

2022

# IMPACT REPORT



Believe in the Decency of Humankind and Our Capacity to Welcome



# MISSION

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The Chicago Refugee Coalition is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the alleviation of human suffering through innovative partnerships, advocacy, and community empowerment.

# VISION

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The Chicago Refugee Coalition is rooted in the values of anti-racism, dignity, equity, and accountability. We believe in building a better, more innovative, and responsive, system for refugees to access critical resources.

This system requires a paradigm shift away from the Global North and tasks the staff, volunteers, and leadership to be conduits to ensuring our constituents are able to equitably access resources that they otherwise would forgo.

Chicago is a welcoming city and our vision is to ensure that it remains a bulwark against intolerance so all can contribute to this incredible place we call home.

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In the face of unprecedented global migration, our distinct approach to meeting the direct, day-to-day needs of Chicago's refugees is making an important difference in our community.

In this report, we are pleased to share what we accomplished in 2022 to bring our vision to life.

The words of our Board of Directors President, Jamia Jowers, capture the essence of who we are, and what we do.



**Alisa M. Roadcup**  
Executive Director



## BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

In 2022, 103 million people were displaced, and forced to flee their homes due to violence, war, and persecution. Having left everything familiar in search of safety, refugees need the opportunity to land softly and rebuild new lives in peace.

In that same year, we were relentless in our efforts to deepen our impact as we nourished and resourced more of Chicago's refugees than ever before. Our dedicated team of volunteers, board members, and partners came together to organize events, increase our food bank reservoir, expand our resource center, and secure key partnerships to realize our vision in unprecedented ways.

I am thrilled to share with you our very first Annual Impact Report, which tells The Chicago Refugee Coalition's story of vision and growth in 2022. It is my fervent hope that one day, we realize a world where all refugees experience a life of dignity and opportunity. I'm so proud to be part of an organization that helps make this hope a reality, day in and day out.

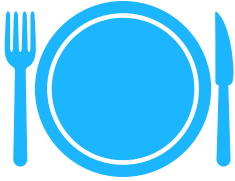
Yours in Service,



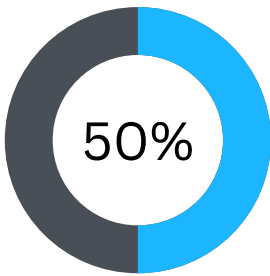
**Jamia Jowers**  
President

# OUR IMPACT

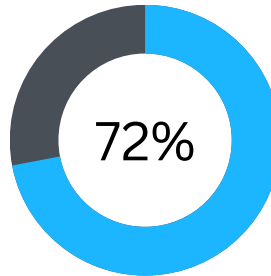
## Food Banking



**100,000 Meals Provided**  
since 2018



**Reported an Increase** in household income elasticity



**Increase** in the number of meals provided in 2022 **over 2021**



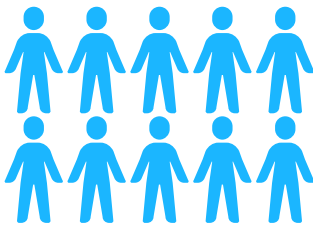
**750 people served** each week



# Resource Center



**\$400,000** of new and in-kind donated products distributed



Services provided to **105 new Afghan arrivals**



**12 new community partnerships** secured



# CAMPAIGNS

## MIGRANT RAPID RELIEF RESPONSE

In June, politicians from southern-bordering states began to transport migrants via bus, train, and air to sanctuary cities like New York, Chicago, and Martha's Vineyard. What was meant to overwhelm existing migrant support networks resulted in a rallying call for Sanctuary Cities to unite.

We partnered with Lurie Children's Hospital, the City of Chicago's Office of New Americans, and the Interfaith Coalition For Detained Immigrants (ICDI) to create an Amazon Wishlist campaign which during 90 days delivered **over \$20,000 of brand new and gently-used clothing and household items** to temporary shelters to meet the critical needs of Chicago's new arrivals.



*Partnering with the Illinois National Guard on Critical Supply Distribution*

## OPERATION TRANSIT

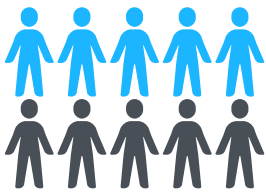
During November and December, we launched **#OperationTransit** to raise funds to purchase our own delivery vehicle. **We exceeded our goal by \$10,000, raising over \$30,000** with support from partners like scholar and Marvel comic author **Eve Ewing**, the **Frankel Family Foundation**, and many others. Central to our campaign were the stories and portraiture of our extraordinary program participants. A special thank you to **Baindu, Ibtihal, Leroy, Mbuto, Rowaida, Sherlyn, and Zaituni** for their meaningful contributions and leadership, which made our campaign a true success.



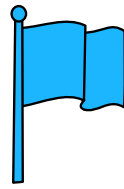
# WHO WE SERVE

Our participants are diverse, with approximately half from the Horn of Africa and the African Great Lakes Region. Additionally, we serve refugees who come from various other countries including Ethiopia, Nepal, Syria, Iraq, Brazil, Lebanon, El Salvador, Honduras, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar and Ukraine, to name a few.

Our programs extend beyond refugee youth to encompass their families, too. Individuals, along with their families, shop at our Resource Center for clothing, household goods, bedding, cookware, sanitary items, and toiletries. Our Food Bank is also utilized on a regular basis and is open to the public. The immense generosity of our donors enables us to provide these basic necessities at no cost to refugees or their families.



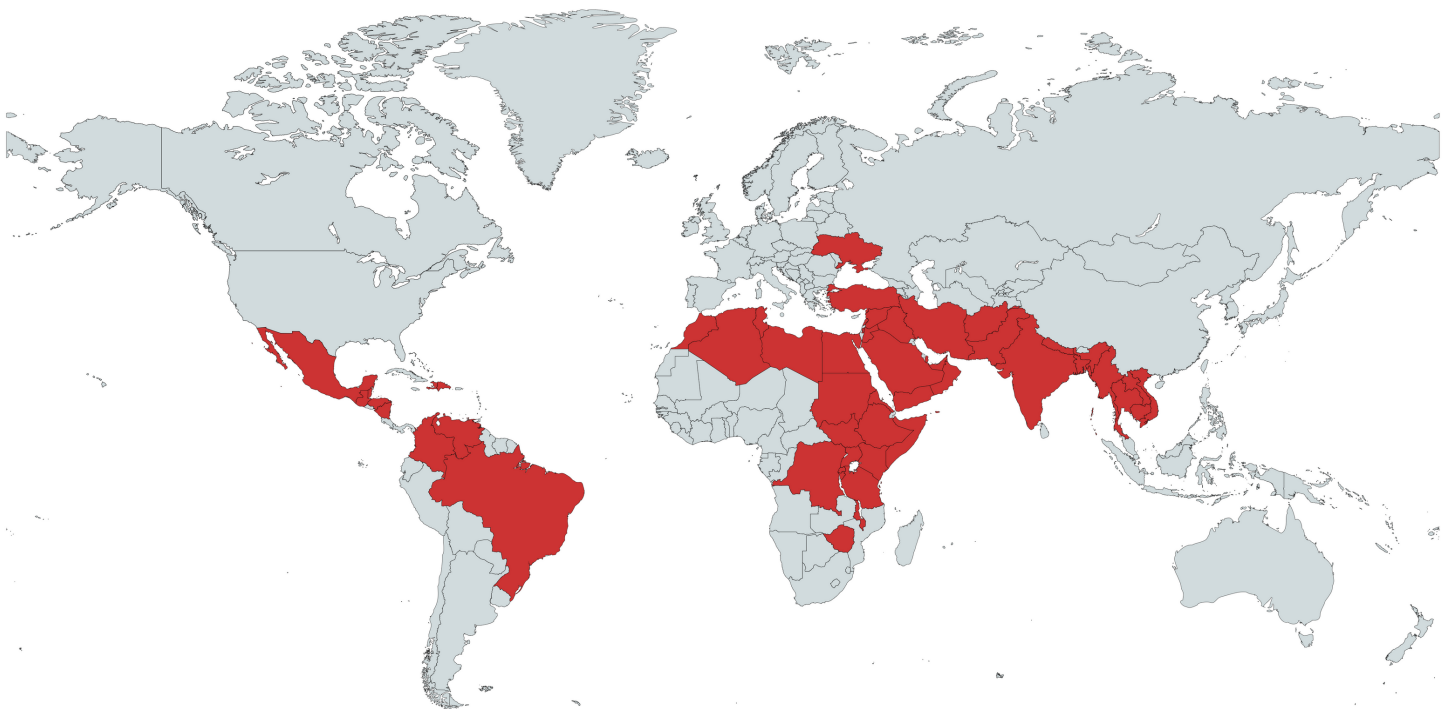
**50% of our Participants** are from the Horn of Africa



Our Participants Come from **More Than 35 Countries**



Our Participants Speak **More Than 38 Languages!**



# MEET RAMAHTULLAH



**After the fall of Afghanistan in 2021, Obama Foundation Scholar Ramahattullah Hamraz was supported by The Chicago Refugee Coalition who advocated for his resettlement to the United States.**

In December 2022, he and his family of five arrived safely at O'Hare and stepped into a new life, settling in the Rogers Park neighborhood.

Over the last few years, Ramah and his family have lived through extraordinary transition. Considering all they have seen, he says, "Leaving Afghanistan became necessary for the education of my own daughters'. I miss my country, my people, and my work in Afghanistan, but still, coming to the U.S. is an accomplishment as well as the next stage of my growth. I know my children will be well-educated here."

"Upon my arrival, The Chicago Refugee Coalition (CRC) was the greatest support I received..."

"Our housing was arranged, completely furnished with everything from technology, to kitchen, to living room, everything was prepared. I was not expecting this generosity" he reflects.

Ramah continues to lead the non-profit he founded, The Conflict Affected Girls' Empowerment Program and he is also co-founder of The National Center for Peace and Development.

CRC has provided Ramah's family with fresh meals, helped enroll his children in school, and connected he and his wife to a rich network of resources. On the welcome he has received, he says, "I knew I had friends, but was not expecting this much support. Especially at the beginning the greatest support I received was from the CRC."

We are grateful to Ramah for sharing his story with us and honored that he will be a featured speaker at our 2023 World Refugee Day Gala on June 20th. This year, we are fortunate to celebrate Ramah in-person as opposed to last year's meeting on Zoom from Afghanistan.

**"UPON MY ARRIVAL, THE CHICAGO REFUGEE COALITION WAS THE GREATEST SUPPORT I RECEIVED"**

--Ramahattullah Hamraz



# OUR NEW HEADQUARTERS

In 2022, we moved into new headquarters at the Simmons Center for Global Chicago - a Chicago-based collective and shared working space for NGOs working in global development.

The Simmons Center serves to strengthen the international development community by uniting globally engaged nonprofits with like-minded professionals, donors, and businesses.

We are honored to be a member alongside 40 organizations working and resource sharing alongside one another.



"IGOs have a practice of providing 'good offices' for partners to facilitate their collaborative work... The Simmons Center is not simply a 'good office', they're **great offices** that will have a resounding impact for generations to come. "

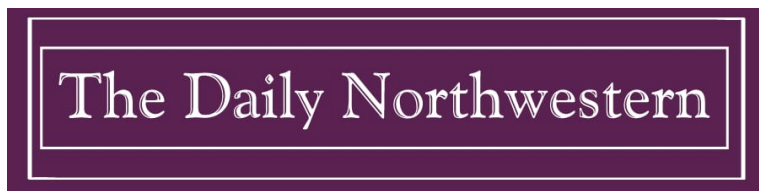
-CRC Founder Connor Mautner  
Speaking at the Grand Opening of the  
Simmons Center for a Global Chicago



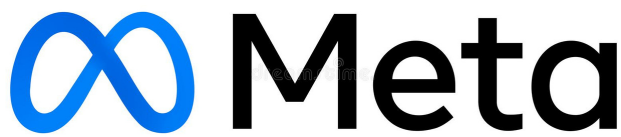
# PRESS & MEDIA

2022 was an unprecedented year for spreading awareness about CRC's work and impact throughout Chicagoland.

We were honored to be featured or have presented to the following media outlets and institutions:



Snapchat





# EVENTS

## World Refugee Day Gala

On June 22nd, we hosted our inaugural World Refugee Day Gala, **exceeding our \$25,000 goal to raise over \$32,000 to fund our critical programs.** Held at Loft Lucia in the West Loop, over 130 guests turned out to support CRC's programs. Live music was provided by a gorgeous stringed trio and the event was catered by **A Touch of Elegance.** We are grateful our sponsors including **Citi Bank, 5/3 Bank, Hogsalt, The Joyous Journey, Smart Dating Academy,** and especially to **A Touch of Elegance Catering** for so generously donating staff and catering in-kind to make the evening so memorable.

**Save the Date for this year's Gala on June 20th!!**



# PARTNERSHIPS

Thank you to the following individuals, partners, and foundations for making our work possible.



## Thank to our World Refugee Day Gala Sponsors

- CITI Bank
- 5/3 Bank
- Hogsalt
- The Frankel Family Foundation
- Espressive
- Rudi Mortimer Ph.D.
- The Roadcup Charitable Trust
- Revolution Brewing
- Signe Hanson
- Mark Fastabend
- The Joyous Journey
- The Smart Dating Academy

**Thank you  
for your  
continued  
support in  
our effort to  
make Chicago  
an open and  
equitable place  
for refugees to  
call home.**

## **Board of Directors**

- **Jamia Jowers, President**
- **Signe Hanson, Finance Chair**
- **Nhu Phan, Secretary**
- **Esperance Gikundiro**
- **Sahro Mukhtar Moalim**
- **Katie Sonnefeldt**
- **Eda Akyar, M.D., MPH**
- **Hinsley Njila**
- **Purvi Patel, Esq., MPH**
- **Brendan Sodikoff**

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## **Photo Credits**

**A special thank you to the talented photographers who captured the images used in this report:**

- **Josh Zepeda**
- **Michele Marie Photography & Design**
- **Claire Markel**
- **Alexis Goettsch Photography**

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