cleaning necessities. Welcome Kits support newly arriving families and support home setups.

Moving into a larger office space meant that we finally had the space to make the Stop and Shop a reality. When community members donate household items to the IRC in Missoula, they are then displayed on the shelves in our shopping area. IRC clients can then “shop” the donated items and chose for themselves what they need at no cost. Items in the Stop and Shop cover personal hygiene, kitchen, bedding, cleaning, clothing, school supply, baby, and bathroom needs.



**40** FAMILIES SUPPORTED WITH IN-KIND DONATIONS

**7** MINIMUM NUMBER OF WELCOME KITS PROVIDED TO EACH FAMILY

**\$608** AVERAGE DOLLAR VALUE OF IN-KIND DONATIONS PROVIDER PER FAMILY

**\$24.3k** TOTAL VALUE OF IN-KIND DONATIONS THAT REACHED FAMILIES in FY23

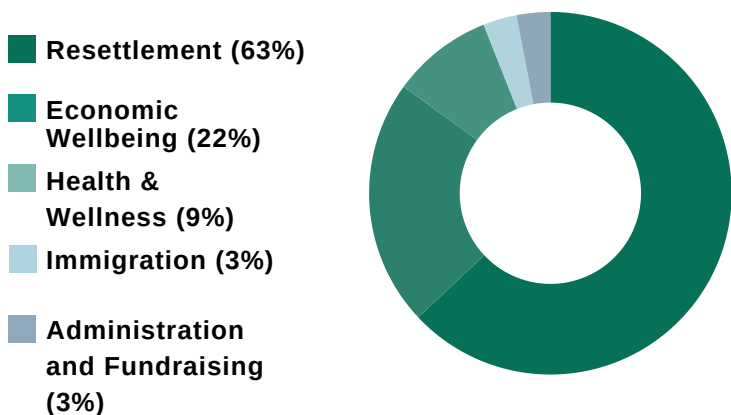
# FINANCIALS

The IRC in Missoula partners with the State Department to implement Reception and Placement (R&P) services and resettle refugees right here in our community through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. Federal funds allow us to staff and implement these programs and provide core services, which include financial assistance components for the people we serve. The amount of available financial assistance per person served has increased very little over the years while the costs of living has increased substantially. Financial assistance covers costs such as hotel stays, security deposits, rent, utilities, child care, medical bills, and other unanticipated expenses.

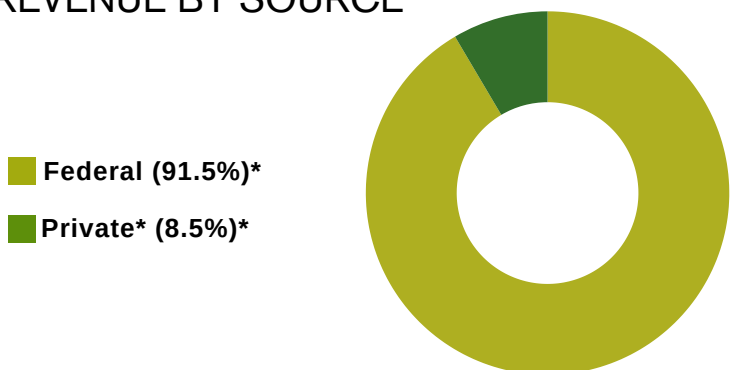
We rely greatly on contributions from individuals like you to help us bridge the growing gap between the limited financial assistance and increasing costs of living and enable us to be responsive to the evolving needs of those we serve as they are in the process of rebuilding their lives. Thank you for supporting the work of the IRC in Missoula.

## TOTAL FY23 BUDGET: \$2,610,080

### EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAM AREA



### REVENUE BY SOURCE



\*Federal includes federal passthrough funds through the State of Montana

\*Private includes foundation, corporate and individual giving.

## OUR COMMUNITY IN ACTION

### 1,266

hours logged by 20 community volunteers and interns

### \$221,000

raised in private funding with support from individuals, foundation and corporate partners.

### \$518,772

provided in direct assistance support to newly arrived refugee families, including rent, utilities, fees, and more.

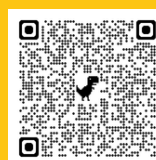


IRC staff and volunteers receive a Uhaul containing donations of necessities and household items to support newly arriving refugee families

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