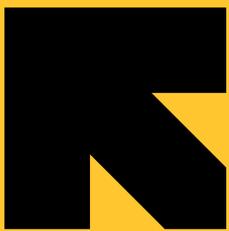




Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

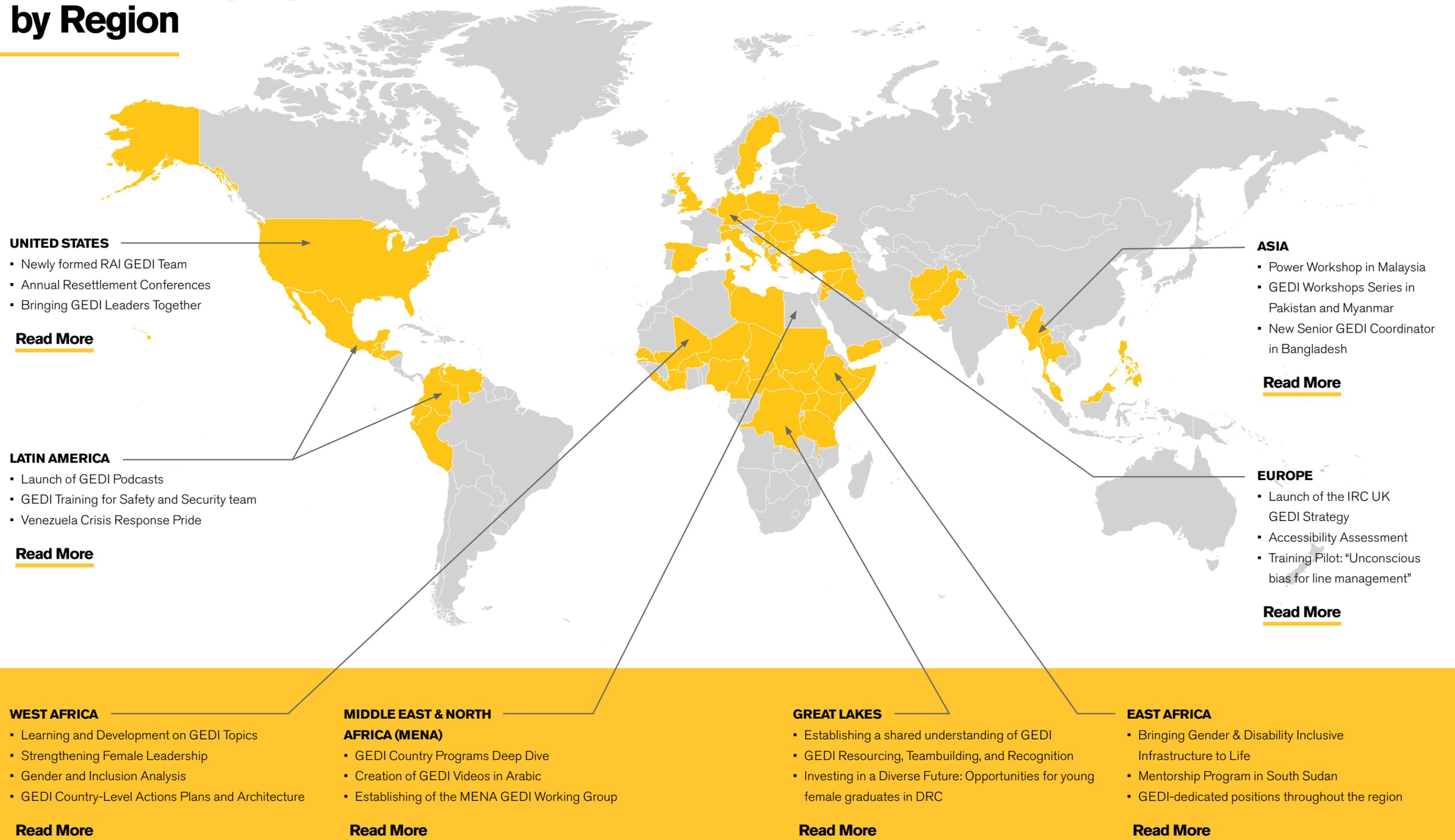


INTERNATIONAL
RESCUE
COMMITTEE

Annual Progress Report DECEMBER 2022

For any questions, please contact IRC.Equality@Rescue.org

Overview: Highlights by Region



This year has been another stepping stone in our journey toward creating a more diverse, equal and inclusive organization for our staff and clients.

I am extremely impressed by the work that has been undertaken at the office, regional, and global levels. There is of course much more to be done, but there are several key projects and a lot of progress that took place this year that I would like to highlight.

- We established our **Gender, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (GEDI) Unit** with experts who are actively working with IRC departments, regional teams, and offices to strengthen our people, program quality, and influence foundations through a GEDI lens.
- We launched the **global GEDI Action Plan** – a three-year action plan that establishes global commitments and metrics while allowing for contextual adaptation and built a strong governance mechanism to hold leaders accountable for making progress toward our GEDI goals.
- We successfully conducted the **IRC People Survey for Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion** with the goal to understand who we are and hear from IRC staff – their experience, their insight – to ultimately help us continue to build a better IRC for all. 12,701 staff took the survey, delivering a remarkable **75%** response rate and sharing close to 25,000 qualitative comments.
- We are making some progress on our **Leadership Diversity Goals**. Over the past 12 months, Headquarters and Regional Leaders Band 5+ who identify as women increased from **64.30% to 64.62%**, Crisis, Response, Recovery and Development (CRRD) Country Program Leaders Bands 4-6 who come from the countries they work in or communities they serve increased from **60.24% to 64.90%** and Resettlement, Asylum and Integration (RAI) leaders bands 4-6 who identify as one or more targeted races and ethnicities¹ increased from **39.20% to 41.21%**.
- Through our Fund the Field Strategy 100 ambition, we saw increased investments in office-led GEDI initiatives. This included approximately **\$500K in strategic investments** made by CRRD offices to advance **Strategic Action Plans (SAP)** and **Strategy Action Plan Implementations Plans (SAP IPs)** commitments. Additionally, **\$300K** of the GEDI Unit budget has been allocated specifically to develop regional and office-led projects.
- We saw continued strong progress towards our ambition to ask ‘Why not partner’ whenever we plan programming, and to partner as equals. We released a new version of the **Partnership Excellence for Equality and Results System (PEERS)**, applying all key recommendations from an in-depth

external review focused on equality. We continued to increase the resources we provide to local actors, to the highest ever level, and invested in the development of long-term strategic partnerships.

- We invested in **GEDI learning across** the organization: **1,298 people managers** have participated in the Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging learning module and more than **15,000 participants** have been reached globally by our GEDI learning efforts.

The organization also learned a lot in 2022. Challenges related to the limitations of our global workforce data required us to reevaluate our needs and find different ways to gather essential GEDI data. We were reminded, too, of the importance of strengthening staff engagement and holding space for difficult conversations in order to build trust throughout the organization. Finally, we realized the need to center our efforts even more on our People Managers and ensure they model inclusive behavior in their daily work and are held accountable for it. The different barriers we encountered taught us to be more patient and to get better at prioritizing as well as increasing coordination between all IRC departments. We will continue to focus on these critical goals in 2023.

Today, I am proud to share with you the GEDI Annual Report 2022. In it, you will learn about key GEDI initiatives that took place in 2022, with a particular focus on our regions and offices. The report isn't intended to be a comprehensive list of all IRC GEDI progress – it only shows a glimpse of the amazing work that has been achieved globally. In the last section of the report, you will find more reflections on how we can use lessons learned from this year to further improve in the future.

I would like to take the time to thank sincerely all IRC staff, particularly our Employee Resources Groups (ERGs), one of our strongest assets to drive an inclusive workplace culture, and the GEDI Council. I am humbled and deeply grateful for your constant energy and drive that push the organization to continue to become more diverse, equal, and inclusive for all our staff and clients.

In Solidarity,

Cica Dadjo, Chief GEDI Officer



¹ Targeted races and ethnicities include Black or Afro-descent; Indigenous or native peoples; Middle Eastern / Middle Eastern Descent; North African / North African Descent; Northeast Asian / Northeast Asian descent; South Asian / South Asian descent



Born and raised in Venezuela, Wildorys (right) moved to Colombia to start a better life. Today she is a health officer with the IRC.

Introduction

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI)

DEI is a key component of the IRC's strategy and vision, and has been identified as a core global priority for our strategic plan, **Strategy100**. We are committed to anti-racism and fighting discrimination, understanding the systemic underpinnings of both, and recognizing that different parts of the world experience these issues in different ways. In October 2020, the DEI interim team was mandated to develop a **DEI Strategy document**, with recommendations aligned with Strategy100 goals and priorities. Read the **2021 DEI Annual Report** for more information.

Gender Equality to GEDI

In 2019, the IRC made a commitment to equality for staff and clients by pursuing a feminist approach to delivering humanitarian aid. As part of this, we launched the first **Gender Action Plan (GAP)**. In 2020, we continued exploring the importance and role of DEI in our work. While we had already begun prioritizing and centering gender equality, it was clear that there were additional elements that needed to inform our client and community work and our organizational culture. As a result, in 2022, we combined the Gender Equality and the DEI workstreams, allowing us to address different systems of inequalities through an intersectional lens.

The IRC GEDI Action Plan

In March 2022, the organization launched the **GEDI Action Plan** which combines the vision and objectives for the IRC's joint GEDI priorities, drawing on the DEI Strategy Document, the success and lessons learned from the GAP, and the work of the previous Gender Equality Unit. This three-year action plan establishes global commitments while allowing for contextual adaptation.

The GEDI Action Plan is structured around three pillars:



1. WHO WE ARE:

The IRC commits to have an **inclusive organizational culture where diversity will be championed and represented at all leadership levels**. We will have zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, bullying, or retaliation in any form.



2. WHAT WE DO:

Our program design and delivery approach **maximize power for the communities we serve through effective collaboration** with clients, partners, and staff. We strive for **equal outcomes for diverse populations** by using our deep understanding of local power imbalances to ensure equitable access to services.



3. WHAT WE SAY AND HOW WE ENGAGE:

We aim to build an organizational culture that encourages open and honest conversations by ensuring **all staff have equal access to internal communications**. Our **external communications will illustrate the resilience of the diverse people we serve**, ensuring that the IRC's client, staff, and partner voices and experiences inform the organization's priorities.

To maintain accountability, we are leveraging existing mechanisms, such as **Delivery Letters, Quarterly Strategic Reviews, Strategy Action Plan (SAP) related routines**, Regional Roundtables, Senior Management Team meetings, etc., and creating new forums, such as HR and GEDI Check-ins, to monitor GEDI objectives at the country/office, regional, and global levels.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2021, after a complaint was received, the IRC Board of Directors formed a Special Committee to oversee an in-depth review of the IRC's approach to promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion and the IRC's process for addressing concerns about workplace behavior. The Special Committee worked with an independent law firm, WilmerHale, to comprehensively review IRC written policies and procedures and interviewed 130 staff members who raised a variety of concerns. In June 2022, the Special Committee shared 16 important recommendations falling into four categories:

- 1. Building** management and leadership skills and impact
- 2. Strengthening** culture and personal accountability
- 3. Driving** staff engagement and behavior change
- 4. Upgrading** capacity, infrastructure, and policies

As you will see in this report, some recommendations have already been integrated into current workstreams, such as management and leadership development, while other specific actions, including global employee relations training for human resource staff and a fully redeveloped global approach to staff onboarding, are built into the FY23 People & Culture Delivery Letter, a document which lays out key organizational goals, objectives, and metrics for the year.



A colleague in Erbil, Iraq, participates in a GEDI Deep Dive Workshop



Natalia Zeepah, an IRC staff member and refugee from Ukraine, helps other refugees from Ukraine apply for cash assistance in Poland.

Progress Towards Building GEDI Organizational Support

GEDI Team

The new GEDI Unit was launched in October using a Management in Partnership model, where GEDI roles are managed by the GEDI Unit and functional departments or units. In the past 12 months, the GEDI Team experienced tremendous growth. Starting from 10 people in January 2022, we now have 20 GEDI team members spread across all the regions we work in, including a newly-developed Resettlement, Asylum and Integration (RAI) team of six staff members.

Additionally, several GEDI positions were created to directly support country programs and RAI offices and advise on GEDI-related issues. All positions have been initiated by the countries and offices they are in and report directly to the local team.

GEDI Council

When the GEDI Unit was formed, the DEI council was renamed the "GEDI Council" to create consistency. The GEDI Council serves as a forum for IRC global staff and its leadership to promote equality, inclusion, and recognition. The Council deliberates the best ways to address the issues they believe require the attention of IRC leadership.



Highlights from Pillar 1

WHO WE ARE

Pillar 1 of the GEDI Action Plan focuses on creating an inclusive organizational culture where diversity will be championed and represented at all leadership levels.

IRC People Survey

An important commitment in our GEDI plans was to conduct a global employee survey that establishes a vital fact base about the staff of the IRC and supports our ongoing efforts to realize our GEDI goals. The survey was administered across **40+ countries** and **26 RAI US offices**, across 16 time zones, translated into **19 languages**, and reaching over **16,900 active staff** at the time. The People Survey project team is currently analyzing the results and will produce **over 140 global and team-specific** reports in the coming months, to be followed by an Action Planning phase in January through May 2023.

GEDI learning across the organization

A Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging learning module has been offered to all People Managers: **1,298 people** completed it and a further **1,500 licenses** have been purchased and will be open to any IRC staff who want to take the course. We also launched the redesign of our global onboarding program to include a focus on inclusion. At the regional and country level, numerous learning opportunities took place across the organization such as training on disability rights, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, and inclusive culture. The Chief GEDI Officer also launched the monthly Senior Leaders Group (SLG) Equality talk, a space for senior leaders to learn and reflect on different topics such as power sharing, privileges, and inclusion tactics.



Left: Participants in the GEDI Power Up! workshop in Kenya.

Human Resources Policies and Practices Equity Assessment

- The IRC committed to conducting a global assessment of the IRC's HR policies and practices across the organization and delivering a summary document of findings and recommendations. The final summary document and recommendations have been delivered to the HR and GEDI teams who have presented the findings to the Leadership Board with next steps recommendations.
- The IRC has commenced a review of our international-national pay practices, with the objective of developing a pay philosophy and related "talent and mobility" strategy that allows the IRC to be an attractive global employer that is market-competitive and aligned with the IRC's organizational values and priorities. The project has nearly completed the "Assess Current State" phase in which our external partner, Mercer, has reviewed existing IRC compensation and policy data and completed interviews, focus groups, and surveys of IRC staff.

Cross regional workshop

In June 2022, 31 colleagues from Asia, East Africa, and the Great Lakes gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, for a five-day GEDI Power Up! workshop organized by the Asia and East Africa regions. This participatory workshop aimed at building the technical capacity of staff to implement an intersectional, anti-racist, and decolonial approach to programs and operations. The GEDI team is planning to scale up this training across the organization.



This training has opened up my mind to learn more. I've come to learn a lot about different cultures, traditions, and perceptions from other countries and tribes."

Sentiment shared by IRC staff during the GEDI Power Up! Workshop in June 2022

- Global HR completed a Pay Equity Analysis for all US-based staff along with RAI leaders, completing a location-by-location review to ensure fair and consistent application of our compensation practices and pay rates. Additional work was completed to update policies and practices to enable pay transparency for all position postings beginning in FY23.



It was great to meet the [Leadership Board] and share our stories as well as some challenges in terms of GEDI issues at the country level!"

Comment from an ERG representative regarding ERG/LB engagement during a GEDI Council meeting in August 2022



At Right: Part of the Northern Central America (NCA) team that participated in the GEDI challenge in El Salvador.

While 2022 was focused on gathering and assessing information, 2023 will be dedicated to designing the future state of our policies and practices and implementing concrete actions.

Leadership Diversity Goals

Through our **Leadership Diversity Goals**, we committed that, by 2026, we will have more staff in leadership positions with lived experience and knowledge of our diverse contexts. **The data we gathered over the past year** show that we are moving in the right direction in some areas. For instance, when comparing the data available from FY22 Q1 to FY22 Q4, we see that the percentage of:

- **HQ & Regional Leaders Band 5+** who identify as **women** increased from **64.30% to 64.62%**

- **CRRD Country Program Leaders Bands 4-6** who come from **the countries they work in** or communities they serve increased from **60.24% to 64.90%**
- **RAI leaders bands 4-6** who identify as **one or more targeted races and ethnicities**¹ increased from **39.20% to 41.21%**

However, we are facing challenges in other areas, such as the racial makeup of our key leadership tiers. Additionally, it will be key to focus on intersectionality in 2023 as the percentage of women decreases or remains very low in several groups such as CRRD leaders coming from the country they work in or communities they serve and RAI program leaders in the targeted races and ethnicities.

We recognize that GEDI targets alone are not enough to produce concrete advancements. In September of this year, we launched a Task

¹ Targeted races and ethnicities include Black or Afro-descent; Indigenous or native peoples; Middle Eastern / Middle Eastern Descent; North African / North African Descent; Northeast Asian / Northeast Asian descent; South Asian / South Asian descent

UPDATES FROM EMPLOYEE GROUPS

UK BAME NETWORK*

The UK BAME network is a space for self-identifying Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) colleagues. The group meets to share, reflect and take action on how the IRC can become a more inclusive and equitable organization. Membership is open to all self-identifying BAME colleagues from the UK and Europe offices. They currently have 20 members and hold a monthly business meeting and monthly informal drop-in/social session.

**Name will be changed in FY23*

BE WELL IN HQNYC

The mission of Be Well is to nurture a sense of wellness amongst IRC staff and to establish a greater sense of community, caring, and encouragement of personal growth. Be Well has a strong commitment to DEI as it relates to the mental health and psychological safety of staff and their ability to be productive and engaged. The group has led a series of meditation and yoga sessions, as well as advocated to Leadership Board and the GEDI Council for the importance of fostering an IRC culture.

EUROPE PRIDE NETWORK

IRC UK participated in its first ever London Pride parade, led by the Europe PRIDE Network. The parade was the culmination of a collaboration with staff groups to highlight a different intersectional theme each week in Pride Month, including Pride x Disability; Pride x BAME community; and Pride x Refugees.

LANGUAGE & CULTURE EXCHANGE

IRC employees advance their language goals while helping colleagues achieve their own through exchanges where each can learn a new language and deepen awareness of another culture. This group fosters a supportive, inclusive, empathetic, intellectually curious and culturally aware workplace, through regularly cadenced language and cultural exchanges among over 500 active members, spanning nearly every country where IRC operates.



Top Right: Female IRC staff in W@W Bangladesh, an inclusive space that empowers women to connect and seek support and mentorship throughout the organization.

Group dedicated to identifying new enabling policies and practices to support our program offices and functional departments to increase leadership diversity throughout the organization.

Getting input from staff

The Leadership Board continues to host a monthly meeting with rotating ERGs in order to hear feedback directly from staff. During these exchanges, ERGs shared their challenges, concerns, and aspirations. The Chief GEDI Officer also created open hours for ERGs to share more about their goals and identify ways the GEDI team can support them better. Finally, several spaces to gather feedback from staff were created at the regional and office level.

Safety and Security

The Safety and Security Unit champions the objective that everyone – regardless of their identities, backgrounds, and lived experiences – should feel safe as they carry out their work with the IRC. The Unit has taken the metrics associated with the GEDI Action Plan to take stock of their current position and has engaged a DEI specialist to collaborate in the development of a security risk assessment (SRA).

Publication of statement of support for people of diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexual Characteristics

As a global organization working in over 40 countries, the IRC operates in contexts where acceptance and inclusion of people based on their sexual orientation, gender identity,

gender expression, and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC) vary widely. To promote a consistent inclusive organizational culture in all IRC locations, regardless of cultural or legal acceptance, the **IRC issued a statement** aligned with humanitarian principles, including that of Do No Harm, and the IRC's mission to ensure people with diverse SOGIESC are protected under the **IRC's Respect at Work Policy**.

GEDI Commitment in Strategy Action Plan Implementations Plans (SAP-IPs)

45% of CRRD countries made a commitment in their SAP-IPs to increase GEDI capacity, hire new dedicated roles, shift or restructure staff to include GEDI responsibilities, as well as invest in training and capacity building. Additionally, **55% of countries** made a commitment to attract, develop, and retain staff from diverse backgrounds.

UPDATES FROM EMPLOYEE GROUPS

WOMEN AT WORK

The IRC has more than **100 Women at Work** groups in the organization. W@W are employee led groups working to remove barriers women face in workplace environments. Since their establishment the IRC's W@W has been a driving force to build a more gender equal, safe, and respectful place for women to work in our offices across the globe.

W@W Ethiopia

Established in 2020, W@W Ethiopia recently formed chapters in eight field offices across the country. The groups work to challenge patriarchy and push for more support for the growth and development of women staff. This year, the group organized a workshop on women empowerment and a session on health and wellness.

W@W Bangladesh

W@W Bangladesh was set up in 2019 to create a safe and supportive environment for all female IRC staff. The group aims to collectively identify barriers to the full and equal participation of female staff and support accountability for GEDI issues in the workplace. W@W also provides all female staff and volunteers a space to connect and seek support and mentorship across the organization.

W@W Northern Central America (NCA)

W@W in NCA was set up in 2019 with the ambition to bring change and create space for reflection on gender in the workplace, sexual harassment, micro-machismos (subtle acts of violence that take place in daily life and are for the most part unperceived), sexism, gender violence, inclusive language, new masculinities, and self-care among others.



Seeing the visible change in some of our female colleagues, many of these women are now truly empowered to share their issues or voice their concerns. This platform has given them the courage and tools to take a lead. We work closely with GEDI colleagues and senior managers to actually empower female colleagues to raise their voice and contribute a leading role in planning our programs."

IRC Staff from W@W Bangladesh in an interview published in October 2022 on RescueNet



Top Right: Itzel, 32, is a psychologist working with the IRC in Tenosique, a Mexican city near the border with Guatemala.



Highlights from Pillar 2

WHAT WE DO

Pillar 2 of the GEDI Action Plan focuses on ensuring that our programs maximize power and equal outcomes for diverse populations through effective collaboration with clients, partners, and staff.

After several consultations with IRC staff and in line with our commitment to embed GEDI in our program design and delivery tools, processes, and accountability mechanisms, the GEDI team created:

- **The GEDI continuum** to help teams assess the degree to which a project is GEDI responsive and identify the changes needed for the project to be more GEDI sensitive and/or transformative.
- **The Discrimination matrix** to help teams identify the most prevalent inequalities and affected groups in the contexts they work in.

The revised tools are now integrated into parts of **Project Cycle Meetings**, a series of routines across the project lifecycle in which IRC staff

and partners make critical decisions about how to best deliver the outcomes we intend for our clients.

Local Partnerships

As a part of the Strategy100 partnership ambition we recognize that our GEDI commitments require that we champion and resource leadership and action that comes from the communities in which we work. To do so, we set our global target of sharing 25% of global funding with local partners by 2024. We saw a continued increase in partnership spending over the first three quarters of FY22, although not at the rate required to stay on track toward our target of 25% by 2024. We can celebrate that our partnership spending is at the highest ever level and also recognize that this



Left: An IRC staff member speaks with a family from Afghanistan who is being resettled in the United States.

highlights the importance of us all always asking ‘why not partner?’ whenever we plan programming—particularly in proposal and budget development.

Partnership Excellence for Equality and Results System (PEERS)

PEERS provides institutional policy, guidance, process and tools for effective partnerships. This year, we commissioned a third in-depth external review of PEERS to identify ways to improve the extent to which it promotes the core institutional and partnership principle of equality in practice. The review was led by **Degan Ali**, co-managed with the **Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR)** network of Global South actors, and featured in-depth engagement with 100+ staff at all levels and 50+ partners from each region. The outcomes of the review have shaped the **new version of PEERS**.

CRRD

On the CRRD side, through their **Strategy Action Plan Implementation Plans** (SAP-IPs), close to **30% of countries** committed to integrating a review of GEDI sensitivity into existing routines.

Nine countries also started a GE/GEDI analysis over this past year. The findings and lessons learned from these analyses will inform future program and proposal development as part of our ongoing effort to advance GEDI in program design throughout all regions we work in.

RAI

This year, the RAI team focused on integrating a GEDI lens into their project cycle standards as well as into SAP guidance.



With this new model, we are able to take input from our direct service staff, from the clients we work with and all the local leadership to decide on the approaches we are going to take as a region.”

RAI Leader talking about the SAP process during a workshop in summer 2022

Additionally, in August 2022, the RAI San Diego Office released the first formal Gender Analysis that the RAI Department has conducted since 2018. The findings and lessons learned will be useful for all offices working with Dari-speaking clients from Afghanistan. Twenty-two clients shared their unique experiences, personal stories, and opinions, which informed the report.



Highlights from Pillar 3

WHAT WE SAY AND HOW WE ENGAGE

Pillar 3 of the GEDI Action Plan focuses on creating inclusive and equitable internal and external communications that reflect the resilience and lived experiences of the people with whom we work.

Brand training

This training focuses on ensuring our messaging and imagery uphold our commitment to have that all of our clients represented with dignity and agency. We've focused on training our External Relations (ER) staff and creative agencies as they develop and/or deploy the vast majority of our external-facing content. We conducted over 40 training sessions in FY21 and held another **35 sessions** in FY22, reaching over **90%** of relevant ER staff and all current ER creative agencies. Training will continue for new ER hires and will expand to additional teams in FY23.

Translation unit

Translation and interpretation are key to ensuring that our staff has equal access to information and that our internal communication is inclusive and reflective of diverse languages, contexts, lived experiences, and voices. With this in mind, the IRC created a Language Services Unit in October 2022. In its first year, and in coordination with colleagues across the organization, the Language Services Unit will facilitate improvements in quality and consistency by standardizing our processes to improve how our staff experience translation and interpretation at the IRC.



Left: Tabettha is an IRC case manager at the women and girls safe space in South Sudan. She helps women and girls understand their rights.

Global Internal Communication Strategy

The Global Internal Communications (GIC) Team's new strategy will focus on supporting the GEDI Council with internal communications, helping ensure that staff worldwide can receive updates on GEDI work in an accessible format and language.

Diversity in IRC Boards

- The IRC UK Board of Trustees committed to its own Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Action Plan in 2021 by appointing D&I Board champions, including D&I as a standing item at all Board meetings, participating in annual race sensitization and unconscious bias training, and providing Trustees' D&I data, as well as setting goals and timeframes for increasing the diversity of the Board of Trustees.
- The IRC Inc. Board instated self-identified targets of 50% women, 33% as a race/ethnicity that is typically under-represented in global power structures, and 20% people who have a lived refugee experience—either personally or through an immediate family member—that shaped their identity in a way that is meaningful to them. Additionally, the Board committed to include consistent DEI updates to their meetings.

The Learning Experience Series

The Learning Experiences series, launched this year, is designed to serve as a platform for staff and teams across the IRC to share interesting projects, initiatives, partnerships, or ideas with their colleagues. For all events, we had live interpretations in to English, French, Arabic, and Spanish is provided.



Being part of the Learning Experience Series was a fantastic opportunity to reach out across the organization, share the experiences and insights of colleagues, and highlight key themes such as staff safety and duty of care."

Comment from IRC Staff about the Learning Experience Series in September

Global Editorial Calendar

The Global Editorial Calendar, launched this year, provides guidance for a clear and equitable approach for what, when, and how we communicate holidays, commemorations, and cultural moments internally as an organization.



Thank you so much. I have never been a part of an institution or place that has published my religious holy days, as such."

Comment from IRC Staff about the Global Editorial Calendar

Inclusive Advocacy Products

Through tools such as the **IRC P&A Panel Policy** or the **Guidelines for Global Advocacy Engagement with IRC Women's Protection and Empowerment Partners**, Policy and Advocacy (P&A) staff are guided to use anti-racist language when the IRC speaks on a policy issue as well as identify opportunities to uplift the voices of local or indigenous people, refugees, women, or organizations led by people who self-identify from a race/ethnicity that is typically under-represented in global power structures. The team is putting these principles to work in its **Watchlist** process this year, convening local and regional stakeholders to partner on content development from early stages.

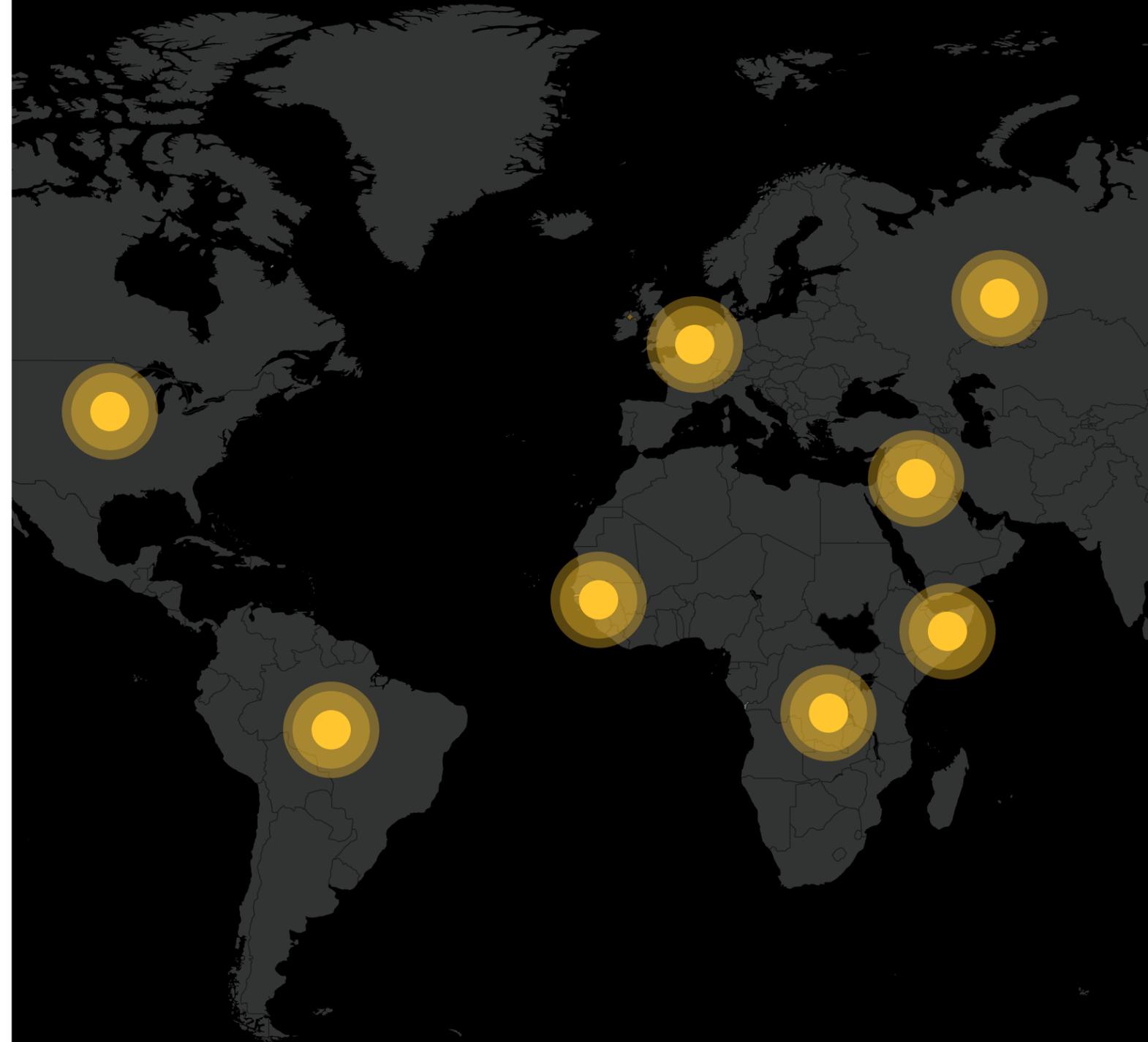
Global commitments

IRC is a signatory of the "DEI Compact: INGO Commitments toward Greater Diversity, Equity and Inclusion," an initiative from InterAction, the largest alliance of international NGOs and partners in the United States. The DEI Compact, launched in May of this year, serve as a set of shared principles and commitments, as well as a support mechanism to develop a culture across organizations in which GEDI is further championed and exhibited through actions, incentives, and accountability. Two examples of the commitments are: 1) to explore and unpack how implicit bias, white dominant cultural norms, and saviorism complex show up in recruitment, hiring, and operational practices, and 2) to prioritize mainstreaming and institutionalizing DEI principles and commitments into all

stages of programming. Learn more about our commitments [here](#).

The IRC is also a signatory of the "Pledge for Change." Spearheaded by [Degan Ali](#), chief executive of [Adeso](#), along with a number of International nonprofit organization CEOs from around the world, the pledge focuses on three key areas: equitable partnerships, authentic storytelling, and influencing wider change. Through this pledge, the IRC and other signatories are making a mutual commitment to shift towards building a stronger aid ecosystem based on the principles of solidarity, humility, self-determination, and equality and to hold each other accountable for progress. Learn more about our commitments [here](#).

Highlights from Our Regions





Asia

An IRC staff member in Afghanistan trains volunteers on screening for malnutrition in their communities.



East Africa

A Women @ Work group in Kakuma camps in Kenya during the chief GEDI officer's visit in June.

POWER @ IRC MALAYSIA

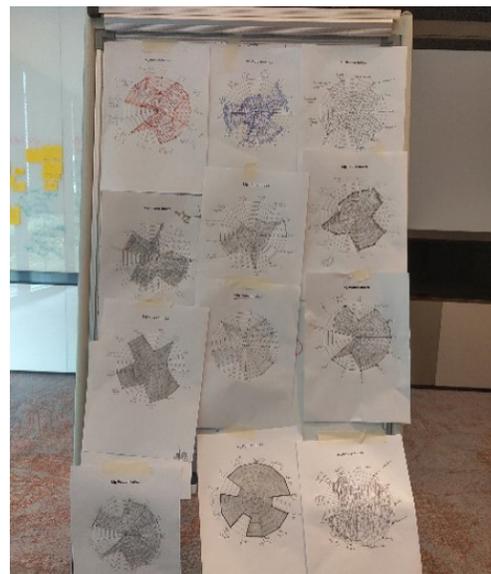
In May 2022, the Resettlement Support Center staff in Malaysia explored power dynamics and systemic inequalities during a one-day workshop. They looked at prevalent forms of discrimination and openly discussed – for the first time – tough topics such as the legally codified racial hierarchy, looking at their own positions of power in multiple contexts.

GEDI WORKSHOPS SERIES IN PAKISTAN AND MYANMAR

The Pakistan and Myanmar offices, under the leadership of their GEDI staff, have organized a series of online GEDI Workshop series. GEDI Champions, Women at Work (W@W) Leads, HR partners, and Field Coordinators explored issues ranging from unlearning and gender to power and systemic inequalities.

NEW SENIOR GEDI COORDINATOR IN BANGLADESH

IRC Bangladesh created a Senior GEDI Coordinator role who reports directly to the Country Director and is a member of the Senior Management Team. Through investing in a GEDI-specific position, the country is putting GEDI at the core of its priorities.



Top: A photo of a diagram to initiate reflection on power that was created during the Power Workshop at IRC Malaysia. Bottom: Shahnaz Rahman is a senior GEDI coordinator in Bangladesh.

BRINGING GEDI INFRASTRUCTURE TO LIFE

Last year, East Africa invested in a policy, facility, and safety and security review using a gender and disability lens. The initiative conducted assessments of 139 facilities across the region and held Focus Group Discussions with 507 members of W@W groups. As a result, two countries amended their breastfeeding policies, two their transport policies, and one their family leave policy. Several countries made infrastructure upgrades: five countries improved women's bathrooms, five made disability-related changes, and five established or equipped breastfeeding rooms. In September 2022, the Global Real Estate and Workplace Solutions (GREWS) team extended funding to teams in South Sudan and Kenya to address facility needs emerging from the assessment. The construction project will generate important learning for how the IRC can more effectively operationalize GEDI minimum standards for facilities.



This program has changed my life. My supervisors are very happy for me.... I see the future is bright."

— IRC Staff in South Sudan talking about the mentorship program

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IN SOUTH SUDAN

The South Sudan team launched a female mentorship pilot earlier this year. Mentees were identified at various levels of the organization and in different departments and offices across the country. Mentees were paired

with mentors from South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Using a toolkit developed specifically for the program, participants received training which covered gender-specific challenges within the workplace. The end results were significant, with some mentees being promoted to managerial positions. There was also a 36% increase in mentees' belief that they had a career path within the IRC and that women had similar professional opportunities to men. The majority of mentees self-reported that their confidence, organizational savvy, and leadership abilities had improved.

GEDI-DEDICATED POSITIONS THROUGHOUT THE REGION

The East Africa region now has 11 GEDI/Safeguarding dedicated positions. All country-based positions have been initiated by the countries and are fully embedded in the countries' teams. This important investment shows a real commitment to GEDI issues from the leaders of the region and is a model for the rest of the organization.



Latin America

Araceley, 50, fled from Honduras to Mexico when her life was threatened by a local armed group. Here she stands with an IRC staffer.

Latin American Country programs are divided into three sections:

- 1) Mexico;
- 2) Venezuela Crisis Response (VCR), made up of Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and Ecuador;
- 3) Northern Central America (NCA), made up by Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

LAUNCH OF GEDI PODCASTS

The Latin America GEDI Regional Working Group developed podcasts in Spanish exploring GEDI topics from a Latin American perspective. The 28 podcasts, each lasting 5-8 minutes, discuss a specific topic and invite staff to reflect and learn more about topics such as the Whitening of Latin America, Afro-descendant populations, and structural racism as well as colonization and systems of oppression.

GEDI TRAINING FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY TEAM

A group of Safety and Security staff from NCA, Mexico, and the VCR team came together for a Regional Training of Trainers for Security and Protection from a GEDI cross-cutting approach where staff shared contexts, strategies, and tactics regarding safety, gender, inclusion, and diversity in Latin America.

VCR PRIDE

VCR Pride is an initiative led by a volunteer committee that manages all GEDI activities including creating informative reports, providing Pride lanyards, and collecting GEDI

data through surveys. The group also started “Diversity Conversations” where they invited people from the LGBTQIA+ community to talk about their experiences.



Top: Part of the Venezuela Crisis Response team pose with their Pride lanyards while in Ecuador. Bottom: Security focal points from Latin America in the ToT for Safety and Security held in Colombia.



Great Lakes

DEI day celebration in Central African Republic.

ESTABLISHING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF GEDI

Numerous spaces for collaboration, learning, and engagement on advancing regional GEDI priorities were created in the region throughout the year, including a regional GEDI workshop in Kenya, in which more than 40 IRC staff participated. Additionally, a convening of regional GEDI and W@W country focal points, Senior Management Team, and regional staff were organized in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Tanzania, and Burundi, reaching over 100 staff members. During this gathering, IRC staff gained a deeper understanding of GEDI-specific topics including power, patriarchy, gender equality, belonging, and decolonization.



Members of the Great Lakes team at the Cross-Regional Intersectional Conference led by Asia and East Africa.

GEDI RESOURCING, TEAMBUILDING, AND RECOGNITION

The region hired its first GEDI and Safeguarding Coordinator in the region, who lead both priorities in the Central African Republic (CAR), Paradis Goana. On September 30, the GEDI and W@W committees held “GEDI” and “DEI” days for staff in CAR and Burundi to build team dynamics and to reflect on how to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive country teams. The Great Lakes region continues to advocate and build its GEDI-designated human resources at the country level to ensure success of country GEDI priorities.

INVESTING IN A DIVERSE FUTURE: OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG FEMALE GRADUATES IN DRC

IRC in DRC launched a project where the IRC gives young, female graduates professional training opportunities to be involved in IRC activities while nurturing their talents with aims to build on their professional careers. Fourteen partner universities and institutions in the four provinces covered by the SAP were identified: North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika and Ituri, and Kinshasa.

Middle East & North Africa (MENA)

Dr. Waood Afara is a health projects officer in Aden, Yemen.



West Africa

Fatima Wakilantu is an IRC Nutrition Officer in Borno, Nigeria.



GEDI COUNTRY PROGRAMS DEEP DIVE

In 2022, the team focused primarily on organizational culture in Iraq, Syria, and Jordan. We worked on refining the understanding of GEDI-related issues and key priorities based on each country-specific context and strengthening country program strategies to advance the GEDI action plan.

CREATION OF GEDI VIDEOS IN ARABIC

Five videos in Arabic introducing basic GEDI concepts like intersectional feminism, privilege, unconscious bias, and power dynamics were created and disseminated across the MENA region.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MENA GEDI WORKING GROUP

A working group has been created by the regional leadership team to guide, direct, and share cross-country and regional lessons on GEDI. The working group serves as the main forum to drive action as well as track and monitor progress against the regional and global GEDI Action Plan. The group also contributes to and informs the Regional Vice President and Regional GEDI Director on decision-making for GEDI-related issues.



Above Left: Colleagues in Amman, Jordan, participate in a GEDI Deep Dive Workshop. Above Right: Representatives from the Women@Work group in Iraq meet with the MENA GEDI Regional Director.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ON GEDI TOPICS

In 2022, the team focused on transforming organizational culture through a better understanding of basic GEDI concepts. To do so, in addition to face-to-face and e-learning trainings, a series of dialogues were created to discuss bias, microaggressions, and cultural backgrounds. More than 90 staff participated in these various initiatives.

STRENGTHENING FEMALE LEADERSHIP

Mentorships and several trainings on how to write a resume, answer interview questions, and feel more confident in public speaking were held to increase the presence of female national staff in senior leadership positions.



We witness that women are afraid to apply for higher positions because they are afraid to speak in public in meetings or colleagues. For this reason, we organized training to give them tips on how to be more confident.”

— GEDI focal point and W@W lead during the W@W workshop in Mali – August 2022

GENDER AND INCLUSION ANALYSIS

Gender and inclusion analyses were conducted or are ongoing in Mali, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso in order to identify barriers, priorities, and specific needs for various groups to better inform programming. Several recommendations came out from the analyses such as the need to strengthen community awareness on gender-based violence or the importance of offering alternative education pathways for children who are living with disabilities or out of school.

GEDI COUNTRY-LEVEL ACTIONS PLANS AND ARCHITECTURE

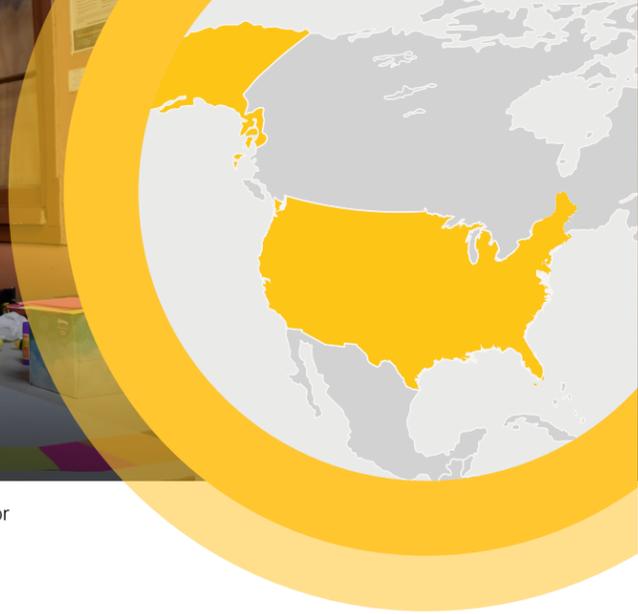
All nine countries in the region have developed GEDI action plans with concrete action steps to accelerate the implementation of the SAP GEDI ambitions. In addition, each country brought together resources from different functional teams and ERGs/W@W to support the implementation of the country-level GEDI action plans.



A group of GEDI Champions in Nigeria.

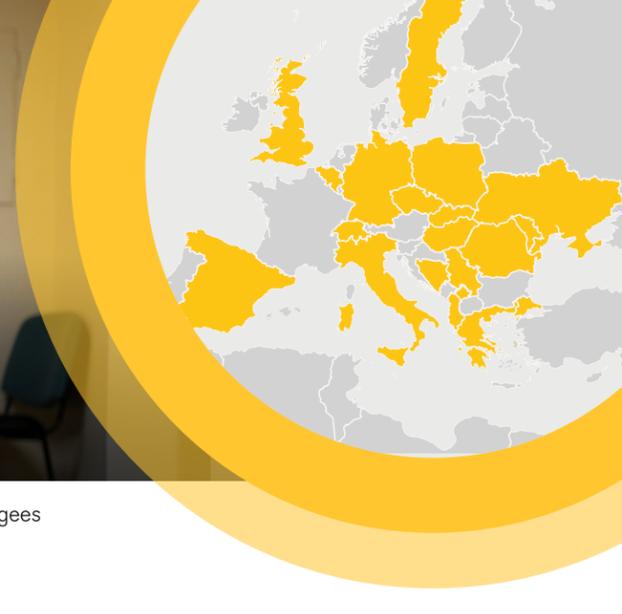
United States

At a government processing center, a woman associated with the IRC lays out a map for responding to the Afghan evacuations.



Europe

A group of women who work at the IRC's registration center in Poland, which serves refugees from Ukraine.



NEWLY FORMED RAI GEDI TEAM

RAI has recruited six positions for the newly formed RAI GEDI team: a RAI GEDI Director, an Inclusive Communities Officer, three RAI Regional GEDI Program Officers for the East, West, and South of the United States, and one Program Officer for Europe.

ANNUAL RESETTLEMENT CONFERENCES

In June 2022, the RAI GEDI team participated in the Annual Resettlement Conferences across three regions—including NYHQ, Seattle, and Phoenix—to foster stronger regional relationships and increase inter-office information exchange regarding GEDI. Panel discussions created an engaging space to develop better understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities for each region around implementation of the RAI GEDI Workplan.

BRINGING GEDI LEADERS TOGETHER

In May 2022, the Chief GEDI Officer met with RAI leadership and staff in several RAI offices in the United States. Through these exchanges, she gathered information regarding contextual needs for RAI and devised tactics to move the GEDI agenda forward in the RAI context. The visit also facilitated direct engagement with ERGs and GEDI champions, staff that are deeply committed to encouraging organizational culture change.



Top: Members of GEDI staff visit Horseneck Farm in Washington State where the Seattle office provides space for clients to grow fruits and vegetables. Bottom: "Intro to RAI GEDI" workshop in the Tallahassee office in Aug 2022

LAUNCH OF THE IRC UK GEDI STRATEGY

IRC UK's HQ component and RAI Europe launched the **FY22-24 GEDI strategy** that sets out focus areas within the framework of the global GEDI vision. It details **75 new actions** that keep race and ethnicity centered while strengthening commitments to people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ staff and clients, and people with lived experience.

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

RAI and HQ teams from IRC Deutschland (DE) commissioned an expert assessment of the accessibility of IRC offices in Berlin and Bonn and the central digital infrastructure. The final report contains concrete recommendations that will help increase accessibility and inclusion in the virtual office, to be rolled out in FY23.

TRAINING PILOT: "UNCONSCIOUS BIAS FOR LINE MANAGEMENT"

Line managers from IRC DE and other teams in Europe participated in a RAI-led pilot training on unconscious bias. The two-day workshop aimed to sensitize line managers and provide them with helpful feedback to take more inclusive leadership approaches. The pilot will be evaluated for a broader roll-out in FY23.



Left: The first graduates of the IRC's new UK program RISE (Refugee Integration in Southeast England) who've completed the IRC's cultural orientation course.



An IRC staff member talks to a woman in Kabul, Afghanistan, to see if her family meets the criteria for cash assistance.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

In 2022, we faced several challenges that forced us to take a step back and reevaluate our needs.

We didn't have access to complete and robust information that would allow us to track our GEDI progress, particularly regarding Leadership Diversity Goals. We identified short-term solutions for this year, such as manual collection of data, and are now working on a global dashboard with key demographic data from all staff—updated on a monthly basis—that will allow us to gather and visualize GEDI data in a simple and user-friendly way. With more complete and precise GEDI data, we are planning to increase our focus on how race/ethnicity, gender, and other identities intersect with each other.

As cases of microaggression and bias are raised, we need to strengthen our employee relations case management from a GEDI perspective and center our efforts even more on our People Managers. It's key to ensure that all IRC leaders consistently model inclusive behavior in their daily work and are held accountable for it. To do so, we are looking at ways to include GEDI goals in all leaders' performance management, and upskill over a hundred HR staff in addressing workplace behavioral matters. Additionally, the recruitment of a GEDI learning specialist is underway. This new role will lead the design and development of our Global GEDI learning and training curriculum, with a particular focus on specific learning content for senior leaders.

Finally, this year we learned that we need to create even more spaces for staff to engage with GEDI work and learn about our progress as well as the barriers that we are facing as an organization. We heard from our staff that transparent, clear, and accessible information and regular engagement with leadership at different levels is necessary to build trust.

LOOKING AHEAD

To be truly transformative, GEDI work has to be embedded in all parts of the organization, in every part of our work, every single day. Each of the **2023 Delivery letters**, which lay out key goals, objectives, and metrics for each IRC department, now includes GEDI goals, such as specific department goals regarding leadership diversity, equitable compensation, and inclusive culture.

In 2023, we will:

- **Dive into the IRC People Survey data reports** and, using the findings, prioritize solutions for maximum impact.
- **Continue to monitor our Leadership Diversity Goals** and put in place enabling policies and practices to allow the organization to continue to make progress.
- **Develop a global GEDI learning and training curriculum** adaptable to different categories of staff and contexts.
- **Improve our support and resourcing strategy for ERGs** globally and strengthen their partnerships with the GEDI team and departmental and office leaders.
- As contextualized GEDI initiatives continue to emerge throughout the organization, we will **scale up successful models and share learning** and good practices across offices, regions, and departments.
- Continue to **strengthen our GEDI team** to ensure that IRC staff receive adequate support to implement GEDI initiatives at the office, country, and regional levels.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) helps people affected by humanitarian crises to survive, recover and rebuild their lives. We deliver lasting impact by providing health care, helping children learn, and empowering individuals and communities to become self-reliant, always with a focus on the unique needs of women and girls. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, we now work in over 40 crisis-affected countries as well as communities throughout Europe and the Americas.

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