


YEAR IN REVIEW 2022

THE PART YOU PLAY

Building a Community of Welcome

world relief 

CHICAGOLAND



THE STRENGTH OF WELCOME

In 2022, more people came to us in need of resettlement support than I remember in my 20 years with World Relief, and I am so grateful for the strength of our community. You have been amazing as you sacrifice, give, and **show love to our new neighbors**.

No one can completely prepare for the uncertainty that lies within a year. Global conflicts that cause mass displacement like Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Venezuela. Decisions that bring unexpected busloads of asylum seekers to neighboring communities. And the ongoing needs of many refugees and immigrants who depend on others to walk alongside them as they rebuild their lives. With challenges like these, it's easy to feel a sense of helplessness.

And yet, **together we rose to the challenges** and have had an impact far greater than any one of us could have alone. At World Relief, we believe God has given all of us gifts & resources to be stewarded for the good of others and for our community. In 2022, we embodied a community of faith and action leading to 665 people being resettled and over 6,000 served through World Relief Chicagoland.

A Congolese refugee grows increasingly confident in his use of English to seek out a better-paying job. An Afghan humanitarian parolee eagerly participates in a women's group that helps her understand the culture and nurture her family. A Venezuelan asylum seeker experiences hope when her new home provides her with the safety she longed for.

When I consider how the impact of moments like these is multiplied across the thousands of people who actively participate in the work of welcome – volunteers, foundations, refugees and immigrants, businesses, financial partners, church members, and World Relief Chicagoland staff, I'm awe-struck at its magnitude.

Together, we are building a powerful community of welcome.

This Year in Review provides an inside look into ways your partnership through World Relief has made a difference this year. I hope you see a picture of the impact you have and the essential part you play in this work. I'm grateful for you and how together we endeavor for everyone to flourish as God intended. That's the power of our community.



Susan Sperry
Executive Director

EVIDENCE OF YOUR IMPACT

IN 2022



1,029

volunteers like you gave their time, talent, and treasure to serve our immigrant and refugee neighbors.



433

of these volunteers served with World Relief Chicagoland for the first time in 2022.



250+

churches also participated in World Relief Chicagoland's mission.



160

faith communities chose to partner through acts of giving, volunteering, and advocacy this year.



665

PEOPLE WERE RESETTLED TO THE UNITED STATES

and provided with vital support to rebuild their lives here in Chicagoland.

636

PEOPLE STARTED JOBS

that will help them support their family and achieve their financial goals.

251

PEOPLE WORKED TOWARD TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS THAT WILL ADVANCE THEIR CAREERS

through the Career Pathways initiative. People who have completed the program saw an average wage **increase of 40%**.

780

CHILDREN GAINED THE SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

they need to grow and thrive.

**THIS YEAR, PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER
THE WORLD CAME TO CHICAGOLAND.
TOGETHER, WE WELCOMED THEM.**

CREATING GENERATIONS OF IMPACT

Over the past 40+ years, the people of the World Relief community – from church and grant partners to individual donors and volunteers – have each had a role in building a powerful foundation of welcome for our refugee and immigrant neighbors.

We each have a part to play, and each time someone like you steps up to share what you have to offer, God shows up to **make the impact exponential**.

When you choose to give, whether it's every month or every year, you connect our new neighbors with the support they need to thrive.



OVERCOMING BARRIERS

When you pick up a refugee family from the airport or drive them to a job interview or medical appointment, you overcome a barrier and show friendship to people working to rebuild their lives.

When you volunteer two hours a week to tutor an immigrant who is studying English, you become a partner in their learning.





FORMING NEW FRIENDSHIPS

When you invite your friends and family to join in welcoming our new neighbors, you connect them with the joy of giving, the chance to build transformational relationships, and hope for a diverse and thriving community.

When you give above and beyond to support the pressing needs of Ukrainian and Afghan newcomers, you help create a place where they feel safe and supported.



LOVING YOUR NEIGHBORS

Thank you for playing your part to build a community of love and welcome for immigrants and refugees.

Whether you give, volunteer, pray, or advocate, when you impact the life of one person, you impact the life of every person they're connected to - now and in the future.



A STORY OF IMPACT

When three couples from Park Community Church, Rogers Park decided to partner with asylum seekers through World Relief's HOME program, they realized the financial commitment was a big undertaking. The amount: \$8,400 to provide rental assistance for six months while the family obtained work authorization to support themselves.

Yet despite some uneasiness about raising these funds, they agreed to move forward, "Simply because there's a lot of need and not many people who wanted to do it." That is until they found what brought the most impact: **they invited others to join them.**

After all, tied to each person was a background of other people – family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, and church relationships – who also cared for the lost, the forgotten, and the stranger. When everyone realized they had connections to call on for help, it became much easier than they thought possible. "It seemed like a really big number," expressed one team member. **"But I underestimated how many people's hearts are willing to do a big number."**

Before they knew it, they not only reached their goal. They realized they could have doubled it.

It wasn't long before they had the chance to call upon these eager hearts again. After meeting Koffi and Emefa for the first time, they discovered this Togolese couple had another big need. They were expecting a baby and had nothing to prepare for her arrival.

The team didn't hesitate to invite others to join them, but this time helpers came from a surprising source: Facebook Marketplace. After explaining the situation to people selling baby products, sellers were happy to offer these items for free. In fact, when it came time to pick them up, **people they had never met before asked if anything else was needed.**

Amazed at the generous response, the team collected everything a baby could need – both from people they knew and complete strangers.

Looking back, the team views their walk alongside Koffi and Emefa as a fun and fulfilling experience. They built new friendships. They grew stronger together as each member stepped up in different ways to play their part. **And with only a simple invitation, they witnessed how God moved in the hearts of others to help build a strong community of welcome.**



INDIVIDUALS

Each one of us was created to make an impact – and at World Relief Chicagoland, we believe that desire comes from God. However, at times, we may question whether we have what it takes to respond to the needs of our neighbors. We may even think that the job of welcoming immigrants and refugees is best left to those who do not have to navigate cultural differences or communicate across languages.

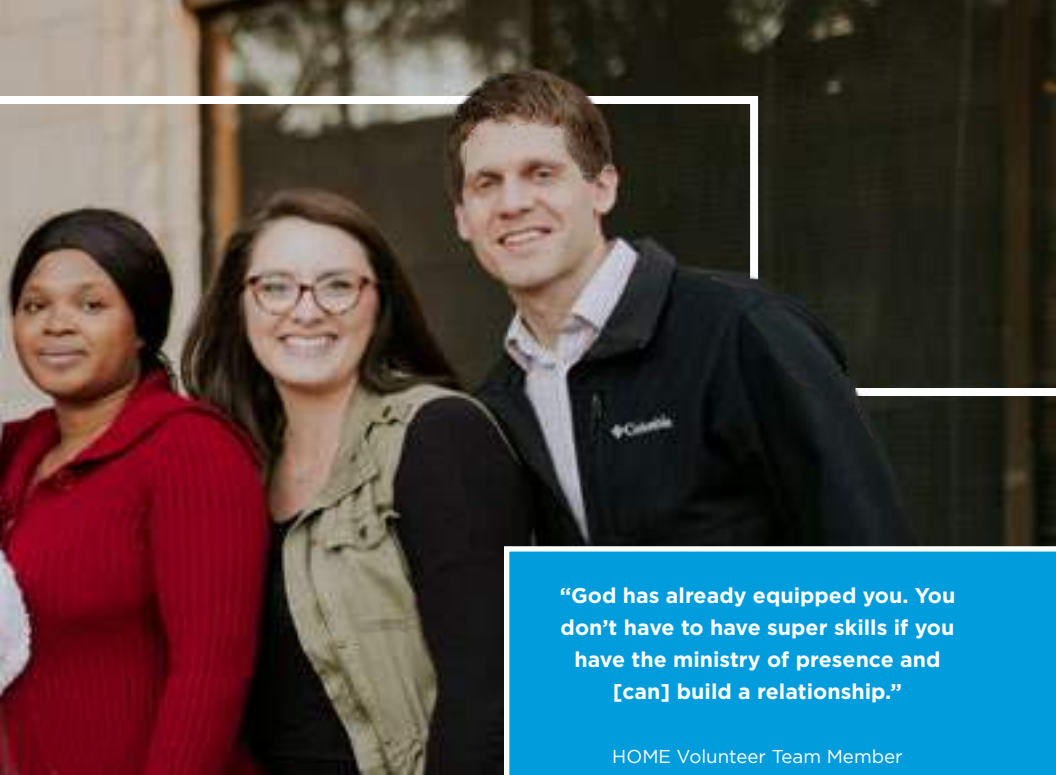
But people were created for connection.

Believing that each person was designed to live in relationship, World Relief Chicagoland looks for opportunities to bring people together – and connect people like you who are passionate about loving others with the chance to welcome new immigrant and refugee

neighbors to the community. And when you step up to the challenge, you get to witness incredible things.

A volunteer team of three couples from Park Community Church in Rogers Park are a beautiful example of that. Last year, Vincent and Ashlee, Jason and Samantha, and Kent and Jillian began volunteering with World Relief Chicagoland's HOME Program – an opportunity to walk alongside a family of asylum seekers, providing friendship and meaningful support for six months.

Though the team members were nervous about building a friendship with Koffi and Emeffa, asylum seekers from Togo, they soon learned that so much power comes from simply being together – offering friendship, sharing meals, and supporting one another.



“God has already equipped you. You don’t have to have super skills if you have the ministry of presence and [can] build a relationship.”

HOME Volunteer Team Member

Jillian shared that she worried about the language differences initially, but soon realized that even if they ran out of topics to discuss using Google Translate, that it would be okay, “We’re going to sit here and smile at each other. And that’s fine because we’re being together.” Kent added, “Sometimes it’s okay to not have to talk the whole time. It’s just about being there and hanging out.”

The tea provided truly meaningful support to Koffi and Emefa – they fundraised among friends and family to cover six months of rent for the couple, hosted a baby shower when Emefa was expecting their first baby, brought the new family of three home from the hospital when baby Vicky was born, and shared regular meals together throughout 2022.

However, the team also learned that there was a power in simply bearing witness to each other’s lives. Team member Ashlee shared, “Just spending time with them and hearing the little bits and secrets of their story reminds me that you never know what someone has gone through. It’s been eye-opening to learn people’s journeys to get here and the trials they’ve gone through.”

Whether you support World Relief Chicagoland as an individual volunteer, part of a team, or as a financial partner, we invite you to experience the power of welcome – when, like this team, you gain the chance to learn someone’s story and join them in the journey forward.



VOLUNTEERS



When you volunteer with World Relief Chicagoland, you join a community of over 1,000 other neighbors who share their time, energy, and talents to **build a strong community of love and welcome**.

Whether providing transportation from the airport or to a job interview, sorting donations, tutoring an ESL student, advocating for just laws, setting up an apartment, or walking alongside a refugee family, each person and volunteer team plays a vital role in offering friendship to immigrants and refugees in our community.

World Relief Chicagoland provides diverse volunteer opportunities to help someone find the part that best fits their passion, skills, and schedule while building life-changing relationships. One inspirational example of this is seen in the story of Farzana and Whitney.

When Whitney signed up to volunteer, she appreciated the care World Relief Chicagoland put into matching her with an opportunity that best fit her background and interests. She became a health advocate for Afghan Paralympian and Humanitarian Parolee, Farzana.

“They were really thoughtful in terms of who they paired me with,” reflects Whitney who is an occupational therapist with a long-held desire to help refugees.

As an advocate, Whitney walked alongside Farzana to help her navigate the American healthcare system to receive needed services. In turn, Farzana showed Whitney hospitality – making her coffee while they practiced English together. It was these normal routines that forged a beautiful friendship that continues today.

World Relief Chicagoland is so grateful for volunteers like Whitney who are building a strong community of welcome as they walk alongside immigrants and refugees.

CHURCHES

More than 250 church partners across Chicagoland played a central part in the mission of World Relief Chicagoland in 2022.

For over 40 years, new and long-time church partners have continued to mobilize small groups and entire congregations to welcome new neighbors. From acts of service as tutors, friendship partners, and transportation assistants, to acts of giving through donations, special offerings, and other contributions, church communities become powerful agents of change and ambassadors of hope when they step out in faith to help immigrants and refugees in vulnerable situations.



WELCOMING NEW ARRIVALS



As temperatures dropped last fall, South Park Church in Park Ridge partnered with World Relief's office in Chicago to provide winter coats and other seasonal clothing items to recently arrived immigrants and refugees. Church members continued to meet the needs of arriving families and individuals by hosting another Welcome Kit donation drive to collect essential household items.

We're grateful for their investment of time, resources, and energy to coordinate donation drives to bless others.

SERVING WITHOUT LIMIT



Batavia Covenant Church in Batavia is fostering a strong culture of service. In 2022, they collected Welcome Kits full of essentials for new refugee arrivals, enlisted volunteers to build relationships with refugee families, and created opportunities for their youth to grow as leaders by serving too.

Recently, in a special service, the congregation was asked who had served with World Relief. Over 80% of this midsize congregation raised their hands.

GIVING ABOVE AND BEYOND



With the influx of Afghans evacuated to the U.S., Christ Community Church in St. Charles responded generously to meet Afghan arrivals' pressing needs. Members stepped up with great enthusiasm to give financially, far surpassing what the church had initially expected they might be able to give.

As a result of the church's multiple generous gifts, 775 Afghans in the broader community gain resources to help with housing and their basic needs and vital long-term services through World Relief Chicagoland.

FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATIONS

Foundation and corporate partners throughout Chicagoland have an important role in sustaining World Relief's programs for immigrants and refugees. From sustaining ongoing services to investing in new program innovations, these partners play an important role in building a strong community in which everyone can thrive. We are deeply grateful for all of the partners included below and for those who prefer to remain anonymous.



GRANT PARTNERS

Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration at the U.S. Department of State

City of Aurora

City of Chicago

Cook County Health

DuPage County

DuPage County Workforce Development Division

Illinois Community College Board

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of Welcoming Centers for Refugee and Immigrant Services

Illinois Department of Public Health

Illinois Secretary of State

Jewish Federation of Metro Chicago

Office of Refugee Resettlement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

United States Department of Labor

United Way, Emergency Food and Shelter Program



BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

6,000+

TOTAL CLIENTS
SERVED

3,396

PEOPLE WERE
SERVED THROUGH

Immigrant Family Services

2,774

PEOPLE WERE
SERVED THROUGH

Immigrant Legal Services

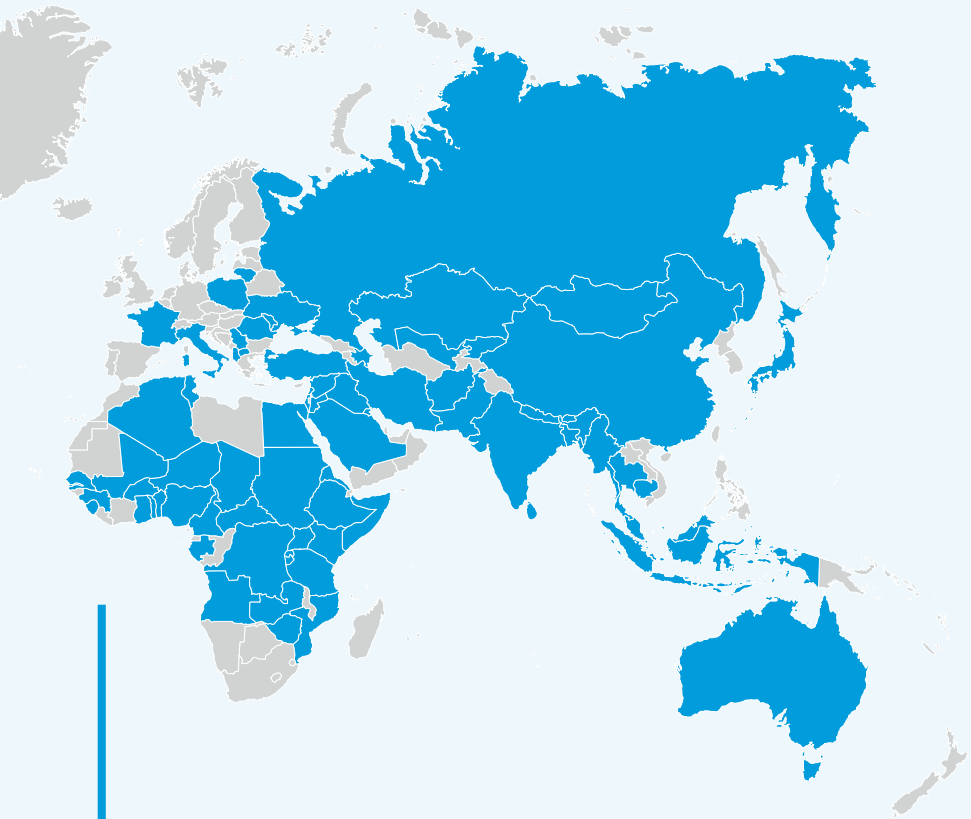
769

PEOPLE WERE
SERVED THROUGH

Adult Education Programs



WHERE IN THE WORLD PEOPLE COME FROM



91 DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES

SEEKING SAFETY AND BELONGING

World Relief Chicagoland serves immigrants and refugees in vulnerable situations regardless of how they came to the United States.

THOUGH THEY BRING HOPES AND DREAMS FOR LIFE IN THE U.S.,

Refugees and immigrants leave behind homes that they love.

Many cherish the geography, culture, history, and traditions of their home country and mourn the beloved people and places they leave behind.

WHEN PEOPLE FLEE THEIR HOMES,

It is often because of poverty, natural disasters, violence or war, persecution, or the desire to achieve a better life for themselves or their families.

Many do not have a choice but were forced to leave their home behind in order to live or care for their families. Others are drawn to the promise of opportunity and freedom in the United States.



Immigrants and **refugees** leave home for similar reasons, but the ways they come to the U.S. can vary depending on where they are from and their circumstances before leaving home.

IMMIGRANT

Immigrants move away from their homes to live in a new country. They may be forced to leave due to persecution or may choose to leave to pursue new opportunities

HUMANITARIAN PAROLEE

Humanitarian parolees are allowed to temporarily enter the U.S. due to an emergency, urgent humanitarian reason, or significant public benefit. The U.S. Government allows them to come to the U.S. for safety, but parolee is not a permanent immigration status.

One's **Immigration Status** determines things like the kind of support they receive from international agencies like **UNHCR** or the **U.S. Government**, whether they can work or receive benefits, and the path to becoming a U.S. citizen.

REFUGEE

Refugees are displaced from their home countries because of a threat to their lives or freedom. They are protected under an international legal framework and brought to the U.S. by the U.S. Government in partnership with agencies like World Relief.

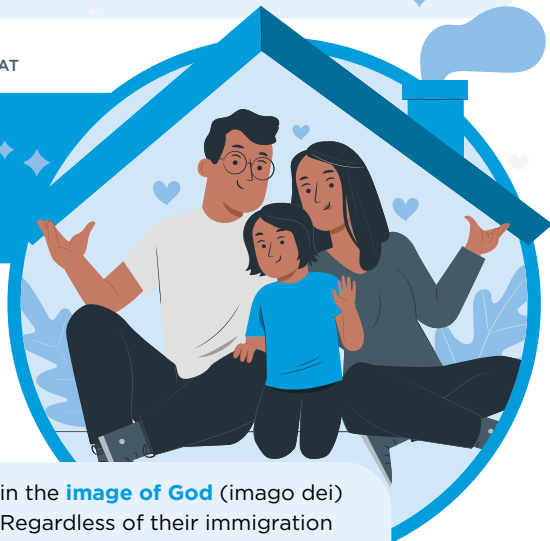
ASYLUM SEEKER

Asylum seekers flee their homes under the threat of violence and persecution. They must come to the U.S. border and present their case for asylum to U.S. adjudicators, who determine whether they can stay in the U.S. permanently as an "asylee."

WORLD RELIEF CHICAGOLAND BELIEVES THAT

Every person has God-given dignity and worth and should be treated with respect and welcomed with love.

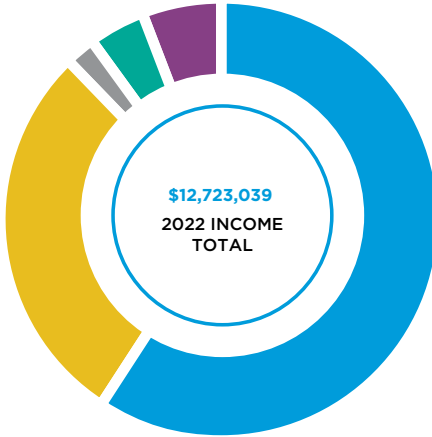
Each of us has the opportunity to walk alongside immigrants and refugees who come to the U.S. from around the world so that they can **flourish**.



Every person is made in the **image of God** (imago dei) and has unique value. Regardless of their immigration status, each person has God-given desires to learn, work, and care for their loved ones.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2022 INCOME



59.33%

Public grants

28.6%

Private income

2.3%

Earned income

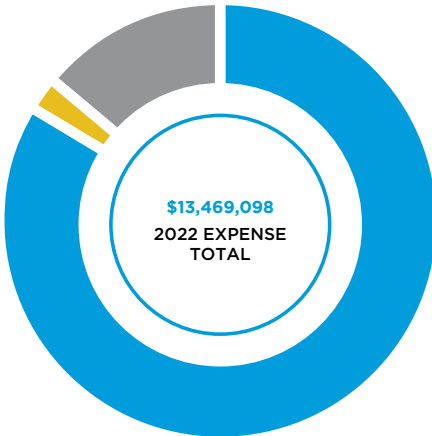
4.2%

Use of cash reserves

5.57%

Gifts in kind

2022 EXPENSES



83.8%

Program expenses

2.4%

Fundraising

13.8%

Administration and other indirect costs

WORLD RELIEF CHICAGOLAND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

2022 Fiscal Year (October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022)

Income	Actual	Budget
Public Grants	\$ 7,548,798	\$ 8,125,634
Private Income	\$ 3,634,423	\$ 2,857,498
Earned Income	\$ 303,553	\$ 399,000
Use of Cash Reserves	\$ 536,265	\$ 1,386,966
Gifts in Kind (GIK)	\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000
Income Total	\$ 12,723,039	\$ 13,469,098

Expenses	Actual	Budget
Salaries	\$ 5,507,061	\$ 6,072,266
Fringe benefits	\$ 1,292,929	\$ 1,884,078
Travel	\$ 31,184	\$ 26,448
Supplies	\$ 28,566	\$ 123,680
Contractual	\$ 439,458	\$ 100,061
Other direct costs	\$ 3,444,350	\$ 3,400,872
Indirect costs	\$ 1,279,491	\$ 1,161,693
Gifts in Kind	\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000
Expense Total	\$ 12,723,039	13,469,098



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