



Pako^{Suomen}aisapu

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

CONTENTS



3 Operating environment

7 FRC's international activities

5 Finnish Refugee Council in 2021

9 Financial skills of refugees strengthened in Uganda

10 Vocational short courses succeeded in Myanmar

11 Building our role as an expert in Ethiopia

12 Supporting refugees around the world for three decades

13 FRC's activities in Finland

15 Strengthening communities through co-operation

17 Opportunities in change

19 Reinforcing a diverse civil society

20 Refugees of the Year

21 Strengthening our role as an expert through high-quality communication and intensive media work

23 Contributing to the rights and better integration of refugees through advocacy work

25 Building a stronger organisation by developing our practices and training our staff

Photos:
Emmanuel Museruka: Cover, pp. 4, 5, 7, 9
FRC Myanmar: p. 10
FRC Ethiopia: p. 11
FRC Malawi: p. 12
iStock.com/adamkaz: p. 13
Anne Kuokkanen: p. 15

iStock/kupicoo: p. 18
Unplash: pp. 19, 22
Julius Töyrylä: pp. 20, 24
The Finnish Refugee Council: p. 23
UNHCR/Hummansa of Amsterdam: pp. 2, 24
UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin: p. 22

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VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS IN THE MIDDLE OF CRISES AND POLITICAL TURMOIL

The year 2021 was no better than the previous ones, quite the contrary: once again, the life situations and rights of refugees, who are in a vulnerable position, deteriorated even further. According to the 2020 statistics, the number of people forced leave their homes continued to grow with as many as 82.4 million people forced to flee. Of these people, 26.4 million were refugees and 4.2 million asylum seekers. Particularly the number of internally displaced persons is once again hundreds of thousands higher than a year before, amounting up to 48 million people.

Again, nearly 70% of the people who had to flee came from only five different countries: Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar. Once again, Turkey received the largest number of people fleeing their homes, with close to 3.7 million refugees already living there. Besides Turkey, Colombia, Pakistan, Uganda and Germany were among the countries welcoming the largest number of displaced people.

The year 2021 was marked by crises and conflicts around the world that further complicated the survival of people who were already in a vulnerable position to begin with.

In February 2021, a military junta seized control in **Myanmar**, and armed conflicts and mass arrests of people seeking democracy have occurred in various parts of the country since then. The UN estimated that some 285,000 people were forced to leave their homes during the year-long coup.

In August, the whole world watched the situation in **Afghanistan** as American troops withdrew from the country and the Taliban seized power. The humanitarian crisis in the country deepened, and Afghans tried to flee to neighbouring states while other countries were evacuating their citizens to safety. According to the UNHCR, the number of new internally displaced persons in Afghanistan reached almost 700,000 in 2021.

In **Ethiopia**, the clashes between the central government and anti-government groups continued, and in November, the conflict that had originally taken place in the Tigray region spread to other states as well. The crisis has left thousands of people dead and millions having to leave their homes.

The year 2021 was also strongly marked by the hybrid warfare taking place in the borders of **Belarus**. As a response to EU sanctions against



the country, Belarus directed thousands of asylum seekers and migrants to the borders of its neighbouring countries. People who were already in a fragile position were used as political pawns and suffered lack of food, water and shelter, having to face freezing temperatures in the border regions, and many lives were lost as a result.

In 2021, an exceptionally low number of people applied for asylum in Finland: in total 2,545 applications were submitted, and of these 1,383 were new applications. Although Finland's refugee quota for 2021 was 1,050, only 891 people arrived

in the country as quota refugees. As a result of the escalated situation in Afghanistan, 236 citizens of the country received a residence permit in Finland based on particular humanitarian grounds, in addition to which 88 asylum seekers arrived in Finland on an evacuation flight. The humanitarian crisis in the Belarusian border, however, was not reflected in the number of asylum seekers in Finland: only some 40 asylum applications could be linked to the situation in Belarus. In 2021, Finland relocated 175 asylum seekers from the Mediterranean area, whom the country had decided to receive in 2020.

FINNISH REFUGEE COUNCIL IN 2021

The Finnish Refugee Council (FRC) is Finland's largest expert organisation specialising in the issues of displacement and migration. Each year, we support thousands of people in recovering from conflicts and integrating into new societies. For close to 60 years, our work has positively impacted lives in Finland, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe. We are a politically and religiously independent organisation.

MISSION

We support the realisation of refugees and migrants' rights, and their equal participation as members and builders of societies.

VISION

Refugees and migrants are equal, participating members of their societies, and their fundamental rights are realised in a positive prevailing attitude.

VALUES

Fairness
Inclusion and equality
Transparency and responsibility

In 2021, the coronavirus pandemic was still prevalent both in Finland and abroad, having a detrimental effect on the lives of people who were already in a vulnerable position. However, the Finnish Refugee Council's work continued using the coronavirus safety measures we had already found to be effective in 2020 and thanks to our highly committed personnel.

Particularly in our international work the coronavirus contingency measures combined with the internal instability of the countries in which we operate affected not only our work but also our staff. Our personnel in Myanmar in particular worked in very difficult circumstances at times, but continued our operations with great dedication. In Ethiopia, the conflict between the central government and the state of Tigray escalated, and internal displacement increased, but we continued our adult education project nonetheless.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic and the challenges posed by difficult operating environments, in terms of operational volume, 2021 was the greatest year in the history of the FRC. The volume of our operations grew by approximately 30% (MEUR 4.4 in 2020/MEUR 5.9 in 2021). The greatest factor behind our growth was the diversification of our international work and its financing base, and especially the FRC's largest single internationally funded project implemented together with the World Food Programme (WFP) in Uganda. The launch of our first actual humanitarian project also strengthened our international operations.

This was a great achievement to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our international efforts, which began in 1991 as a mental health project in Malawi. The perseverance of our work is reflected in the fact that Uganda, our largest country of operation today, has been a focal point of our international work for 25 years now.

In our domestic operations, we managed to retain our results and meet our goals, although the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic were evident, particularly in our individual counselling work. This reflects our staff's ability to transfer operations to remote implementation and their innovative ability to find alternative ways of organising operations. We successfully worked remotely and organised activities in small groups, paying attention to the coronavirus safety guidelines.

In our communication and advocacy work, we strengthened the basis of our advocacy efforts by updating our stands on integration. The spring municipal elections were visible in our "Kotikunta on kaikkien turvapaikka" (municipality of residence is an asylum for all) campaign and we also joined forces with the UNHCR to campaign for family reunification.

Our work also reflected the preparation of our new strategy period, the rising trends of

which were already taken into account in the preparation of new financing applications.

During the year, we implemented a number of administrative reforms to support our growing operations. We invested in our employees' ability to cope during the coronavirus pandemic through staff trainings, among other things. The themes of these trainings varied from recovery and resilience to topics that had emerged during our competence survey. We also worked on our supervisors' working capacity management skills. In order to support our updated operations, we implemented a pay system reform.

In 2021, we were also faced with grief when, in May, our highly esteemed and long-time chair, Marjatta Rasi, passed away following a long illness. Marjatta was a Bachelor of Laws and a Finnish diplomat who had travelled the world and come across a lot of human stories. We are left behind, remembering with gratitude and respect our chair, who was the main engine behind the reform of our organisation for six years' time.

Almost 83 million people have already been affected by the tragedy of being a refugee, reminding our team of experts of the importance of our work.

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Annu Lehtinen, Executive Director of the Finnish Refugee Council



14,676
people participated in our adult education

Civil society was supported by strengthening
7,003
individuals' leadership and social skills and by supporting activities that prevent sexual violence.

5,089
people attended training which supported employability and livelihoods

Humanitarian aid was provided to
4,186
internally displaced persons

206,590
participated in financial literacy training

Participant breakdown:
73% women
34% young people
4% persons with disabilities

FRC'S INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In 2021 the FRC's international activities were marked by both the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic and the political crises in Myanmar and Ethiopia. The travelling restrictions related to the pandemic made it difficult for us to carry out and monitor our work, but we were still able to implement most of our operations in accordance with health safety measures.

In Myanmar, schools remained closed throughout the year, so we were only able to provide vocational education in temporary facilities and for a smaller number of young people than

originally planned. In addition to the difficult coronavirus situation, the country fell into a severe political crisis after the military overthrew the elected government. Massive demonstrations and armed resistance against the army that extended over the course of the year significantly deteriorated the safety of the country. As a result of the country's unstable situation, public services, such as health care, were not functional. The situation also hindered banking services, imports and Internet connections, all of which, in addition to the poor security situation, hampered the implementation of our programme. Despite these challenges, our work to prevent gender-

based violence and help those affected by it continued in cooperation with local women's organisations.

In Ethiopia, the conflict between the central government and the state of Tigray, which had begun in 2020, continued and escalated into the surrounding areas, causing massive displacement. As a result of the conflicts, the number of internally displaced persons in the country reached 1.2 million during the year, in addition to which drought and floods forced half a million more Ethiopians to leave their homes. In addition, there are refugees from the surrounding states in the country. We continued our adult education work with refugees from South Sudan in the Gambella region in Western Ethiopia.

The situation in Uganda remained stable and, despite the occasional coronavirus restrictions,

we were able to successfully provide adult education in refugee settlements throughout the country. We continued our functional literacy, English language and entrepreneurship courses with more than 7,000 refugees and Ugandans participating. As a partner of the World Food Programme, we implemented a major financial literacy programme involving more than 200,000 refugees during the course of the year. The successful implementation of the programme raised awareness of the FRC among other operators and refugees in Uganda.

The year 2021 was the final year of the programme period. Throughout the year, we both assessed the activities of the period coming to an end and planned ahead for the new programme in accordance with the new strategy period starting in 2022.

FINANCIAL SKILLS OF REFUGEES STRENGTHENED IN UGANDA

In 2021 we achieved something completely new in Uganda: Through World Food Programme funding and as their partner, we gave some 112,000 refugee households a six-week basic course on financial skills in almost all refugee settlements in Uganda. This cooperation also significantly raised the profile and awareness of the FRC among funders, other refugee organisations and refugees. The commendably completed training generated additional funding that will allow us to continue the courses in 2022.

As usual, we continued our literacy, English language and small-scale entrepreneurship courses, although the coronavirus pandemic forced us to make some changes to their implementation. Once again, our volunteer instructors showed their dedication: during the coronavirus restrictions, they divided the students into small groups, which meant that they had to teach a lot more classes than under normal circumstances.

In total 7,010 people completed the basic level course; approximately 3,200 in literacy, 2,200 in English language and 1,600 in entrepreneurship. Of the people completing a course, 70% were women, 34% were young people, 21% were Ugandans and 6% were disabled.

The knowledge and skills taught in the courses are practical and aim to solve problems that the refugees face on a daily basis. When measuring an English course participants' ability to negotiate in buying or selling situations in English, their starting level was 8% and increased to 54% at the end of the course.

At the beginning of a literacy course, only 4% of the participants were able to write short sentences, and at the end of the course the number was 81%. Only 7% of entrepreneurship course participants knew how to handle unforeseen expenses at the beginning of the course, while at the end of the course the percentage was 60. The learning curve among the participants in the financial skills course was also significant: at the beginning of the course, 30% reported that they make a plan for their weekly or monthly budget and income, while at the end of the course, 86% said they do this.

The curriculum and the teacher's guide to support literacy training that had been under preparation for more than two years were finalised and updated to meet current needs, for example, in issues related to the environment and climate.



We gave approximately 112,000 refugee households a six-week basic course on financial skills.

VOCATIONAL SHORT COURSES SUCCEEDED IN MYANMAR

In 2021, our employees and operations in Myanmar were challenged by both the country's unstable political situation and the coronavirus pandemic. We had to make changes to some of our operations, for example, due to Internet, travel and gathering restrictions: face-to-face meetings gave way to online courses and large teaching groups were divided into small groups. As a result of conflicts, many people became internally displaced, and we changed one of our development projects to respond to the acute needs of these people. Military checkpoints also made moving between different areas of operation dangerous, in addition to which the lack of jobs made it difficult to support people's livelihoods.

Despite all these challenges, one of our greatest achievements in Myanmar was providing vocational training for internally displaced persons and their host communities in the state of Kachin. Through our activities, we were able to improve the employment opportunities of internally displaced persons and narrow the gaps between different population groups. Participants in our vocational training learnt both digital and practical skills. Smaller teaching groups also proved to be efficient: the learning outcomes of small groups were clearly better than those of large groups. As was the case with life management and business skills, we were also able to successfully transfer vocational training to online courses.

During the year, we taught 6 vocational short courses, which were completed by 163 young people. All participants learnt a lot about repairing motorcycles and gained basic IT and sewing skills. In addition to these courses, 50 young people also



took part in a life management and business skills online course. We supported 28 of the participants who had completed the course commendably by giving them scholarships that enabled them to start their own small businesses.

During the year, our activities in Myanmar covered in total 15,375 people, 77% of whom were women. Through our work, we were able to prevent sexual violence and support its victims through education, psychosocial support, hygiene kits, cooperation with authorities, and by providing them with legal assistance and housing in a shelter. In total 10,383 people, mostly women, were involved in this operation. Emergency assistance, including food, mental health support and toilets, was provided to 4,186 mothers of young children, children under the age of 2 and pregnant women. We provided in total 575 people with vocational training. In addition to all this, we supported three other organisations with thematic and project management training to the extent that was possible under the circumstances. Our operations in Myanmar were concentrated in the provinces of Kayah and Kachin.

BUILDING OUR ROLE AS AN EXPERT IN ETHIOPIA

In 2021 we launched our operations in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. During our first year of operation, in total 1,117 refugees, 93% of whom were women and 4% disabled, completed our literacy project supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. With the implementation of the project, the FRC also built its network and gained a foothold for further operations. In October, we also started another project in Gambella, which extended our operations to two new refugee camps and doubled the number of participants we had set as our target.

Through these projects, we have been building a long-term strategy in Ethiopia that focuses on the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities (disability inclusion) and the inclusion and empowerment of women. In Gambella, our organisation is recognised as one of the experts in the field of disability education, in particular, and our work to further develop this expertise continues.

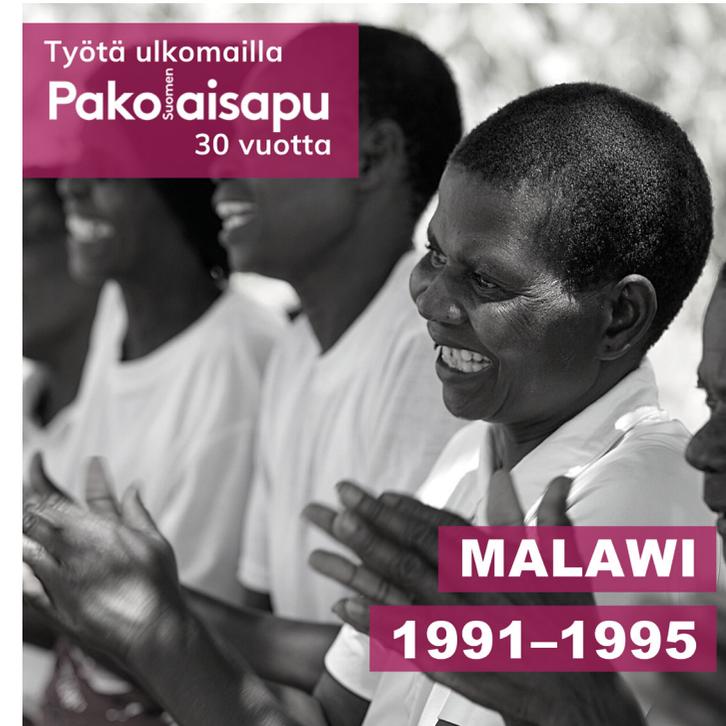
The challenging political and humanitarian situation in Ethiopia occasionally hampered our operations, but it also gave us direction to expand our operations in crisis areas in the coming years and increasingly respond to the enormous humanitarian needs that Ethiopia faces as a result of both the climate change and conflicts. Unfortunately, floods, droughts and ethnic conflicts are part of daily life in various parts of Ethiopia.

Despite the many challenges, the resources of our Ethiopian operations also grew during 2021, both structurally and in terms of the number of employees. The FRC has two offices in Ethiopia, one in Addis Ababa and another in Gambella, at the border of South Sudan. In many ways, 2021 was marked by the coronavirus pandemic and political instability, but our small but knowledgeable team of experts was able to respond to these challenges quickly and flexibly.

The resources of our Ethiopian operations grew both structurally and in terms of the number of employees.



SUPPORTING REFUGEES AROUND THE WORLD FOR THREE DECADES



The first FRC project was launched in 1991 in Malawi refugee camps and supported women and children who had fled the civil war in Mozambique.

The 30th anniversary of the FRC's International Programme was celebrated in 2021 by highlighting in our social media channels memories and achievements from all our operating countries. When we launched our first foreign development cooperation project in 1991, there were approximately 17 million refugees in the world. Now, 30 years later, there are more than 80 million of them.

Over the past few years, the FRC has had its own projects in as many as ten different operating countries: we started in Malawi and expanded

our operations to Uganda, Liberia, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina during our first years. We have also extended our efforts to Sierra Leone, Thailand, Myanmar and Turkey, as well as to Ethiopia in the year before last. Our work has focused on improving the position and equality of women, strengthening adult literacy, supporting livelihoods and building democracy, as well as promoting interaction between host communities and refugees. Our thirty-year history includes numerous successes as well as setbacks, but above all, it is full of meaningful encounters and a lot of hard work we have been passionate about.



FRC'S ACTIVITIES IN FINLAND

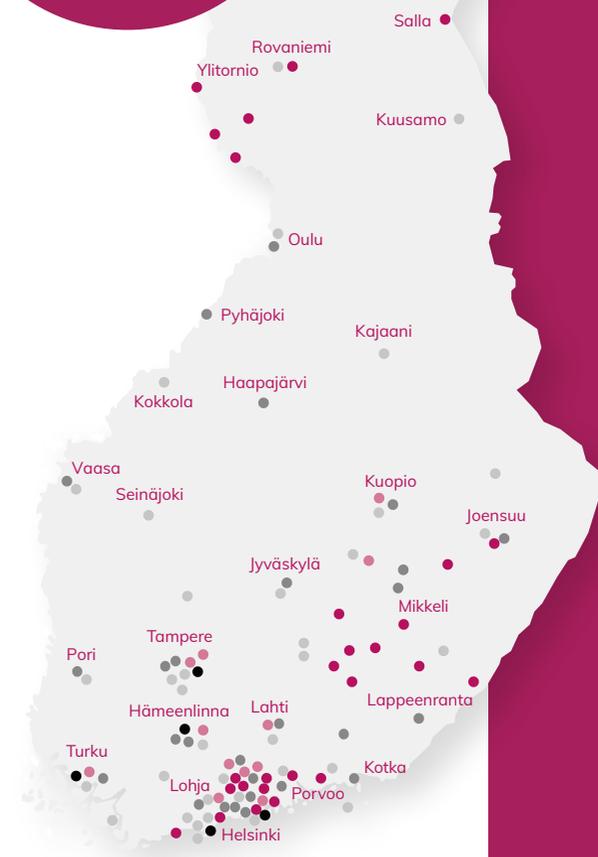
In 2021, we also continued our domestic work under exceptional circumstances due to the coronavirus pandemic. Despite having to work remotely, we achieved excellent results in many of our projects and operations: we were able to carry out several trainings online and achieved our targets in terms of participant numbers. However, remote work made individual counselling much harder as for many of the people in need of support, guidance and advice would have been much more effective in face-to-face meetings.

During the course of the year, we developed our domestic work towards a more professional direction. We were able to achieve this by reinforcing our staff's professional skills, gaining special skills to our organisation through

successful recruitment and diversifying our work community. In view of the upcoming strategy period, we focused our attention increasingly on seeking and instilling comprehensive and systematic solutions. When working on this goal, we paid more attention to closer cooperation with various operators in order to achieve maximum societal impact.

Although in 2021, we followed our old strategy, the new strategy period was already present: for example, when coming up with ideas for new projects and surveying financing possibilities, we paid attention to the guidelines of the new strategy that was being prepared at the time. In the future, we will turn our attention more on the FRC's comprehensive expertise on immigration as well as current innovative solutions.

A total of **248** associations and **638** individuals attended Järjestöhautomo's (organisation incubator) training and counselling.



FRC's activities in Finland:

- Cooperation related to peer activities
- Partner municipalities of civic orientation and municipal training
- Participants in Järjestöhautomo's (organisation incubator) activities
- Volunteer activities
- Fair Labour project activities



1,280

young immigrant adults received guidance and counselling

200

volunteers supported 326 immigrants and asylum seekers

Employability coaching was attended by

60

persons, 65% of whom found employment during the same year

50

clients and 150 professionals received information and training on labour exploitation

63

people participated in peer-supporter training

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH COOPERATION

Peer activities that support integration for two decades

Through our peer activities that support integration, immigrants gain factual information from peer supporters as well as support from people who are in similar life situations. At their best, peer activities strengthen the resources of individuals and support their integration into a new society. In 2021, our Kasvokkain (face-to-face) peer activities continued their high-

quality work by offering peer-supporter training and help for supporters, coaching and training for organisations, as well as expert speeches on organising peer activities. During the year, we reached 86 different organisations and trained 63 new peer supporters. Our peer supporter database, launched in 2020, includes already 188 qualified peer supporters in 35 different locations with expertise in 66 different languages.



As usual, we coordinated our national network of peer supporters (VeTo network), which at the end of 2021 included 97 organisations from all over Finland. The members of the network actively participated in the network and jointly planned its events.

In 2021, we also celebrated the 20th anniversary of the FRC's peer support activities. To celebrate this important work, we organised a national Vertaisuuden voima (Power of peer support) event with 75 participants from 36 different organisations. During 2021, we also developed new materials: we updated our guide for peer supporters and translated it into three different languages in addition to Finnish, published a video entitled Sensitiivinen vertaistointi (Sensitive peer support activities), and joined forces with the VeTo network to develop the initial and closing survey forms for peer groups in seven different languages. We also created a new peer supporter refresher course, which is available on the electronic learning platform in Finnish and English.

Our Kasvokkain operations were praised several times in 2021. Peer supporters' help and training were highly regarded; the support gained through the training was seen as useful for launching and organising peer support activities and during the coronavirus pandemic, our remote networking meetings between various organisations were considered particularly valuable.

During the year, we reached 86 different organisations and trained 63 new peer supporters.

Interaction at the heart of integration

During the course of the year, we developed a new social orientation concept that supports the integration of immigrants and provides them with information about the Finnish society in their own language. We organised two remote social orientation courses with 14 participants each. In addition to this, we trained 8 new social orientation trainers and offered additional training and networking meetings to our current trainers. All trainer course participants felt that the course provided them with good capabilities to act as a trainer. We now have as many as 28 trainers who are able to provide social orientation in 15 different languages.

The Navigaattori (Navigator) project, implemented in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), ended in March 2021. Already in April, we continued to support the reception of refugees in Finnish municipalities and the development of early integration services in the Navigaattori 2.0 follow-up project. During 2021, more than 500 employees from municipal basic services, public administration and the third sector as well as volunteers participated in our Pakolaisen matka kuntaan (Refugee's journey to the municipality) training courses around Finland. Of the course participants who left feedback, 96% reported that the course had added to their understanding of the kinds of information needs that a quota refugee may have after arriving in Finland and their destination municipality.

During spring 2021, we also produced evaluation reports for the social orientation course and the Pakolaisen matka kuntaan training courses, as well as the 'Supporting integration with one's own language' handbook. We distributed these materials widely to various partners.

OPPORTUNITIES IN CHANGE

Encounters in different languages and interesting trainings

In 2021, the winds of change were blowing in the FRC's Kurvi operation, as there were quite a few personnel changes. Despite the changes, we continued to successfully support and advise young immigrant adults in questions related to immigration. In 2021, we provided service-guidance counselling more than 1,280 times, and 52 of our clients received individual support. We implemented our operations mainly remotely, but the importance of face-to-face counselling was further emphasised: not all of our clients have the digital skills or technology necessary to manage their affairs online. We operate as part of Ohjaamo, a guidance centre for Helsinki residents aged 15–29 that has proven to be highly effective: meetings with clients have been organised in a health safe manner and regularly with the help of a multi-professional working group.

Currently, we offer service in more languages than we used to, which further lowers our clients' threshold of contacting us. We also improved our accessibility by renewing our website and translating it into four different languages.

In 2021, we organised 14 training courses that yielded highly positive feedback: more than 80% of participants said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the training. We also focused more on our cooperation with our stakeholders: 93% of the respondents to our stakeholder survey said that they had found Kurvi's expert information useful.

Accelerated pathway to employment

There are many challenges related to the employment of immigrants, and we attempted to respond to them with the help of the FRC's Sauma project also in 2021. In our Sauma project, we bring together employers and immigrant jobseekers, and offer jobseekers working life coaching and mentoring.

The number of jobseekers participating in our working life coaching was higher than ever: 60 jobseekers participated in our four remote training sessions. The results of the training were delightful, as all participants reported they were satisfied with the training and more than 90% said that their jobhunting motivation and skills had improved. As many as 67% of the participants were subsequently employed. At the end of the six-month follow-up period, 75% of the training participants were either working, studying or in a work trial.

At the beginning of 2021, we launched a long-term cooperation with IKEA Finland, through which 24 refugees have already been recruited to work in various operations at IKEA department stores. In the first year, the programme was extended from IKEA Espoo to the Vantaa department store. In addition to this cooperation, we also started working with new companies. We significantly increased our stakeholder cooperation to further improve the employment opportunities of our jobseekers.

More than 80% of the participants reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the training.

Towards fair labour

In May, the expertise of the FRC was further strengthened as we launched our Fair Labour project. Our goal is to prevent labour exploitation in Finland and to support victims of labour exploitation to access support services.

The project enabled the establishment of close cooperation with other organisations working to prevent labour exploitation: during our first year, we organised as many as 65 cooperation meetings. The cooperation seems to have been successful, as 90% of the respondents to our stakeholder survey reported they would recommend the project activities to their target group. In order to ensure

smooth cooperation and that we operate in accordance with our goals, we have established our own expert steering group for the project.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, we were only able to organise seven pop up events for our clients in October and November, with approximately 50 participants attending them. During the year, we also successfully trained 150 professionals to face and identify phenomena related to labour exploitation. In order to gain visibility and help us disseminate information, we set up a project website and printed brochures with information in four different languages.



DIVERSE CIVIL SOCIETY FORMS A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR GOOD POPULATION RELATIONS



Reinforcing a diverse civil society

We continued our successful work at Järjestöhautomo (organisation incubator) and added to the competence and problem-solving capacity of multicultural associations and civil society operators. Järjestöhautomo's (organisation incubator) remote consultations, coaching and trainings reached record numbers with 432 participants from 348 associations in 40 different locations. The competence level measurement and consultancy surveys conducted during the trainings indicated very good results in terms of quality and predicted effectiveness: more than 90% of the association operators reported that their competence had improved.

Furthermore, in a separate project funded by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, we intensively supported 13 small associations in developing their activities and organised six open trainings in association activities with 157 participants. During the course of the project, we consulted organisations 127 times.

New ways of getting together were established during exceptional circumstances

The aim of our volunteer activities was to strengthen the integration capabilities of immigrants and to provide opportunities to influence the prevailing attitudes. As the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus pandemic continued, we implemented most of our operations remotely and were only able to arrange face-to-face encounters to a very limited extent. This had an impact on the number of people we were able to reach and the amount of activities we provided, as well as the commitment ability of our volunteers. The extended restriction of activities that are based on getting together and the rapid changes brought along by the new coronavirus variants had an impact on the coordination of our activities, which in turn had a clear impact on how communality was experienced. Despite the challenges, more than 200 active volunteers led Puhutaan! Finnish-language discussion groups, provided support in running errands as Suomiluotsi support persons and acted as advocate volunteers. The activities reached 326 integrating immigrants.

Global education supports the understanding of global phenomena

As the coronavirus pandemic and the related restrictions continued, we organised 14 school visits mainly remotely, reaching a total of 248 students. Because of the pandemic, the focus of our activities remained on the marketing and distribution of our digital photo exhibition, teachers' materials and the materials produced for children of different ages by the UNHCR. We also participated in the development of teachers' sustainable development education as part of the Transformer 2030 project.

REFUGEES OF THE YEAR

The Finnish Refugee Council has been honouring the Refugee Woman of the Year since 1998 and the Refugee Man of the Year since 2016. Through the award, we want to highlight people with a refugee background and support them

REFUGEE WOMAN OF THE YEAR SARA AL HUSAINI

Sara Al Husaini was born on a refugee camp in Saudi Arabia and arrived in Finland as a quota refugee as a less than a four-week old baby in 1992. Her family had to flee Iraq because of her father's political views.

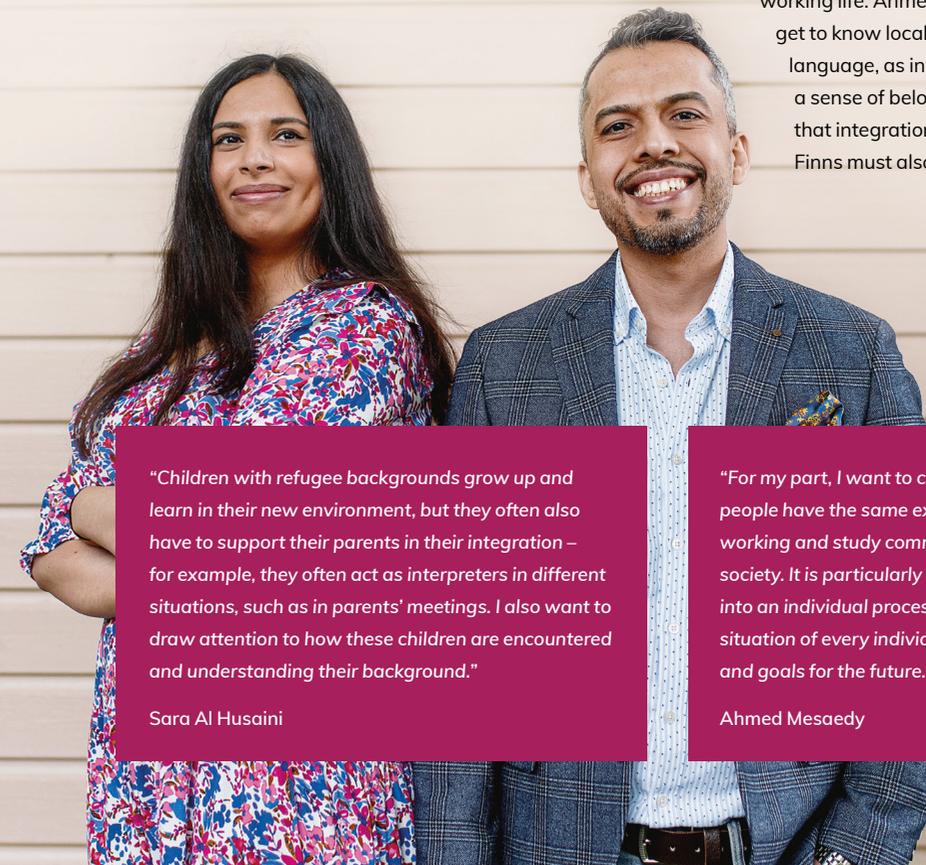
Issues that are important to Sara include the position of immigrant children and young people in society and gender equality. Sara has disassociated herself from Islam and wants to discuss equality from the point of view of a former Muslim woman. She would like to see refugees and immigrants be more involved in the debate and the decision-making process.

in realising their goals and dreams in their new home country. In 2021, our choices emphasised willingness and activity to take a stand on integration and influence the general debate on it. The 2021 refugees of the year came from the same country but told two very different stories. Both have bravely discussed their experiences and ideas for improving the integration system and building a more equal society.

REFUGEE MAN OF THE YEAR AHMED MESAEDY

Ahmed Mesaedy arrived in Finland after a long and difficult journey in 2015. Ahmed, who has rebuilt his life in Tampere and Helsinki, has a law degree from his native country, Iraq. In Finland, he graduated as a Bachelor of Social Services and dreams of continuing his legal studies in his new home country.

As the refugee man of the year, Ahmed wants to promote equality and especially the position of people with refugee and immigrant backgrounds in society. In this respect, he wants to highlight, for example, the development needs of the integration system and the shortcomings of working life. Ahmed encourages immigrants to get to know local people and learn the Finnish language, as involvement motivates and builds a sense of belonging. However, he also says that integration is a two-way process in which Finns must also participate actively and openly.



"Children with refugee backgrounds grow up and learn in their new environment, but they often also have to support their parents in their integration – for example, they often act as interpreters in different situations, such as in parents' meetings. I also want to draw attention to how these children are encountered and understanding their background."

Sara Al Husaini

"For my part, I want to contribute to ensuring that all people have the same exact opportunities both in the working and study community and as members of society. It is particularly important to develop integration into an individual process, taking into account the unique situation of every individual, such as their study history and goals for the future."

Ahmed Mesaedy

STRENGTHENING OUR ROLE AS AN EXPERT THROUGH HIGH-QUALITY COMMUNICATION AND INTENSIVE MEDIA WORK

In 2021, we continued to strengthen the expert role of the Finnish Refugee Council and to highlight the results of our operations through strong strategic communication, high-quality content and constantly developing media cooperation.

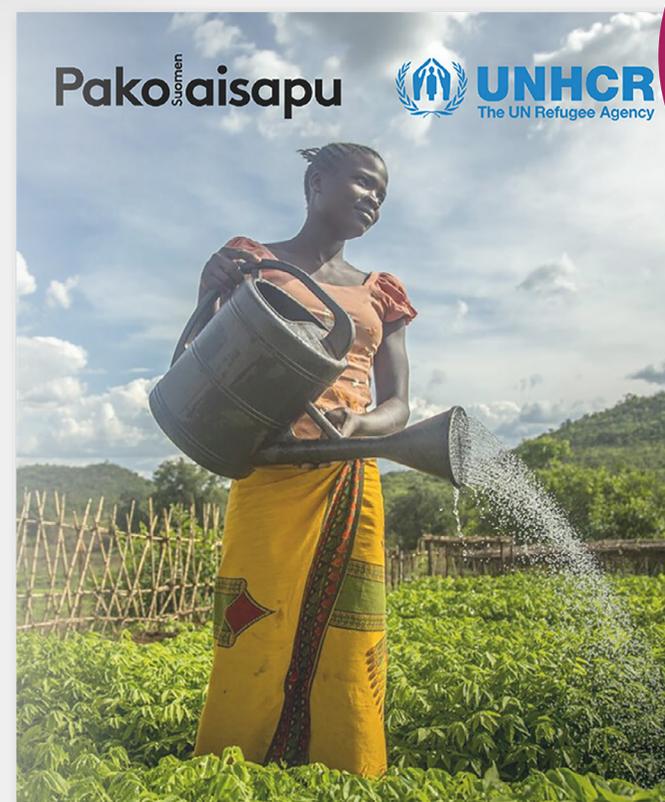
We built our media relations by organising a five-session course for journalists that provided its participants with an information package on immigration and refugees and the expertise to write about these topics. The course was carried out in cooperation with various partners, such as the UNHCR and the Finnish Refugee Advice Centre. We also cooperated with the media by actively offering them ideas for stories and different perspectives on current themes.

Our communication cooperation with various networks continued to be successful in 2021 despite the continued coronavirus pandemic: we participated in various communication campaigns and in some events. Through the 'I am antiracist' campaign coordinated by the

Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, we increased awareness of racism and ways of addressing inappropriate situations. The 'Break records, not the game' campaign of the Finnish League for Human Rights was aimed at creating a healthier and more equal world of sport. We were also involved in the '16 days of activism' campaign focusing on the prevention of violence against women both in Finland and in Myanmar by sharing and producing social media content. Our cooperation with the Finnish UN operators and the UNHCR continued, for example, at the World Village Festival and during the UN Week.

In 2021, we continued to develop our fundraising, which is vital for our organisation's operations. Towards the end of the year, we focused particularly on corporate fundraising. Our climate-related Christmas campaign paid off, and we received 10,000 euros in corporate donations.

We want to extend our sincere gratitude to all our donors for making our operations possible!



2021

we continued to develop our fundraising

We were involved in the '16 days of activism' campaign focusing on the prevention of violence against women both in Finland and in Myanmar.

Let's join in solidarity to eliminate **violence** against women

Refugee Council

CONTRIBUTING TO THE RIGHTS AND BETTER INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES THROUGH ADVOCACY WORK



In our advocacy work, we focused on improving the human rights of refugees, for example by highlighting the challenges of family reunification and the development of integration. The Finnish Refugee Council's stands on promoting integration, developed with top experts on integration matters and published in 2021, serve as a guide for our advocacy work. Good integration practices were also highlighted at the Kotogaala event aimed at professionals, where we gave the International Working Women of Finland network the Kototeko 2021 award for their ground-breaking work in promoting the employment of immigrant women.

During the municipal elections in spring 2021, we implemented our own "Kotikunta on kaikkien turvapaikka" (municipality of residence is an asylum for all) campaign on social media. In connection with the campaign, we published recommendations for future municipal decision-makers to ensure that the municipality would be safe, functional and equal for all. In the autumn, we took a clear stand and participated in active advocacy work so that Finland would assume global responsibility and help the people of Afghanistan, who have plunged into an even deeper humanitarian crisis than before.



We carried out an extensive #OikeusOllaYhdessä (right to be together) campaign together with the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR.

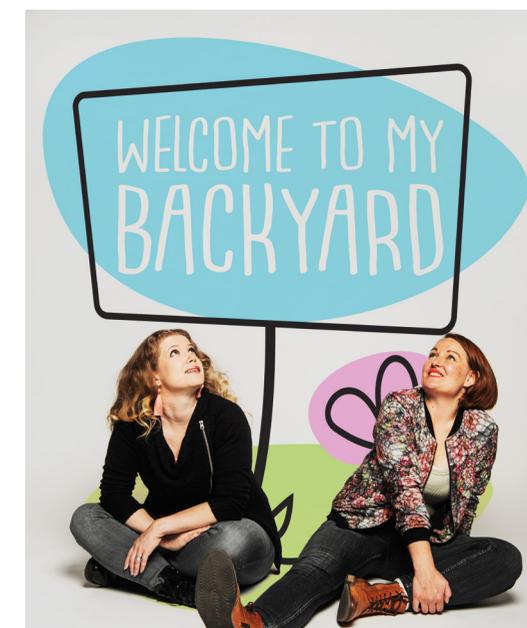
in other respects as well. Global Trends, one of the UNHCR's most significant annual reports, was published once again in June. Based on the report, we communicated the key figures related to refugees on our website, in social media and by informing the media about them.

As effective organisational influence requires cooperation, we also operated in various networks during 2021. The most significant of these is Pakolaisasioiden vaikuttamisverkosto (advocacy network for refugee matters), which is chaired by the Finnish Refugee Council. We also joined the highly esteemed ICVA network for international humanitarian operators.

Our advocacy work was at its most visible towards the end of the year, when we carried out an extensive #OikeusOllaYhdessä (right to be together) campaign together with the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR. This communicative advocacy campaign reach in total more than 4.2 million people. The aim of the campaign was to support refugees' right to family life and to raise Finns' awareness of family reunification and its numerous obstacles. Furthermore, we aimed to reach out to decision-makers and give them policy recommendations to ensure that the human rights of refugees and the best interests of children would be better realised in Finnish legislation. The campaign focused on the rights of the child and the importance of living as a family for the wellbeing and integration of immigrants.

During the year, we strongly raised the UNHCR's stands and views on the global refugee situation

In 2021, we also ventured to try something completely new when the FRC's "Welcome to My Backyard" podcast was launched in May. The podcast delved into the heart of the refugee and immigration debate in a constructive and straightforward manner with different guests in every episode. During the first year, we produced seven podcast episodes with themes ranging from racism to development cooperation and from Afghanistan to the myths of immigration.



BUILDING A STRONGER ORGANISATION BY DEVELOPING OUR PRACTICES AND TRAINING OUR STAFF

The focus of our administrative work in 2021 was on supporting controlled growth and responding to the economic and operational challenges posed by the prolonged coronavirus pandemic.

Our extended humanitarian work required the organisation to invest in the further development of risk management. Our resources and practices of internal control were reinforced with the help of our central office's human resource

investments, job description changes and the system development of our country offices. We increased the bilateral cooperation between experts in our country offices, and assessed and developed ways of cooperation. Our information management development work invested particularly in the strengthening of our centralised information management.

During 2021, we implemented a pay system reform, in which we developed compensation and

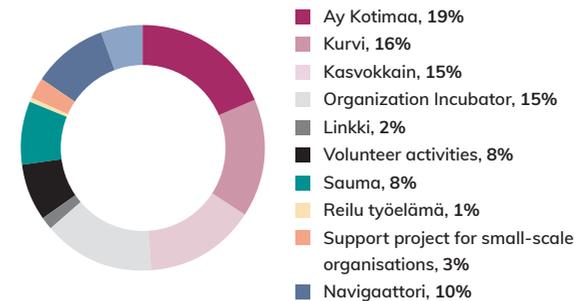
assessment practices to suit our expanded and new operations. We also updated our articles of association and the central documentation of our human resources management to respond to our current operations.

In response to the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, the training of our staff in Finland emphasised resilience, recovery and working capacity management, as well as the priorities raised in our competence survey, i.e. humanitarian work and international refugee law.

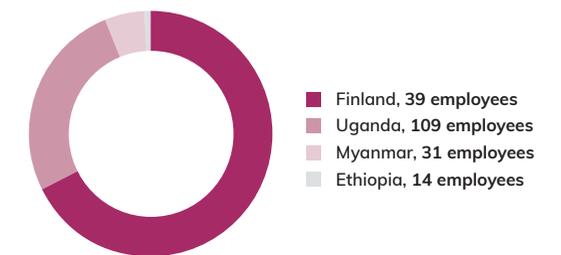
The FRC's work is carried out in all our operating countries by our diverse and skilled team of experts. The staff of our country offices have been hired locally, with the exception of country directors. Currently, 39 of our staff members work in Finland, 109 in Uganda, 31 in Myanmar and 14 in Ethiopia.

In 2021, the total funding of the Finnish Refugee Council was EUR 5,975,608.

Domestic programme work per project



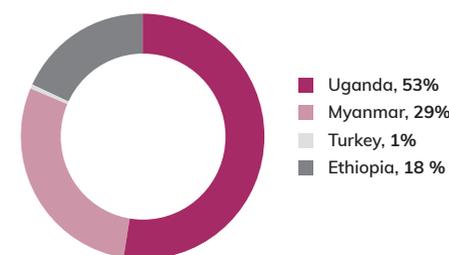
Staff per country at the end of the year



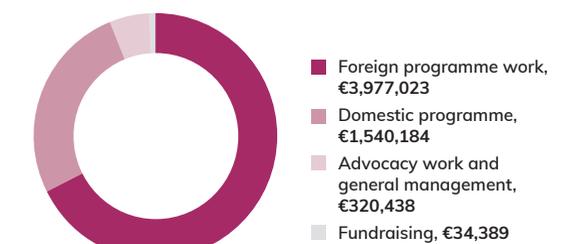
Income



Foreign programme work per project



Costs per operating area



Members of the Board:

Marjatta Rasi (Chair)
Pekka Sauri
Eija Pitkänen
Irma Ertman
Sari Koivuniemi
Egëzona Klllokoqi-Bublaku
Sofia Nevalainen
Maria Bernas-Hilli
Anne Rasskasov
Heta Räikkönen (alternate member)
Ansa Haavikko (alternate member)

Member organisations:

Svenska Kvinnoförbundet rf The Women's Organisation of the Swedish People's Party in Finland
Svensk Ungdom, Svenska folkpartiets ungdomsorganisation rf Swedish Youth of Finland
Finlands svenska Marthaförbund r.f. The Swedish Martha Association in Finland
Kokoomuksen Opiskelijaliitto Tuhatkunta ry Student Union of National Coalition Party
Suomen Nuorten Naisten Kristillisten Yhdistysten (NNKY) Liitto ry YWCA of Finland

Nuorten Kotkien Keskusliitto Unga Örnars Centralförbund NKK ry
Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestö SAK ry The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions
Sosialidemokraattiset Naiset ry Social Democratic Women of Finland
Suomen Kansanopistoyhdistys ry Business and Professional Women (BPW) Finland ry
Keskustaopiskelijat ry Centre Students Finland
Vihreiden nuorten ja opiskelijoiden liitto (Vihreät Nuoret) ry Federation of Green Youth and Students of Finland
Kansalaisopistojen liitto KoL ry The Finnish Association of Adult Education Centres

Sosiaalidemokraattiset Nuoret ry Social Democratic Youth of Finland
Vasemmistonuoret ry Left Youth
Aseistakieltäytyjäliitto ry Union of Conscientious Objectors
Kansainvälinen Solidaarisuustyö ry International Solidarity Work
DaisyLadies ry
MIELI Suomen Mielenterveys ry MIELI Mental Health Finland

In addition to the member organisations, the association had 181 individual members.

Pakolaisapu

Suomen

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