



2022 IMPACT REPORT

The full report will present the community, systemic and ways-of-working impacts of the Resourcing Refugee Leadership Initiative (RRLI) during 2021-2022. It will be available online at refugeeslead.org in November 2022.

In May 2021, the Resourcing Refugee Leadership Initiative (RRLI) received a significant investment through the Larsen Lam ICONIQ Impact Award – an initial 10 million USD – to undertake a bold solution for refugees globally. RRLI's approach was simple: invest in high-impact organizations led by people of forced displacement, regardless of their programmatic focus, in a long-term, relationship-based and collaborative way. The 2021-2022 RRLI Impact Report covers the results of that approach during the period of May 2021 - August 2022.

RRLI's first task was to get money out to RLOs efficiently and safely. To do so, it established the first of its kind RLO-to-RLO Fund, a grantmaking mechanism designed to combat the systemic exclusion of RLOs from international funding streams. In its first year the RLO-to-RLO Fund, committed **five-year grants totalling 8.84 million USD to its coalition RLOs (Basmeh & Zeitooneh, StARS, RAIC, Refugiados Unidos and YARID)** in order to resource both their incredible ground-level work and their

participation in RRLI activities. In July and August of 2022, **the RLO-to-RLO Fund issued a total of 1.18 million USD to 12 new RLOs**, chosen for their demonstrated impact on their communities' well-being and futures.

This report will show that these investments – and investments like them – are already making a significant difference in people's lives. Five of the coalition RLOs **reached approximately 189,486 people in a recent one-year period¹ with comprehensive support, including humanitarian aid, education, health services, economic empowerment, legal aid, and resettlement.** Among other impressive achievements, YARID prepared and

¹ In order to not add undue labor to the organizations to align their reach calculation practices, we have allowed organizations to provide reach numbers during different timeframes within reason. Basmeh & Zeitooneh reported numbers between January and December 2021; RAIC and StARS reported reach numbers between July 2021 and June 2022; and Refugiados Unidos provided reach numbers for between June 2021 and May 2022..

RRLI's Overall 2021-2022 Impact by the Numbers

\$11.7 million

in direct funding unlocked for RLO grantmaking, including \$10m in RLO-to-RLO fund commitments and \$1.7m in instigated grantmaking through other donors.

11

key mindset shifts amongst influential actors, including more inclusive grantmaking practices, larger grants and changed funding priorities

58

RLOs supported with mentorship, collaboration, network development and more

17

RLO-to-RLO Fund grantees

189,486

people reached through grantees last year

enrolled over 1,400 children into Ugandan schools, RAIC submitted 19 applications for private sponsorship to Canada, StARS reached over 10,000 children with holistic wraparound services, Refugiados Unidos supported 317 families to submit their applications for legal status, and Basmeh & Zeitooneh provided 9,810 community members with comprehensive protection services including legal community-based services, case management, and psychosocial support.

The numbers only tell half the story. In early 2022, RRLI contracted five external researchers to evaluate the impact of each of the coalition RLOs. In addition to sharing information about the breadth and depth of programming, evaluators found that **community members of all races, ethnicities, religions, gender identities and abilities typically felt safe, understood, and respected while receiving services from their respective RLO.** In short, these

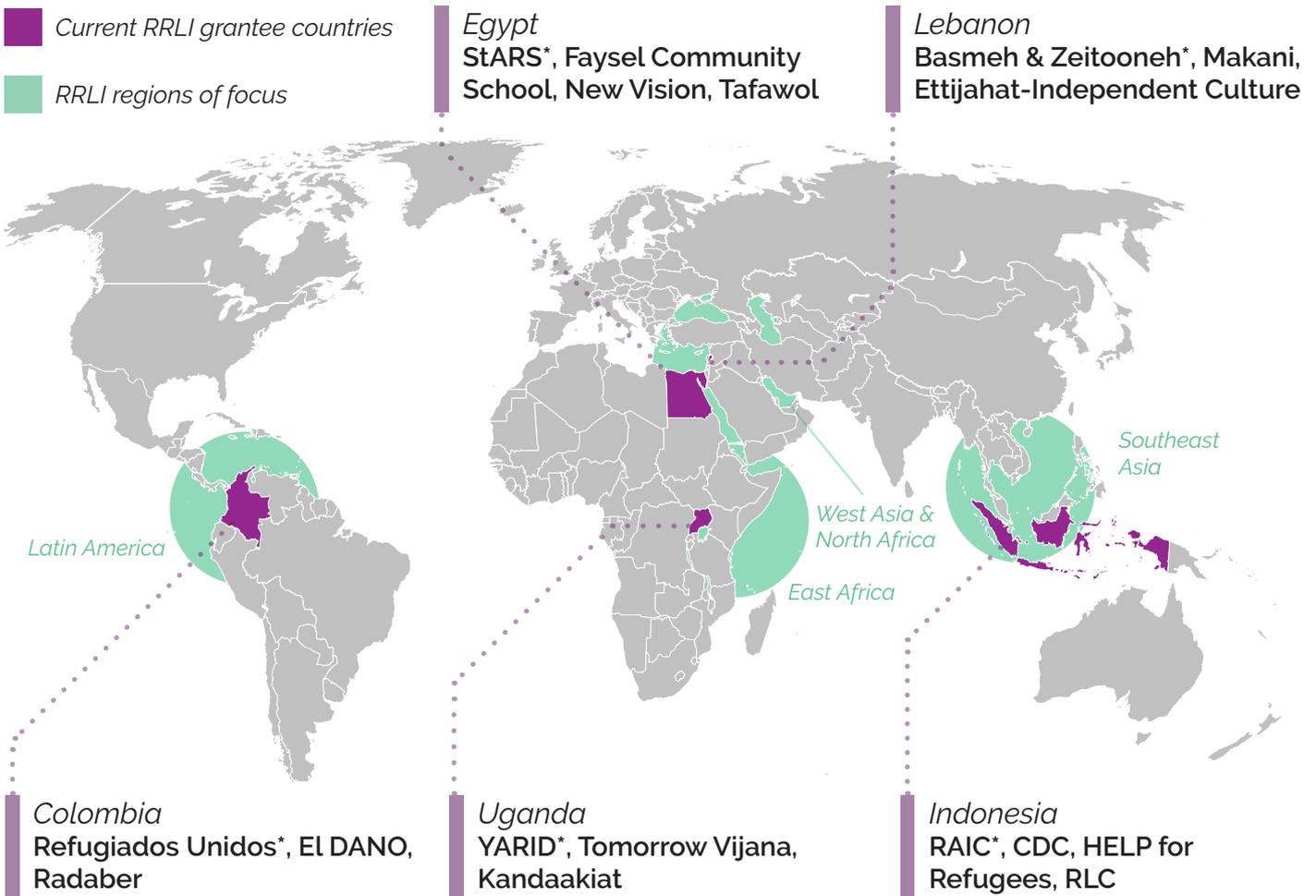
RLOs offered more than services or solutions – they offered community and belonging.

These kinds of transformative wins are predictable when high-impact organizations are adequately funded. With this in mind, **RRLI has a goal of unlocking at least 40 million USD for local RLOs during its first five years.** In addition to growing the RLO-to-RLO Fund, RRLI is collaborating with more influential and powerful funders to increase the amount of high-quality and flexible funding they grant to RLOs in order to reach the 40 million USD goal.

In 2021-2022, RRLI met with 41 key stakeholders (government, multilateral agencies, foundations and international NGOs) to offer both the rationale and the practical pathways for financing RLOs. Last year, **RRLI made 80 connections between RLOs and donors; this has already translated to**

RRLI grantees

**Coalition RLOs in receipt of funding 2021-2026, all other grantees in receipt of renewable funding 2022-2023.*



1.7 million USD in new funding to 3 high-impact organizations.

More change is coming. Through RRLI's engagements, **two major foundations established new refugee leadership funding priorities, UNHCR increased the size of granting specifically available to RLOs from 12,000 USD to 50,000 USD, and RRLI representatives were asked to join three prominent funding initiatives:** the EU-UNOPS Grant Facility advisory board, the Collective for Refugee Leadership in MENA (CRLM), and the Women in Forced Displacement Action Network at GIZ. These actions and invitations demonstrate there is a growing intention to fund RLOs, the fruits of which will be seen in the coming years.

Underpinning these successes is RRLI's commitment to inclusion. Thanks to a highly accessible grant application process created by and for RLO leaders, **30% of grantees report this is their first grant ever and 70% report it is their largest grant ever.** Because the requirements are flexible, the RLO leaders have the freedom to spend on core costs (like salaries and rent), fostering organizational sustainability and longevity. These approaches mean that key community leaders and their organizations will be able to grow their impact and participate in strategizing and decision making spaces, some for the very first time.

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Because of RRLI's inclusive hiring practices, **each of its five new staff hires brings a lived experience of forced displacement to their roles and the project, in addition to their professional expertise.** Their familiarity with experiences of

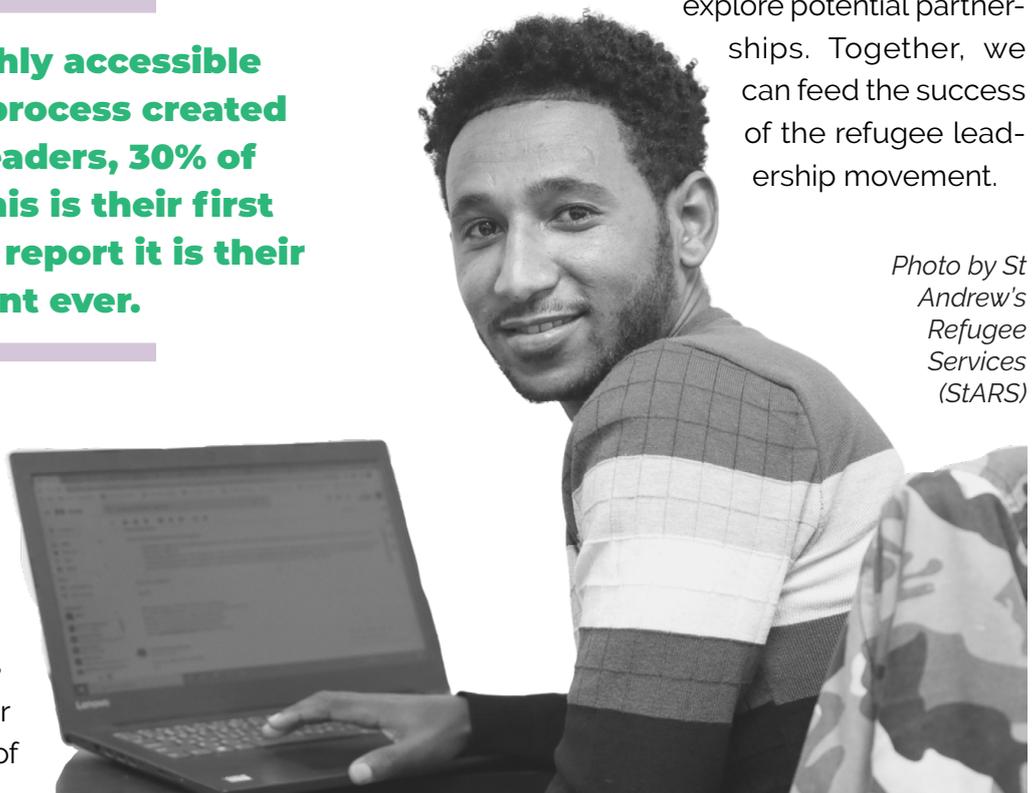
forced displacement leads to practical approaches that respond to the RLO experience and barriers. It also leads to more empathetic and equitable collaboration. These successes highlight why the internal journey toward inclusion supports the external journey toward impact.

Despite progress, the year also held challenges. RRLI continued to field concerns from donors that financing RLOs was risky and/or complex. These experiences have taught RRLI **that it must not just focus on funding modalities, but also on dismantling the biases that feed problematic misconceptions.** RRLI remains determined to help change this narrative, one piece of evidence and partnership at a time.

The impact articulated in this report is just the beginning. Looking forward into 2022-2023, RRLI will focus on fundraising for grant renewals and the next cohort of RLO-to-RLO Fund recipients, supporting and connecting its new grantees, and collaborating with other donors who wish to join RRLI in uplifting refugee leaders to support their own communities.

RRLI invites potential grantees to watch our website for information about the next funding cycle, and to email RRLI at grants@refugeeslead.org with questions. RRLI also invites allied organizations, philanthropic donors, government and multilateral agencies to reach out at info@refugeeslead.org to explore potential partnerships. Together, we can feed the success of the refugee leadership movement.

Photo by St Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS)



Join us!

The call for applications for the RLO-to-RLO Fund opens on our website each January and closes in March. If you are an RLO, we encourage you to learn more about our RLO-to-RLO Fund and consider applying if you are within our current geographic reach. We are eager to learn more about your organizations and the possibility of partnering with you! If you have any questions about our grantmaking process, please contact us at grants@refugeeslead.org.

Over the past year, we have received tremendous support for our initiative from our fellow RLOs, allied organizations, philanthropic donors, governmental and intergovernmental actors, and multilateral agencies. These partnerships are the backbone of RRLI's success, and we are continuously seeking new and impactful collaborations. If you'd like to join us in this journey, we encourage you to reach out by sending us an e-mail to info@refugeeslead.org to start a conversation. Together we can feed the success of the refugee leadership movement.

Our Coalition



RRLI would like to thank Chris Larsen, Lyna Lam, Lever for Change, ICONIQ, Open Society Foundations, David and Samantha Karp, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation, Bosch Foundation, Porticus Foundation, the Global Whole Being Fund, and the Local Engagement Refugee Research Network (LERRN) for their support during RRLI's launch and inaugural year. We couldn't have done this without you!

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