



IRC Denver Annual Impact Report

Your Impact in Colorado: October 2019 - September 2020



On behalf of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Denver and the refugees and other vulnerable immigrant populations we serve, I would like to personally thank you for your continued efforts to support our life-changing work here in Colorado. We are pleased to share some highlights from the IRC in Denver's work in Fiscal Year 2020.

We strive to ensure refugees and new Americans are welcomed, feel safe and connected in their community, and have opportunities to realize success in their new home. Thanks to you, and despite the challenges we face, we continue to provide essential services that support their ability to pursue their goals and integrate into Colorado communities.

While COVID-19 has produced many challenges over the last several months, the IRC in Denver has been able to prioritize direct assistance and emergency support to hundreds of clients, ensuring all newcomers can have a place to call home amidst a global pandemic.

We are here for refugees and new Americans no matter what—today, tomorrow and always. We are excited to share how that took shape in 2020, and we are grateful for the role each of you played in bringing it to fruition. Thank you for being right here with us.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J Wilson'.

Jennifer Wilson, Executive Director



In Fiscal Year 2020 the IRC in Denver directly served 1,040 individuals of 55 different nationalities speaking 52 languages through a variety of services at various points in their journey. 154 newly arrived refugees and SIVs were resettled.



Arrive.

Case Management

IRC ensures that all clients have basic needs met, connect to community resources, secure stable housing, receive cultural orientation, and develop skills to navigate life in the U.S. In FY20:

- 94 households were assisted with housing navigation and 72 families received help applying for low-income housing
- 149 households were supported with food security
- 30 people were assisted with resolving problems with vital documentation

Asylee Outreach

In an effort to reach people recently granted asylum across Colorado and connect them to resources, in partnership with colleague resettlement agencies the IRC in Denver:

- Hosted presentations to 163 individuals who identified as either undocumented, asylum seekers, asylees, tourists, DACA recipients, immigrants with a specific status, or SIV holders
- Hosted 41 orientation sessions and 8 webinars, reaching more than 620 attendees, including community partners and leaders, to raise awareness of asylees and non-refugee populations, and the services and benefits they are eligible to receive

Health

IRC facilitates access to initial health screenings and immunizations, health coverage, maternal and child health, and ongoing primary and specialty care. IRC also provides health education to all new arrivals and offers medical case management for those with complex medical needs. In FY20:

- Pre-arrival medical care coordination was managed for 99 clients
- 164 clients completed their initial health screenings
- 840 services were provided to support health education and access to primary and specialty care



Strive.

Economic Empowerment

IRC supports job readiness, English acquisition, digital literacy, job placement, career counseling, financial literacy, financial coaching and counseling, and credit- and asset-building. In FY20, the IRC in Denver:

- Partnered with 103 employers to secure 225 job placements for 152 employable youth and adults
- Helped 96 clients apply for unemployment and offered support filing tax documentation needed for CARES Act stimulus funds
- Served 291 clients with financial education and coaching and issued 40 credit-building, auto, and resilience loans totaling \$141,029



Thrive.

Safety & Wellness

The Safety & Wellness team provides everything from intensive case management and clinical services, to women's and children's psychosocial support programming. In FY20:

- 39 women participated in the *We Can Do It!* program and 10 children were supported through parallel programming
- 82 Family Stabilization Services cases were served across the 3 resettlement agencies
- 112 clients were enrolled in the Survivors of Torture program
- 86 youth joined 5-week long virtual summer camps

Immigration Legal Services

Immigration services ensure that people adjust status timely, apply for naturalization to achieve the highest degree of legal protection, have access to pro bono or low bono asylum representation, and pursue reunification with loved ones. In FY20:

- 45 Survivors of Torture received legal assistance; 13 new cases were matched with pro bono attorneys
- While most clients are still awaiting their asylum decisions, 1 client was successfully granted asylum with the help of a pro bono attorney participating in IRC's program
- 178 clients were supported with filing applications for green cards, travel documents, citizenship, family reunification, and more.

Story Spotlight.

From his very first financial counseling session, Mehrdad expressed great motivation and enthusiasm toward starting his financial life on the right building blocks. Financial Capability Coordinator, Mousa Al Khafaji, enrolled Mehrdad in financial coaching classes. Shortly after, he applied for his first Credit Building Loan for \$100 through IRC's Center for Economic Opportunity. After successfully repaying this loan and boosting his credit score, Mousa helped Mehrdad secure a low interest auto loan that came at just the right time as he was experiencing car troubles and needed transportation to maintain his second job. Both of Mehrdad's jobs were going very well until the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020, and he unfortunately had to quit his second job after becoming ill. Upon recovery, Mehrdad decided to use his car for Lyft to earn extra income. Needing new tires for his car, Mehrdad took out a Resilience Loan and with the second step of his Credit Building Loan, he was able to buy new tires and begin his job with Lyft. At present, Mehrdad hopes to buy his own house, and is making the financial steps towards saving and credit-building in order to do so.



COVID-19.

COVID-19 has exacerbated disparities for refugees and immigrants on every front: economic security, affordable and stable housing, physical health, mental and emotional wellbeing, education, basic needs, safety, and legal security. Many are in greater need of support as they lack legal status, are unemployed, arrived recently and have limited knowledge of the local area, are a single parent, are disabled or homebound, are elderly, have underlying health conditions, or are otherwise vulnerable. In many ways the impacts IRC clients are feeling are similar to those felt by vast numbers of people as a result of the pandemic, yet they face unique challenges including cultural and linguistic barriers and the disruptive effects of displacement on education and economic opportunity. Since March 2020, IRC has modified all of its services to ensure safe delivery and triage client needs. While IRC's response is multi-faceted and holistic, the primary focus is on economic stabilization and promoting wellbeing and resilience. The spike in demand for IRC's services has been tremendous.



IRC staff hosts a virtual job readiness training session with clients.

By the numbers...

- More than 104 households received direct assistance in the form of food distribution, rent payment support, cash assistance, and more.
- \$155,192 was provided in COVID-19 relief to help clients stay housed and fed, and to meet needs for hygiene and sanitation supplies, transportation, phone and internet service, and vital medications.
- IRC's Financial Capability team assisted 28 households in securing a total of \$38,500 in COVID emergency grants.
- More than 80 clients were laid off as a result of COVID-19. To date, 54 regained employment.
- 41 clients were able to gain employment for the first time despite the economic impacts of COVID-19.



It takes a village.

Our community plays an essential role in the resettlement and integration process. Together, we support our refugee neighbors so they can realize their full potential.

Community Engagement

In 2020, IRC in Denver's **150** volunteers and interns contributed **5,535** hours valued at **\$163,274**.

30 pro bono attorneys and **3** law students contributed **1,010** hours of time to provide legal assistance.

Community members donated **\$62,273** worth of in-kind contributions that went directly to supporting refugee and immigrant individuals and families.

THANK YOU, COLORADO!



Despite the challenges 2020 has brought, the IRC in Denver remains committed to serving this community.

