

A close-up photograph of a woman wearing a light pink hijab, smiling gently. She is holding a young child with dark, curly hair. The child is looking directly at the camera with a curious expression, their hand near their mouth. The background is softly blurred, showing indoor lighting and a wooden door frame.

2017 IMPACT REPORT

PERSEVERANCE IN THE
FACE OF CHALLENGE

HIAS

Welcome the stranger.
Protect the refugee.

COURAGE.
STRENGTH.
CONVICTION.

FULFILLING OUR PROMISE

Right now, the world is facing the largest refugee crisis in recorded history, with an unfathomable 65 million men, women and children—one in every 113 people worldwide—being forced to flee their homes because of conflict, violence or persecution. Tragically, the current political landscape continues to put the lives of more refugees at greater risk every single day.

HIAS, the world's oldest, and only Jewish, refugee organization has long been a leader in protecting the most vulnerable refugees so they can live in safety and with dignity.

Today, HIAS must continue to fulfill its promise to rescue, resettle and advocate for those in desperate need. Your ongoing partnership is the cornerstone of HIAS' tireless efforts to do exactly that.

You can see your true impact in the following highlights of our work in 11 countries and through our resettlement network in more than 20 U.S. locations.



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ACTIVISM TO LEGAL ACTION:

A Syrian father greets his family at JFK airport Feb. 2, 2017 after two years apart. HIAS was able to help make this reunion happen just one week after the Trump administration's first Travel Ban.



Photo by Bill Sversey/HIAS

OVER THE PAST YEAR, HIAS has fought hard to keep America a welcoming country for refugees, filing dozens of lawsuits and organizing countless protests ever since the first executive order for a refugee and Muslim ban was signed by the current administration back in January. Immediately, HIAS and the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP), with legal representation from the ACLU and the National Immigration Law Center, jumped into action to file a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of this executive order.

And while the administration continues its attempts to put a ban in place, we continue litigation to stop these efforts in their tracks. This year, in fact, HIAS became the first and only organization of its kind to file a court challenge against the administration's refugee and Muslim ban, taking our fight all the way to the Supreme Court. To this day, HIAS stands strong to oppose the Muslim and refugee bans in court as one of the plaintiffs in *Trump v. International Refugee Assistance Project*. With generous partners like you by our side, we remain committed to opposing these policies with every means at our disposal—including our mobilization efforts that span from coast to coast, urging the U.S. government to do more, not less, in response to the largest displacement crisis in human history.

Last February, for example, HIAS' Day of Jewish Action for Refugees engaged thousands in New York, Washington D.C. and nearly a dozen other major cities across the country to protest the administration's executive order slamming America's doors shut on refugees. On World Refugee Day in June, thousands more attended our march and rally calling for an end to the refugee ban. Still, we continue litigation against the ban, and our efforts to protect refugees continue on this front day in and day out. Stay updated and learn how you can take action by visiting hias.org.

CHAD: MARIAM'S STORY

Photo by Glenn Gordon/HIAS

Sudanese refugee, Mariam, escaped violent genocide and now lives in a refugee camp in Chad where HIAS is on the ground offering critical support services.



TODAY, MORE THAN 350,000 DARFURIS like Mariam (pictured above) have fled persecution and genocide in Sudan for safe haven in the over-crowded refugee camps of Chad. But poverty and brutality, particularly sexual and gender-based violence, continue to plague the camps. Many refugees have already spent a decade or more in exile and are unlikely to return to their homeland in the near future.

As the only global Jewish agency dedicated to refugee protection, HIAS is on the ground in 12 of the 13 refugee camps that exist in eastern Chad today, where we're working hard to ensure safety and dignity for all. To that end, HIAS has implemented a flagship community mobilizer program. This vital program provides protection, care and critical assistance to the most vulnerable, including women who are targeted for sexual and gender-based violence and children who have trouble coping with the violence they've witnessed. Comprised of members of the refugee population, our community mobilizer program has greatly increased HIAS' capacity to offer trauma counseling and other essential support services in the field.

Also among the many key services HIAS provides in Chad is free legal aid to help ensure that refugees understand their rights—from preserving families in refuge, and having the right to work, to obtaining medical attention and education for their children. In this way, and with your support, HIAS works to create new opportunities to help refugees build new lives, so that hope overcomes despair.

YOUR IMPACT:

- More than 130 staff members and 300 community mobilizers in the field to support refugee families
- 50,000 refugees offered various forms of assistance including food aid, trauma counseling and other vital services



KENYA: FATUMA'S STORY

WHEN FATUMA WAS NOT YET 21, she fled her homeland of Somalia. As a paraplegic, paralyzed from the waist down, she was severely ostracized, suffered terrible rejection, and constantly feared for her life.

Fatuma is among hundreds of thousands of Somali refugees who have sought safe haven in Kenya. Although Fatuma made it there safely, she was still in danger because she didn't have a strong support system and was unable to work. She often had to move from house to house when friends could no longer afford to help. But then Fatuma received life-changing support and with it newfound hope, thanks to HIAS and your generosity.

“I recently met a community outreach worker from HIAS who provided me with a tricycle,” Fatuma shares after arriving in Nairobi. “The tricycle, which I pedal with my hands, allows me to move across the city by myself, giving me more independence and making me feel more self-sufficient. I am even planning to set up a small business.”

In Kenya, HIAS has been serving particularly vulnerable refugees like Fatuma for more than 12 years. We focus on building safe environments in which refugees can stabilize, heal and rebuild their lives. This includes offering individual and group therapy that helps refugees overcome trauma and cope with life in exile, as well as providing emergency safe housing, food assistance and medical referrals.

YOUR IMPACT:

- 70+ HIAS staff members trained to assist refugees on the ground at five sites in Nairobi, Kenya's capital city
- 4,700 refugee families received vital support services such as legal protection, social assistance and vocational training



BUILDING FINANCIAL SKILLS

The first financial literacy class meets at JFS of Washtenaw County, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



Photo by Glenn Gordon/HIAS

OFTENTIMES, REFUGEES WHO RESETTLE in the U.S. arrive with few or no assets, and after the first few months of receiving financial assistance from a resettlement agency, they become responsible for paying their rent and bills with earnings from what are typically low-wage jobs.

Under such circumstances, *“it can be easy to fall behind on payments and difficult to save for those things that are essential for advancement, such as a second-hand car to get a better job, a computer to facilitate the job search, or training classes to learn a new skill,”* explains Keith Combs, program manager for economic inclusion at HIAS.

That's why, in partnership with Jewish Family Services (JFS) of Washtenaw County in Ann Arbor, Michigan, HIAS recently developed educational materials to promote financial literacy on crucial topics like budgeting, credit, financial institutions and goal setting. The curriculum teaches refugees to calculate a simple budget, use online banking, set up a savings account, and more. HIAS provides the lesson plans and materials (translated into French, Arabic, Burmese and Nepalese) for use by volunteer facilitators in the classroom.

Susan Fisher, president of JFS' board, and one of several volunteer facilitators for the financial literacy course, says the students themselves are the ones who make the program so worthwhile because *“they are working so hard to integrate themselves into this country.”*

YOUR IMPACT:

- 222 refugees (and growing) have completed financial literacy training





THE NEED CONTINUES INTO 2018

IT'S NO QUESTION, these are uncertain times, especially when considering the terrible plight of the world's most vulnerable refugees. During this period of unprecedented crisis, America has signaled it is a nation in retreat, and as a result the outlook for refugees is even more bleak. Each of our actions today will have a deep and lasting impact on the future of defenseless human beings fleeing violence, genocide and terror.

HIAS is fiercely determined to persevere in the fight for refugees, speaking out in the courts, on the streets and at the Capitol to ensure that America never again turns its back on innocent people seeking safety and freedom. HIAS needs your voice and your support now and in the months ahead to make the vital message clear that refugees belong here.

PROTECTING THE WORLD'S MOST VULNERABLE REFUGEES

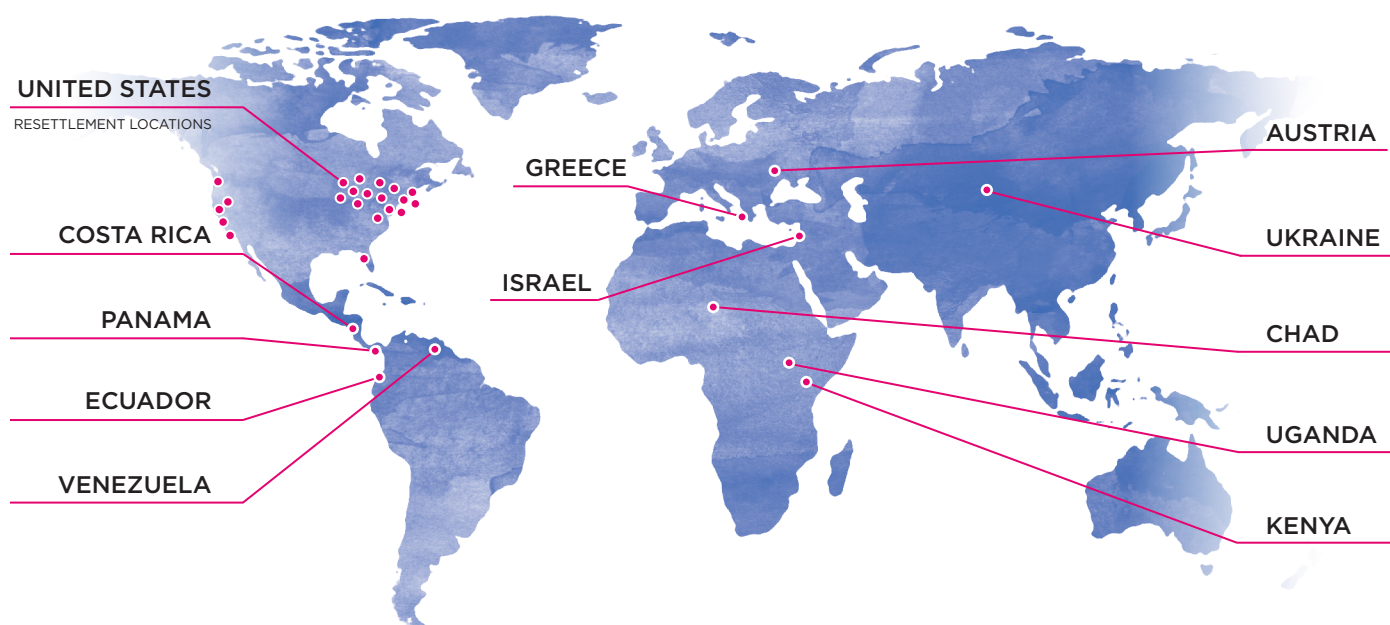


Photo by Glenn Gordon/HIAS

FAR-REACHING IMPACT:

In the last year alone, with your generous, ongoing support, HIAS offered life-changing and lifesaving support services here at home and abroad:

- Working with refugees in 11 countries around the globe
- More than 20 U.S. resettlement locations

HIAS

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Thank you for supporting this lifesaving work.

Visit www.hias.org/donate to give securely online.