

PROJECTS FOR CHANGE:

Thinking Outside the Box to
Improve the Lives of Refugees



Women's Refugee Commission



WOMEN'S
REFUGEE
COMMISSION

Research. Rethink. Resolve.

Since 1989, the Women's Refugee Commission has advocated vigorously for policies and programs to improve the lives of refugee and displaced women, children and young people, including those seeking asylum—bringing about lasting, measurable change.

Cover photographs: Clockwise from top left: Microsoft Unlimited Potential; Shell Improved Cook Stoves; solar cooker, Nepal; Central Rice Research Institute “no-cook rice.”

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Innovations. They make things better. They can be radical, even revolutionary changes in thinking. Products, processes, companies, organizations change because of them. They are ideas that lead to increased productivity, to positive change. We have names for the people who put the ideas successfully in practice: pioneers, trailblazers, trend-setters—innovators.

We believe that innovation and how it can improve the lives of refugees is such an important concept in our field that this year, we decided to make the theme of our Voices of Courage annual event “Innovating for Change.”

Of course, we already knew that our honorees *embody* “innovation”—there was no question about that. Amalia used her traumatic personal asylum experience to found Families of the Incarcerated—pioneering the model of providing resources to immigrants in criminal detention so that their children are not forever lost to the foster care system. Deo, who survived incredible hardship both in his native Burundi and in New York City, went on to found Village Health Works, an innovative health clinic for refugees. And Microsoft, whose Unlimited Potential and KIND projects are the definition of innovative—setting a standard among philanthropists.

Once we put out a call for innovative projects, we found that many of our Voices of Courage Luncheon guests had the innovation gene, too! We heard about a two-village project in Benin that combines solar water pumping and drip irrigation to create economical and sustainable means of irrigation, making it possible for women farmers to grow crops during the annual six-month dry season. And supplying refugees with improved cook stoves that are portable and reduce fuel use and toxic emissions are perfect for refugee camp use. The launching of a new prosthetic and long-term care rehab center at Hôpital Albert Schweitzer in Deschapelles, Haiti, means the loss of a limb doesn't necessarily mean a loss of livelihood and economic security.

You have in your hands our modest attempt to shed light on some promising innovations that are currently used in the field or *could* in the future benefit refugees and asylum-seekers. We hope you'll be inspired by these novel and courageous ways of improving the lives of some of the millions of displaced people we serve. We challenge you to create your own.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carolyn Makinson".

Carolyn Makinson
Executive Director

Amalia Guzmán Molina 2010 Women's Refugee Commission Honoree

Families of the Incarcerated

"Helping others, I found the true meaning of my incarceration."

Amalia Guzmán Molina fled from El Salvador with her immediate family in 1998, fearing persecution from local guerrilla forces. She arrived in the United States on a visitor's visa, and upon arrival applied for asylum. Soon after, she and her husband were detained by U.S. immigration authorities and charged with "violating immigration laws," although the charges were never made clear. Her children, aged 13, 16 and 19, lived alone while Amalia and her husband remained detained. After 16 months in detention, they were finally released and granted asylum. Tragically, her husband died from cancer not long after their release.

Amalia is now fervently involved with issues surrounding detention within Los Angeles. Soon after she gained asylum, she founded Families of the Incarcerated, which works to assist families of inmates by giving them support and resources that are typically unavailable. Most of the individuals who are incarcerated are imprisoned as a result of the U.S. government's recent trend toward criminalizing the physical movement and assimilation efforts of immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. Families with a member in prison are a hidden and isolated group. As they try to deal with quotidian





life on the outside, their fear of stigma imposes a silent sentence of their own and their needs to go unnoticed.

Families of the Incarcerated provides families with free trips to visit loved ones in jail, resources to find different types of assistance and numerous other programs. Inmates participating in the program benefit from an agenda emphasizing reconciliation, rehabilitation and reflection. Some programs include monthly masses, transportation, educational assistance through Project 4-1-1, healing services and the Parent Project for adolescents with behavioral problems.

Amalia also leads workshops and classes designed to empower and educate immigrant families about criminal and immigration law. She began the model of providing assistance and resources to immigrants in criminal detention hoping to thwart the process of immigrant children being forever lost to the foster system.

She is the author of *The Power of Love: My Experience in a U.S. Immigration Jail* and appeared along with her children in "Posada: A Night to Cross All Borders," a half-hour documentary about unaccompanied immigrant children.

Find out more at familiesoftheincarcerated.com

Deogratias Niyizonkiza

2010 Women's Refugee Commission Honoree

Village Health Works

As a medical student, Deogratias (Deo) Niyizonkiza survived a massacre at the hospital in Burundi where he worked as an intern. Today, his non-profit organization Village Health Works (VHW) has provided health care to more than 28,000 patients since opening in the community of Kigutu, two years ago.

Deo fled Burundi in 1994, arriving in New York with the help of a fellow medical student's family. He struggled to learn English and find work, eventually enrolling in Columbia University. Upon graduating, he worked with and became inspired by Dr. Paul Farmer and his organization, Partners in Health, which successfully assisted the most indigent communities in Haiti.

Galvanized, Deo founded VHW in direct response to the overwhelming need for health care in rural Burundi. VHW is a collaborative effort between the community of Kigutu and concerned persons from the United States. The core belief, informing VHW's work, is that everyone, even the most impoverished, is entitled to the highest standards of health in their pursuit of happy and productive lives.





VHW has enjoyed tremendous success in Kigutu, predominantly due to the community's deep desire for and commitment to seeing a clinic built. Many families even expressed a willingness to donate the very land on which their homes were built, often the only asset they possessed. With the entire community involved, making bricks, carrying stones (often on their heads) and enthusiastically hoeing a four-mile road in just days, the seed of an idea for a free clinic soon became a reality.

The clinic currently has one physician, four nurses, one lab technician and 60 community health workers. Clinical volunteers from the United States and around the world are also regularly present. VHW works closely with the Burundi community providing (mostly free) care with a special emphasis on obstetrics, pre-natal, maternal and infant care.

The vast majority of VHW's patients are women and children; VHW is in the process of building its own Women's Health Pavilion, the first of its kind in Burundi. The doors of the clinic are open to everyone, regardless of nationality or ability to pay. Many of VHW's patients travel for miles for days at a time. Due to a flood of returning refugees and internally displaced persons, many of VHW's patients are drawn from the refugee camps housing Congolese and Tanzanians.

Deo, a true emboldened survivor, is the subject of "Strength in What Remains," the critically acclaimed new book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Tracy Kidder.

Read more at villagehealthworks.org

Microsoft 2010 Women's Refugee Commission Honoree

Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)

KIND serves children who face the U.S. immigration system alone. Founded in late 2008 by the Microsoft Corporation and actress and humanitarian Angelina Jolie, KIND works to ensure that unaccompanied children in the United States are treated fairly and that their rights are respected.

Each year, approximately 8,000 children come to the United States without a parent or legal guardian and are placed into U.S. custody. Many of these children come to seek safe haven from severe abuse, abandonment or persecution; others are victims of trafficking, or come to be reunited with their parents. More than half of these children go through immigration proceedings without a lawyer.

Without counsel, most children cannot understand the complex procedures that they face and the options open to them. Too often, children with viable claims for U.S. protection are unable to present them and are sent back to uncertain and often perilous fates.

KIND strives to find pro bono representation for all unaccompanied children in the seven cities where it works. KIND has partnered with more than 50 law firms and corporations that have agreed to help these children. The organization provides comprehensive training and mentoring to volunteer lawyers throughout their cases; no immigration experience is necessary to work with KIND.

KIND has field offices in Baltimore, Boston, Houston, Los Angeles, Newark, New York City and Washington, D.C. During its first year of operations, KIND worked with nearly 1,000 children and trained more than 1,000 lawyers.

Learn more at www.supportkind.org



Microsoft Unlimited Potential

Microsoft began with a mission to put a computer on every desk and in every home everywhere. Through Microsoft Unlimited Potential, the company has expanded that vision by weaving together new business models, technology solutions and research to help enable social and economic opportunity.



Microsoft Unlimited Potential comes to life

through partnerships. For example, Microsoft and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) collaborate to apply creative technology solutions in support of refugee protection, assistance programs and educational opportunities. The Community Technology Access program brings computers and internet access to camps, which UNHCR plans to implement globally, helping refugees in 19 countries.

In Indonesia, the Health and Humanitarian Foundation—Yayasan Mitra Kesehatan dan Kemanusiaan and Yayasan Sirih Besar—partner on the prevention of trafficking of women and girls for labor and sexual exploitation, providing IT skills training programs and employment opportunities. Technology Service Corps at NPower New York provides technology services, training and internships for youth interested in IT. In Poland, Foundation for Rural Development created ICT Education—Your Chance for Employment to enhance prospects for those living in less prosperous regions, and to provide technology education for women and the unemployed. The National Women's Shelter Net in Japan focuses on activities that promote the empowerment of women impacted by domestic violence to provide IT skills training and support.

Since the Unlimited Potential Community Technology Skills Program began in 2003, Microsoft has provided more than \$350 million in cash and software grants to more than 1,000 community partners. These donations have supported more than 40,000 technology centers in more than 100 countries.

With thousands of partners around the world, Microsoft is committed to creating sustainable technology solutions that make a lasting difference in people's lives.

Read more at microsoft.com/citizenship

J.P.Morgan

Stronger Together

J.P. Morgan recently announced a three-year, \$3 million grant for Grameen Foundation's Bankers without Borders® initiative. This unique program, for which J.P. Morgan was an inaugural sponsor, taps senior working professionals for short-term projects supporting microfinance institutions (MFIs) and technology-for-development initiatives.



Equally important, J.P. Morgan extends its human capital in support of microfinance and entrepreneurship. Over the last year, 40 J.P. Morgan employees have supported high priority needs of MFIs in developing nations within areas such as portfolio risk management, human capital development, social performance management and information technology innovations.

Bankers without Borders assignments included piloting a point of sale terminal system for an MFI in Ghana to increase lending through more efficient, electronic processing; creating and conducting risk management training for an MFI in Tunisia; and recommending the most cost-effective way to remove currency risk from a loan portfolio in Indonesia.

"Bankers without Borders helps people create self-sustaining businesses so they can break the generational cycle of poverty," says Kim Davis, president of the JPMorgan Chase Foundation. "We are proud to help empower millions more poor people so they can improve their lives and those of their families and communities."



J.P. Morgan salutes the Women's Refugee Commission in its work to protect and promote women and families around the globe.

ExxonMobil

Women | Tools | Technology: Building Opportunities & Economic Power

Committed to helping identify and deploy technologies for women worldwide, ExxonMobil in partnership with Ashoka's Changemakers and the International Center for Research on Women, is dedicated to discovering new technologies that foster women's economic growth, regardless of where they live, in an urban, village or refugee setting.

Through a groundbreaking online challenge, Women | Tools | Technology: Building Opportunities & Economic Power, the partners hope to create a marketplace for ideas, collaboration and funding to help find and nurture the most promising innovations designed to advance women's economic opportunities. It is hoped that the ideas and solutions generated through this challenge will spark profound transformation in the way women in developing countries live and work daily.



Many entrants have already registered projects displaying great promise for women living in refugee camps. One project, developed by the Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF), is an innovative example in Benin, West Africa, where SELF pioneered the combination of solar water pumping and drip irrigation to create the Solar Market Garden (SMG). This two-village project demonstrates a reliable, economical and sustainable means of irrigation, enabling women farmers to grow crops during the annual six-month dry season for significant improvements in family income and nutrition. Women participating in the SMG pi-

lot have reported that they spend up to 50 percent less time working on their current plots than they had hand-watering their previous plots, which were 10-30 times smaller. Additionally, they spend the gardening time engaged in more income generating activities—including seed replication for sale to other farmers— than simply hauling water as before. Women also receive training on how to install and repair the solar technology.

As programs like SELF's Solar Market Garden demonstrate, technology's promise is greatest for those who stand to use it to transform their lives. For women worldwide, technology has the potential to initiate a chain reaction that results in their economic advancement and, in turn, raises their standard of living, strengthens their families and communities, and contributes significantly to global progress. ExxonMobil is proud to be a part of this exciting future.

Shell Foundation

Improved Cook Stoves

One of the most pressing burdens facing women in refugee camps worldwide continues to be the collection of firewood. Reaching the ever-diminishing wood sources often demands a several-hour walk each way, with women carrying heavy loads on their heads. The physical toll and time spent on this task is harsh in itself, but is hardly the only hazard. While away from the camp, women and children collecting fuel-wood lack security and are extremely vulnerable to physical and sexual assault.

Supplying refugees with Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) reduces this burden, while significantly curtailing fuel use. ICS also dramatically abate the smoke and toxic fumes from cooking fires, which kill hundreds of thousands of women and children annually. In September 2007, Shell Foundation partnered with U.S.-based non-profit Envirofit International to develop a sustainable, global ICS business. While the focus remains on determining best practices for mass producing ICS for the three billion people who still cook on open and traditional stoves, the partnership is currently in the early stages of developing a low-cost, portable stove suitable for refugee camps.

“The stoves we produce today are portable and significantly reduce fuel use and toxic emissions—so they could be used in refugee camps, especially long-term camps,” says Nathan Lorenz, Envirofit’s Vice President—Engineering. “But we want to come up with one that is lighter, so if people are forced to move they can easily carry it with them, and cheaper so they can be deployed at scale.”



ENVIROFIT INTERNATIONAL - (Left) Schematic and rendering of Envirofit BUILT-IN COOKSTOVE prototype, (Right) Preliminary rendering of Envirofit LOW-COST COOKSTOVE prototype

Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP

Using Legal Muscle to Protect Unaccompanied Migrant Children

Thousands of children migrate to the United States each year. Many of them come fleeing war, violence, abuse or natural disaster; others come to reunite with family members already here, or to seek better lives for themselves. They undertake difficult journeys, often across numerous international borders, often alone. Unaccompanied children are some of the most vulnerable migrants who cross our borders, and are in need of special protections appropriate for their situation. Yet they face additional hurdles upon arrival. They are placed in custody while their immigration cases proceed through the courts, and they must undergo adversarial immigration proceedings, often without the help of a lawyer or guardian.

The Women's Refugee Commission joined forces with the law firm Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP to undertake a study of conditions for children held in immigration detention. The goal was to see if conditions had improved since 2003, when custody of unaccompanied alien children was transferred from the former Immigration and Naturalization Service to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).



Dozens of lawyers, along with Women's Refugee Commission staff, visited 30 programs run by the Division of Unaccompanied Children's Services (under the auspices of ORR), three facilities where Immigration and Customs Enforcement detains children and three Border Patrol stations. In addition, they interviewed staff, attorneys, advocates, social workers and more than 200 children.

They found that while conditions had improved since 2003, there were still situations in which children suffered unnecessarily. The Women's Refugee Commission and Orrick issued a report with many recommendations to improve the system, and conducted advocacy with the US administration.

Read more at womensrefugeecommission.org/reports

Hôpital Albert Schweitzer, Haiti

In Haiti, the loss of a limb quickly translates into a loss of livelihood and economic security. Combating this eventuality, Hôpital Albert Schweitzer (HAS) in Deschapelles, Haiti, recently launched a new prosthetic and long-term care rehabilitation center in partnership with the Haitian Amputee Coalition (haitian-amputee-coalition.org). The Haitian Amputee Coalition Prosthetic and Rehabilitation Center comprises U.S. prosthetic experts (from Hanger Orthopedic Group and Physicians for Peace) and Haitian medical professionals, many of whom graduated from HAS's Rehabilitation Technician Training Program (RTTP) as trained physical and occupational therapists. The access to appropriate prosthetics, which the center affords, allows patients to regain substantial mobility and independence, critical for re-entering the workforce.

HAS, located 90 miles north of Port-au-Prince, withstood the devastating January 12th earthquake and began treating survivors within hours of the tragedy. Through the creation of this center, HAS, one of the few surgical specialty hospitals in Haiti, is now one of eight planned centers for provisions of artificial limbs. In addition, a commission has been established to create a national policy for the clinical management of amputees, with HAS's Shaun Cleaver, Director of the RTTP, holding one of nine membership seats.

A formidable demand for a prosthetic and rehabilitation center existed even prior to the earthquake, due to diabetes-related amputations. During the first two weeks following the earthquake HAS treated more than 1,000 victims, frequently seen as examples of crush-related injuries requiring major surgical procedures and sadly resulting in amputations. Since that time, HAS receives many referred patients for revisions of emergency procedures from such field amputations.

This innovation was submitted by Women's Refugee Commission Commissioner Beth Daniels.

Read more at www.hashaiti.org



TD Bank

Urban College of Boston Financial Literacy Program

The Urban College of Boston (UCB) was established to provide a link to higher education and economic opportunity to those urban residents traditionally underserved by higher education. The institution, fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, has more than 700 students per semester enrolled in its programs, which include several two-year Associate of Arts degrees (early childhood education, human service administration, general studies) as well as nine certificate programs and continuing education courses. In addition to academic instruction, UCB provides advising and tutorial support. The majority of UCB attendants are non-traditional students with an average age of 35. More than 90 percent of UCB students work full time (78 percent have annual incomes below \$32,000; 28 percent below \$10,000), 75 percent are first generation college attendees and 93 percent are women (63 percent with children).



Module topics include personal finance management, home ownership, insurance and liability issues, home-based business entrepreneurship, bookkeeping, marketing fundamentals and accounting.

Additionally, a UCB initiative started in 2006, the Child Care Economic Opportunity (CCEO) Micro-Enterprise Model, aims to enable low-income, Spanish-speaking women with limited access to affordable housing or childcare to start and expand their own family day care businesses.

The project received a \$600,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at the time of its launch. The CCEO project incorporates four major elements: a community outreach process, a college-level certificate program, a package of technology-assisted business development services and housing access referral services. Funded by a \$50,000 grant by TD Bank, the CCEO initiative began offering a comprehensive financial literacy curriculum taught by TD Bank Employees. Program results and benefits are expected to include a certificate in early childhood education, a clear understanding of personal and small business financial issues, and the ability to establish and grow a viable small business.

Women's Refugee Commission

Building Livelihoods

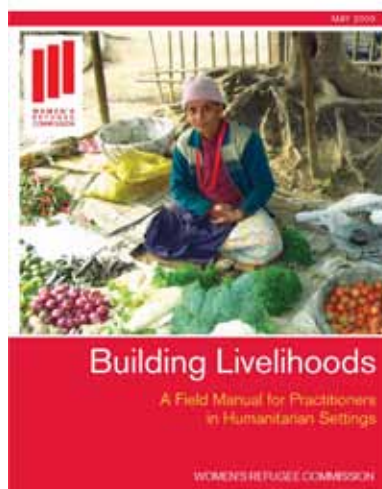
When people are forced to leave their homes because of conflict and become refugees or internally displaced, they also leave behind the means by which they earned a living and supported their families. Many displaced people are forced to resort to harmful behaviors to survive, such as prostitution and trading sex for food. If they work in unregulated jobs, they are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, and have no recourse to local law enforcement.

Based on field research in 10 countries, pilot projects to test innovative practices and interviews with experts, the Women's Refugee Commission produced and is now promoting use of *Building Livelihoods: A Field Manual for Practitioners in Humanitarian Settings*. This is the first-ever comprehensive "how-to" manual on livelihoods programming for use by staff working in refugee situations.

The manual covers livelihood programs in camp-based and urban displacement settings, as well as in communities of origin to which refugees return when conflict ends. It lays out the steps necessary for effective program design. Several chapters detail specific interventions, such as cash-for-work, vocational training and apprenticeships, microfinance and enterprise development. The manual provides tools and approaches for conducting participatory needs assessments, market assessments and monitoring and evaluation, among others.

The manual is now being used widely in displaced situations around the world, and the Women's Refugee Commission has conducted a series of regional and national training workshops for practitioners.

Read more at womensrefugeecommission.org/reports



Women's Refugee Commission and International Rescue Committee

Rice Mills Help Farmers and Traders Get Ahead

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Women's Refugee Commission have joined forces to help farmers and traders in Lira district, northern Uganda, increase profits from rice harvesting by up to 50 percent.

The two organizations have introduced improved seeds and helped to construct two rice mills in Aloi sub-county, allowing the local community to process the raw crop into milled rice that is cheaper to transport and fetches a better price at market.

Previously, farmers had to travel long distances to use rice mills in Lira town; they had to wait as long as five days to process their crops, and had to pay sizeable fees. Their only alternative was to sell unmilled rice to traders in their own communities at a far lower price—so low that sometimes they earned no profit.

The local traders didn't fare much better. They bought the produce of local farmers, transported heavy bags of unmilled rice over 20 miles to Lira town to be processed, and then sold the produce in the market. They also had to wait for days and pay considerable fees.

Denis Adoko is one such trader. Today, he runs one of the two new rice mills in Aloi. "I really appreciate the IRC for supporting me to set up this rice mill as my personal business," says Adoko. "I bought the land and paid for the building of the warehouse where the rice mill sits, and pay the salaries for all the laborers at the mill. The IRC paid for the rice mill and installation. The machine is helping us a lot — we are able to collect and process more rice, and earn more money that way."

As peace has returned and the many displaced moved back home to their villages after 20 years of civil war, initiatives like the rice mills are proving invaluable in helping communities to regain their independence.



Women’s Refugee Commission

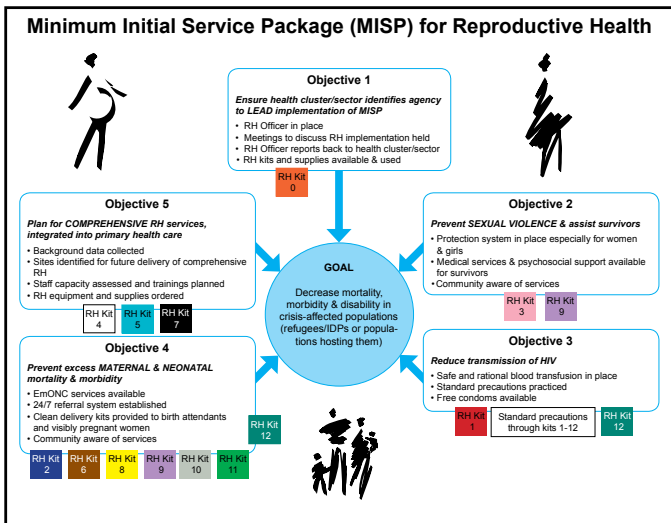
Online Module to Get Certified in Priority Reproductive Health Services

Women and girls have critical reproductive health needs that must be addressed during an emergency situation. The serious consequences of neglecting reproductive health during emergencies include: preventable maternal and infant deaths; unwanted pregnancies and subsequent unsafe abortions; and the spread of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

The Women’s Refugee Commission works to ensure that these vital needs are recognized and addressed in an emergency by promoting basic standards for reproductive health care. It plays a vital role in promulgating implementation of the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Reproductive Health. The components of the MISP are designed to: prevent and respond to sexual violence; prevent maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity; reduce HIV transmission; and plan for comprehensive RH services in a coordinated manner. When implemented at the onset of a crisis, the MISP saves lives and prevents illness, especially among women and girls.

The Women’s Refugee Commission developed an innovative MISP distance learning module to help humanitarian workers learn how to implement all activities of the MISP. The module, which can be downloaded as a PDF document or read online, teaches about the components of the MISP, and each chapter concludes with a quiz to test knowledge acquired. If the post-test quiz is completed online, the practitioner is issued a MISP certificate.

Learn more at misp.rhrc.org



Central Rice Research Institute (CRRI)

Aghunibora: “No-cook Rice”

Researchers at the Central Rice Research Institute (CRRI) in India have developed a unique hybrid rice crop that requires only soaking, rather than cooking, prior to consumption.

Rice is a staple part of most people’s diets in developing nations, but cooking equipment—even the most basic, such as firewood or gas burners—is typically expensive and inaccessible for many. Often, women face multiple safety risks when collecting firewood to cook rice.

The new rice crop, Aghunibora, is a non-genetically modified cross between komal saul, a soft rice grown in Northern India, and a traditional soft rice variety. In lieu of being cooked, Aghunibora is edible after being soaked in lukewarm water for just 15 minutes, or in room-temperature water for around an hour. The new rice saves cooking expenses, fuel and time, while mitigating carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere via cooking fuel. Additionally, using the rice has the potential to reduce women’s exposure to physical and sexual violence, as it reduces their need to collect firewood.

The CRRI rice initiative is still quite new and appears to be limited to India at the present time. Some pending questions include: the cost of the rice; the feasibility to order it in large supply for refugee camps and how the program can be expanded to initiatives outside of India.



Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR)

Legal Orientation and Pro Bono Program

Since 2003, the U.S. Justice Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has carried out the Legal Orientation Program (LOP) in partnership with NGO legal service providers to improve judicial efficiency and assist all parties in detained removal proceedings—detained aliens, the immigration court, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the detention facility.

Immigrants in removal proceedings are not entitled to publicly funded legal assistance, and thus, over 80 percent of those who are detained appear before the Immigration Courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals without legal counsel. Legal representation has an enormous effect on the likelihood of a successful claim. Asylum claims represented by an attorney are eight times more likely to be granted than those that are not. Representation also reduces procedural errors and enables immigration judges and the Board of Immigration Appeals to provide a more effective and timely case review.



The LOP program began as Know Your Rights presentations under the auspices of Matt Wilch and Christopher Nugent at the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project. Attorneys or accredited representatives from the Florence Project arranged to give periodic presentations to immigrants in detention to explain their rights and various potential options for immigration relief. The Know Your Rights presentations were well received by the local court and detention facilities, which found that information and representation of immigration detainees made everyone's job easier. Other nongovernmental organizations replicated the model at other detention facilities, and eventually the Executive Office for Immigration review started a formal pilot program supporting the NGOs. The LOP program was praised by the U.S. Senate via a resolution appropriating funding to expand the program to 30 additional states. The LOP program allows nonprofit organizations to provide immigrants with group orientations; individual orientations and discussions; referral/self-help programs with access to pro bono counsel; basic legal training and group workshops, where appropriate.

The pro bono project has secured counsel for more than 450 immigrants who would otherwise have failed to receive representation.

Read more at justice.gov/eoir/probono/states.htm

Taller de Vida (“Life Workshop”), Colombia

Taller de Vida uses an integrated set of psychosocial interventions to reach out to people who have been displaced by violence in Colombia. Uprooted herself by Colombia’s ongoing internal conflict, Haidy Durque Cuesta developed a methodology for leading the displaced through a recounting and analysis of their experience.

Her organization, Taller de Vida (Life Workshop), is working in Bogotá and four other regions of the country with a particular focus on displaced Afro-Colombian populations that face not only the trauma and loss of livelihood as a result of displacement, but racial discrimination as well.

Staff members conduct training through multiple-day workshops covering various psychosocial components (working with life stories, identity, gender consciousness, racial issues, mental health, etc.). Additionally, Taller de Vida has added handicraft workshops, focused on income generation, producing marketable goods, such as greeting cards with poetry, jewelry, and candles. Cuesta is currently working with a Colombian MBA student at Wharton Business School to solidify her business strategy, to reach more markets and increase the profitability of Taller de Vida’s operations.

Cuesta is also working on systematizing her methodology in order to produce an organizational workbook with the aim of facilitating the spread of Taller de Vida’s work throughout Colombia.

For more, go to: [ashoka.org/node/3470](https://www.ashoka.org/node/3470)

Afghan Institute of Learning

Sakena Yacoobi founded the Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL) in 1995 while working with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Afghan refugee camps situated across the border in Pakistan. As women in the camps requested educational opportunities for themselves and their children, AIL established learning centers and began to offer workshops on democracy and human rights, which it carefully termed “Islamic rights” (after the fall of the Taliban, AIL continued its work in Afghanistan). The program’s success led the Afghan government to apply Sakena’s interactive methodology to educational institutions throughout the country. AIL is one of the largest citizen sector organizations in Afghanistan, and presently serves an estimated 350,000 people annually with education, health and training programs.

Although traditional Afghan village social structures, gender roles and religious beliefs often actively discourage the education of women and girls, Yacoobi harnesses these very institutions to establish interactive programs in education, health, human rights, peace initiatives, environmental awareness, democracy and income generation. At the core of her methodology, AIL uses innovative teaching methods based on critical thinking and interactive learning.



Since 1996, AIL has supported more than 200 schools and educational centers, including 80 “underground” home schools for girls under the Taliban. AIL was also the first organization to open women’s learning centers and offer fast-track literacy and skills training classes with human rights, peace, health and democracy messages integrated into the curriculum. To support its education and health efforts, AIL publishes an education and health magazine quarterly.

During her time with the IRC, Yacoobi realized that Afghans themselves needed to become involved in their educational process, so she established a grassroots program within the IRC. This program trained female teacher trainers, with the dual goal of improving education overall and of increasing girls’ and women’s access to an education. She managed a staff of 680, and oversaw programs serving 17,000 refugees in the areas of primary education, health education, pre-school education, English language training and computer and office training.

Read more at ashoka.org/node/3916

New Technologies Working Group (of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crisis Situations)

Innovations in Reproductive Health

Following the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development, the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Reproductive Health in Refugee Settings was formed with the purpose of promoting access to quality reproductive health care for refugee women and others affected by armed conflict. The IAWG was originally made up of more than 30 organizations, including UN agencies, universities and governmental and nongovernmental organizations. It was led by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). Currently, IAWG has more than 130 member organizations. Although substantial progress has been achieved since 1994, gaps in the provision of reproductive health in emergency settings still exist.

The Women's Refugee Commission, PATH and the International Medical Corp recognized that some of these gaps could be addressed through technology solutions. The New Technologies for Crisis Settings Working Group (New Technologies Working Group) was established to foster dialogue among experts in the fields of reproductive health, emergency health response and technology development. This introduction heightened expectancy for increased access to appropriate new and underutilized reproductive health technologies in crisis settings.

The Women's Refugee Commission and PATH co-hosted a consultation on new and emerging reproductive health technologies in Seattle in 2008. The meeting fostered dialogue among 32 experts representing 16 agencies involved in the fields of reproductive health, emergency health response and technology development.



The easy-to-use, injection-ready format of Uniject ensures an accurate dose of oxytocin, which is used during childbirth to prevent and treat postpartum hemorrhage, in a non-reusable, sterile device with minimal preparation and minimum waste.



The calibrated blood collection drape takes the guesswork out of estimating how much blood has been lost, helping to diagnose postpartum hemorrhage as early as possible. As a result, help can be sought sooner to save women's lives.

Participants narrowed the list of priorities to the following four activities:

- Develop job aids to improve the correct use of technologies that are either already in kits or that are newly introduced. Job aids will reinforce correct behavior after health providers complete their professional training.
- Develop a community-based approach to health care for survivors of sexual assault. Sexual assault creates the need for a range of technologies and interventions including emergency contraception, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and access to safe abortion. In certain settings, survivors cannot reach clinic-based care so a community-based system might serve as an alternative means of care for survivors.
- Advance access to postpartum hemorrhage technologies (e.g., non-pneumatic anti-shock garment (see page 24), Oxytocin in Uniject, Misoprostol (see page 22)).
- Strengthen intra-camp communications by using cell phones for information and connectivity. Relief organizations already use cell phones to report on health conditions and coordinate logistics. In developing countries cell phones are being used to promote health in underserved communities. The potential for health promotion via cell phones in crisis settings is unknown, but may be promising.

Read more at iawg.net/technologies/index.html

University of California, San Francisco

The Safe Motherhood Program and Lifewraps

The Safe Motherhood Program is a research group of the University of California, San Francisco, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences and the Bixby Centre for Global Reproductive Health. Focusing on maternal health, its LifeWrap (a body wrap to stabilize pregnancy-related bleeding) project is at the forefront of the program's research into ways to end maternal deaths.

Resembling a wet suit with a split down the middle, the non-pneumatic anti-shock garment (NASG) was originally designed by the National Aeronautics and Space Agency. When wrapped around the body, it reduces hemorrhage by applying pressure to the lower body—where blood collects during shock—to return blood to the vital organs.

A woman somewhere in the world dies every four minutes from obstetric hemorrhage, most often immediately after giving birth. The LifeWrap helps women survive delays in getting to a hospital and obtaining the necessary treatment. It can be applied by anyone after a short, simple training. To date, it has been used on more than 2,000 women.

In addition to piloting the LifeWrap, the Safe Motherhood Program conducts rigorous research, trains clinicians in low-resource settings, and endeavors to raise community awareness of maternal health by disseminating information and innovations globally.

Learn more at lifewraps.org





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