



International Relief & Human Rights Initiative

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IRHRI ANNUAL REPORT 2019

ABOUT US

International Relief and Human Rights Initiatives (IRHRI) is a United States based Non-Governmental Organization, established and registered in 2014 under UBI Number 603-609-734 with Head Offices in Spokane, Washington.

IRHRI was formed by a group of Spokane- Washington USA Human Rights and Social Development activists in response to critical socio-economic and political challenges in Africa and of particular interest in the Eastern and Central Africa considering the human insecurity in the region.

At the heart of the organization's pursuit is the quest for sustainable inclusive approaches to deepening democracy and access to justice in order to ensure that every citizen lives a life of dignity. The resultant strategic program intervention of IRHRI in all its countries of operation should contribute to a Free and Just World, Respect of Human Rights, Sustainable Peace, Stability, Democracy and Justice for all, Research for Evidence based Advocacy and Policy

Change, Free Legal and Humanitarian Aid for the Voiceless, Taking sides with the Voiceless and Communities and Championing Equal job opportunities.

OPERATIONS

LOCATIONS & FACILITIES

Africa: Regional office Nairobi, Kenya

Serving the countries of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.

United States: Regional office Spokane, Washington

Opening office in Washington DC

Serving the region - focused on immigrants from the Great Lakes Region of Africa as our primary target group.



We work with:

American Red Cross

Catholic Relief Services

Catholic Charities of Spokane

Church World Service – UNHCR

Government of Canada

International Committee of Red Cross

UNICEF

US Department of Health & Human Services

U.S. Department of State

U.S. International Organization for Migration

This allows us to expand our reach and help more people who are in dire need for our services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

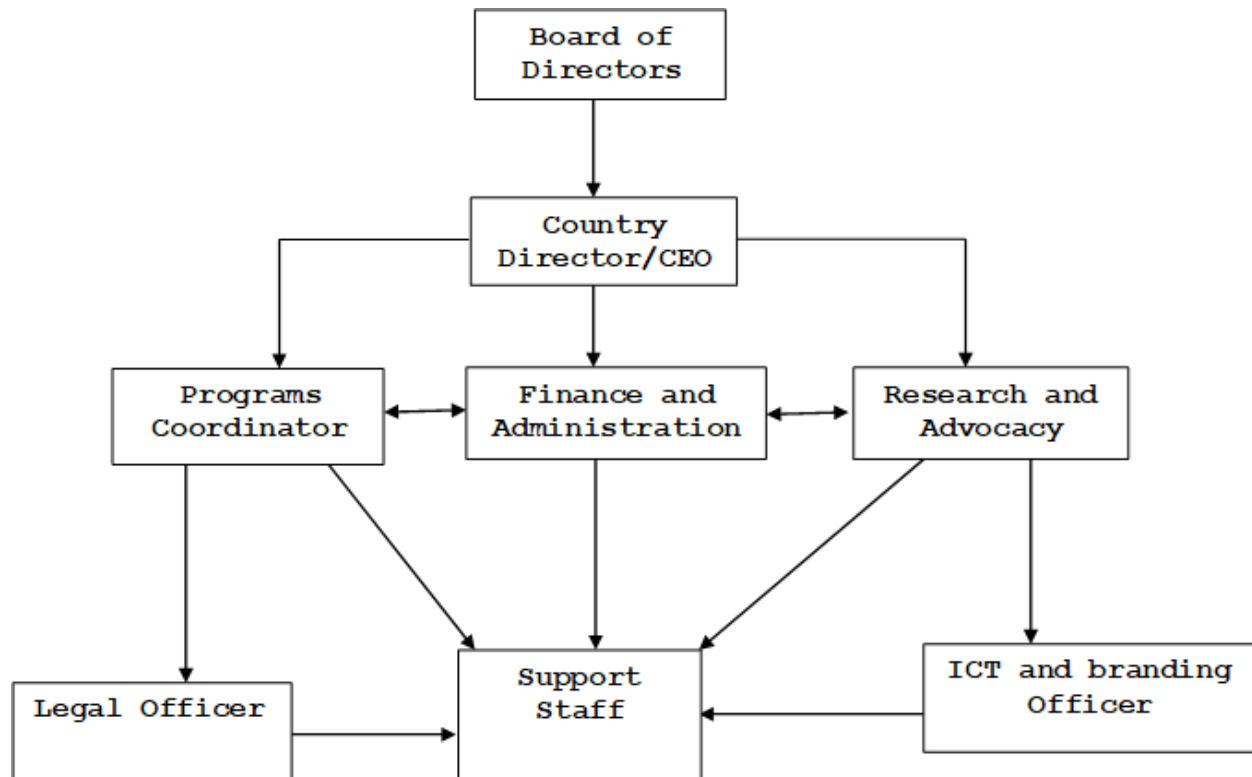
There are a growing and urgent need for immediate humanitarian work all over the world. In the 21st century, we are experiencing the highest migration and displacement numbers than ever in human history. We are witnessing an alarming steep upward trend in political, civil, and economic rights violations amongst the most vulnerable groups of people globally - especially throughout the African continent.

As a humanitarian organization IRHRI is overwhelmed by the number of people who require our immediate attention and services. We help refugees from all over the world, but predominately from the Great Lakes Region of Africa with whatever needs they have. These include combatting drug addictions, helping the homeless, and providing support to those with no family unit or support system. We help disenfranchised people and refugees reconnect to a strong and secure foundation to rebuild their lives.

Currently, the world's largest grassroots human rights organization, we investigate and expose abuses, educate and mobilize the public, and help transform societies to create a safer, more just world.

Our Spokane and other offices help people who are seeking asylum from within a nearby immigration detention centers.

While there are many humanitarian organizations currently working, IRHRI is unique in sense that it was founded by Mr Greg Smith Heavens, who has gone through hell as a former refugee, blind and disabled, and understands what it means to fight for justice.



PROTECTING THE REFUGEE

In 2019, IRHRI continued to grow as we opened offices in several more countries, provided more services across the world. We built our primary program areas, and helped even more refugees in the refugee camps of Kenya and Uganda.

This past year, IRHRI continued interacting with stakeholders, donors and well-wishers and this helped us maintain our good working relationships with them as we helped the disadvantaged.

We managed to get office premises in Nairobi for our East African regional headquarters and we hope to make it operational before 2020 ends.

In the year 2019, we adopted plans to start up a media company named Freedom Society News Network. It will be headquartered in Spokane, Washington in the US. We plan to kick-start news website and will gradually grow into a big media company running Newspapers, Radio Stations and Television Stations and its operations will be covering different parts of the world.

The main essence of this is to be the voice of the vulnerable persons who have for long been neglected by the media. We as well provide a platform for everybody including those who are

politically persecuted such that they can make their voices heard since their views have often been censored by governments-controlled media.

The media house will put much emphasis on investigative reporting, documentation of human rights abuses and domestic violence; corruption and human trafficking, justice and legal access, political and conflicts analysis, counterterrorism and cybersecurity and advocacy among other areas.

IRHRI continued to innovate and lead in the areas of; Human Rights Protection, Sustainable Peace and Security, Research and Evidence-Based Advocacy, Legal Aid and Livelihood and Economic Empowerment; developing model expert practices than can be replicated and scaled to provide support to thousands more refugees around the world.

Human Rights Protection. We achieved this through creating awareness campaigns and training different stakeholders on the rights of persons. For example; IRHRI hosted and organized a national civil society dialogue on Trafficking in Persons on July 29, 2019, where 16 human rights civil organizations participated. We identified and monitored human rights violation cases, and we intervened in order to defend and protect people's rights.

Under the same program, we also did Human Rights Documentation and Reporting in collaboration with local media outlets and research-based institutions.

Sustainable Peace and Security through awareness campaigns, workshops, counseling, publications, media and newsletters, in collaboration with different stakeholders.

Research and Evidence-Based Advocacy. This is ensured under our research institutional framework with different stakeholders including university students utilizing the exchange program, from all over the world, for reliable statistical data.

Legal Aid with a focus on the International Protection of Refugees and advocacy for protection, psycho-social counseling, assisting and resettling eligible selected sensitive cases of refugees such as women at high risk; SGBV victims; vulnerable medical cases, and cases with sensitive political security concerns that put someone's life in danger.

Livelihood and Economic Empowerment. Here, we target marginalized groups of people including refugees and we ensure they live a life of self-reliance in an enabling environment that allows them to express themselves freely and safely.

In advocating for refugees rights in response to the Trump administration's Executive Order against Refugees Program, we presented our project to Governor Jay Inslee in September 2019 and we as well introduced our projects to the HIAS and CWS Church World Services.

We also wrote to the US Department of State PRM, seeking recognition and acceptance of receiving refugees such that we can handle their legal matters in different capacities. The responses were promising.

In the Spokane community where our head office is located, we created a project called Spokane county diversity, and it has done a tremendous job in legally settling and helping refugees and

immigrants. We have achieved this through developing partnerships with local churches, charitable organizations as well as local authorities at all levels. Many youths have gotten opportunities working with us as volunteers, interns, and others as members of staff and they have been able to transform their lives.

This kind of project will go on in different counties in Washington State and other areas we work in. So, we really have an underlying experience in managing refugee situations as our team of experts on the ground represents our integrity in this humanitarian field.

In 2019, we also started a robust program through which we shall seek meaningful opportunities for the most vulnerable refugees living in Kenya, Uganda, and other African countries through complementary pathways. We hope to find opportunities for these refugees to study and work in countries like the USA and Canada, something that can change their lives for the better and live to glorify the name of God.

Advocating for human rights of individuals

Toward the end of 2019, our office received a call for help from the family of Benjamin Rutabana, a French citizen, who wanted our assistance in locating him after he went missing in Uganda in September, 2019.

We immediately launched our investigation and even filed a case of habeas corpus in Ugandan courts and the progress is good. We are continuing with the search in the year 2020. He hope to secure justice for him.

Challenges

There is lack of awareness in communities we work in about humanitarian organizations and the work we do. We keep engaging them to let them know that we are not enemies, rather friends with hearts of helping.

IRHRI is overwhelmed by the number of people who require our immediate attention and services. This renders our resources and funding insufficient as our organization is still growing its capacity to handle big numbers of people who need to be helped.

As of now, we cannot reach every corner of the world, though we are aware that there are many vulnerable people looking forward to be help. We continue liaising with our colleagues in other human rights organizations and we make our contributions through them as we hope to get the capacity to reach them physically soon.

We are undertaking many projects which require adequate funding but the source of funding is still limited as we still depend on member contributions and donations, but we plan to get a sustainable loan form SBA to continue running our projects.

Fighting myths

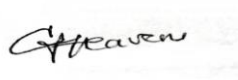
A 2019 International Relief for Human Rights Initiative (IRHRI) report revealed violations against street children by police and local government officials, as well as abuses by members of the community and older homeless children and adults.



According to the report, there is a widespread belief that street children are all criminals and are often the first suspects, for instance, when theft is committed. In the end, they expressed fear of the authorities and a total lack of protection on the streets.

Approved by Board of Directors:

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