



Annual Report

2021/22



Dear Friends and Supporters,

We live in a rapidly changing world. From global pandemic to war and regime change, the pressures on communities and societies are increasing exponentially, and more people are ending up displaced globally – 100 million and growing – than perhaps at any other time in history. LGBTIQ displaced people are particularly vulnerable during these tumultuous times.

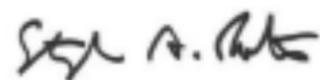
Thanks in part to ORAM's size and the nimbleness of our small but dedicated team of employees, board members and volunteers, we have been able to pivot and respond quickly to emerging global challenges impacting LGBTIQ displaced people. And we've done this while also staying true to our existing work and the communities we serve, and always keeping the needs and perspectives of queer refugees and asylum seekers at the center of our work.

This report aims to encapsulate our efforts and accomplishments – made possible by your support – in 2021 and early 2022. During this time, we advanced the economic inclusion of LGBTIQ refugees by orchestrating specialized trainings in skills ranging from pottery to poultry farming, researched and reported on living conditions for the LGBTIQ community in Guatemala and Kakuma Refugee Camp, engaged corporations to support queer displaced people, and championed the rights of LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees on a global scale. And as our fiscal year drew to a close in March 2022, we launched a major response to provide housing to displaced LGBTIQ Ukrainians across Europe.

Above all, ORAM remained focused on helping displaced queer individuals to reclaim their humanity, providing them with tools for self-sufficiency and helping to restore their hope in the power of global community. The people whom we serve are our greatest source of inspiration, and our work is focused on lifting them up while providing them with a platform to share who they are. Now, it is our pleasure to share those stories with you.

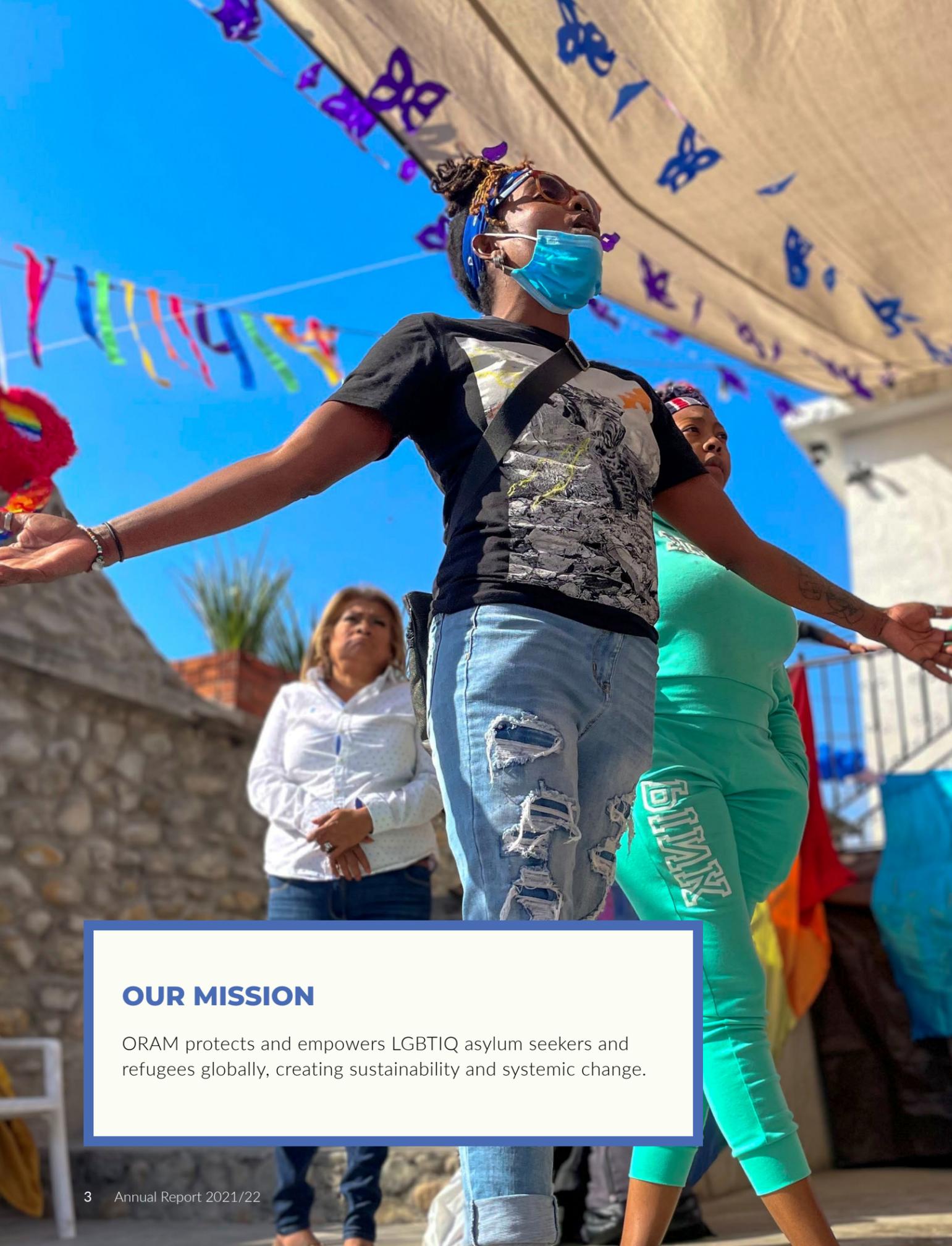
As we reflect on the last year and plan for our future growth, I want to thank you, on behalf of the entire ORAM team, for your unwavering support.

In solidarity,



Steve Roth
Executive Director





Our History

Founded in 2008, ORAM - the Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration is a pioneer in advocating for the protection and well-being of extremely vulnerable LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers globally. ORAM is recognized as one of first international NGOs to assist people fleeing persecution based on their sexual orientation and / or gender identity and expression and has since become a thought leader in LGBTIQ migration.

Over the last decade, ORAM has trained NGOs, governments and UNHCR on the unique protection needs of the severely marginalized LGBTIQ refugee population. We support LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees in navigating the long asylum process from the moment they arrive in their first country of asylum to being resettled to a safe third country. ORAM collaborates with local partners and our beneficiaries to ensure that our work is built around the people we serve.

OUR MISSION

ORAM protects and empowers LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees globally, creating sustainability and systemic change.



Our year in numbers



170

LGBTIQ refugees in Kenya received technical skills training and business training



\$870

in livelihoods seed funding, on average, provided to LGBTIQ refugee-led community-based organizations (CBOs) in Kenya



60

LGBTIQ asylum seekers in Tijuana benefited from rent support for their shelter



5

countries directly impacted by our work



237

LGBTIQ refugees who received food support



We focused on:

- Advancing economic inclusion through livelihood programs
- Promoting sustainable solutions
- Responding to global emergencies and crises
- Developing research and reports
- Championing the rights of LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees
- Building coalitions
- Engaging corporations in the protection and empowerment of LGBTIQ refugees

2021/22 in review



This report covers the period of April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022 (Fiscal Year 2022).

Economic Empowerment

After fleeing persecution, one of the most effective ways LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers can rebuild their lives with dignity is through the opportunity to become self-sustainable and financially independent – hence ORAM’s vocational trainings. In order to maximize our support for the LGBTIQ refugee community and create a safe learning environment for trainees, we hire LGBTIQ refugee-led businesses to lead trainings. We also offer business-coaching sessions to queer refugee entrepreneurs.

Multi-Talented LGBTIQ Refugees in Kakuma

In Kakuma, a refugee camp located in the Northwestern region of Kenya, ORAM provided training in business management and specialized skills – including cosmetology, poultry farm management, and marketing – to 66 individuals this year. We also granted seed funding to a majority of the folks whom we trained in poultry farming.

Community-Based Organizations in Nairobi

In Nairobi, Kenya, we provided dozens of queer asylum seekers with training in cooking and catering, tailoring, and cosmetology. Many went on to sharpen their skills by completing internships, which ORAM helped them secure. We also provided some trainees with seed funding so they could establish their own businesses.

One such trainee is a gay man from Uganda named Ronnie, who runs a catering business called Ronniez Delicacy that ORAM supports. Ronnie’s cooking skills were born out of his passion for “serving people, even if it’s for pay or not...” He hopes his story can be an inspiration to other queer refugees and asylum seekers. “We are here,” says Ronnie, and “whatever’s happened has happened.” Read our blog post, [“Catering Hope and Change in Nairobi”](#) to learn more about Ronnie’s journey of food and inspiration.



Ceramics Lessons with a 3D Printer in Tijuana

Residents of ‘El Jardin,’ a shelter for displaced queer individuals in Tijuana, attended a ceramics class that ORAM organized at a local pottery studio. The teacher, renowned architect and professor Ron Rael, demonstrated how to make ceramics using a 3D printer – the first of its kind in the region – so that trainees can eventually sell their pottery to support themselves financially. Read more [here](#).





Emergency Response

ORAM supports LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees by lending a helping hand during challenging times such as humanitarian emergencies and pandemics. This part of our work looks different each year due to the ever-changing needs that arise in times of crisis, but one thing stays the same – we always prioritize listening to the folks whom we serve because they know best how we can help.

Safe Housing for LGBTIQ Ukrainians

After Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, ORAM immediately began assisting displaced LGBTIQ Ukrainians out of our office in Berlin. We provided short-term housing to individuals and families who were forced to flee their country, and we conducted needs assessments to determine how we can continue providing support for as long as there is a need. [Our efforts](#) remain focused on creating safe spaces where queer Ukrainians can sleep comfortably, eat home-cooked meals, dress for job interviews, and reclaim their humanity.

Helping LGBTIQ Refugees Survive the Mexicali Shelter Fire

When a fire devastated a lesbian-run migrant shelter in the Mexican border city of Mexicali, ORAM was there to help. The fire displaced over 150 migrants – including LGBTIQ asylum seekers who had fled trauma and persecution in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. ORAM worked with the queer group running the shelter, Centro Comunitario de Bienestar Social (COBINA), to provide critical aid and supplies to residents to meet their basic needs.

A New Shelter for Queer Refugees in Mexico

ORAM works closely with El Jardin de las Mariposas, a shelter in Tijuana for LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers that provides legal counseling, English language education, HIV/AIDS education, and much more. Unfortunately, in the wake of covid-19 this past year, ‘El Jardin’ has at times struggled to keep their doors open and to provide accommodation to all who seek it. In response, ORAM provided El Jardin with key funding and partnered with our parent organization, Alight, to enhance spaces within the shelter and implement additional programming for the residents.

Amplifying Voices

At ORAM, we are firm believers in the importance of providing LGBTIQ refugees with a platform to share their own stories. We stand to learn from the resilience that our community demonstrates, to reflect on our shared humanity, and to spread awareness about the struggles that the LGBTIQ refugee community faces – along with their hopes and dreams. Here are just a few of the incredible individuals whom we have supported along their journeys to resettlement and self-reliance.



Meet Makeenzy!

Makeenzy, a transgender woman from El Salvador, relocated to El Jardin de las Mariposas, a shelter for LGBTIQ refugees in Tijuana, Mexico. There, she participated in various skills training programs provided by ORAM, including courses in the English language, pottery, yoga, and more. Makeenzy refers to herself as a 'book.' "I don't always want to keep writing my story," she admits, "but even after a period, the story doesn't end – a new story comes." While Makeenzy lived in El Jardin, ORAM's pottery program motivated her to keep writing her story.



Meet Obote!

Obote, a bisexual father and the co-founder of Rainbow Family Support and Advocacy- Africa (RaFaSa), fled from Uganda to Nairobi, Kenya with his wife and three children. Once in Nairobi, Obote and his family were evicted from several apartments. But instead of giving up, Obote worked to bring his vision – of a queer refugee-led community-based organization (CBO) that aids families within the LGBTIQ community – to life.

This year, ORAM trained members of RaFaSa in poultry farming and provided Obote's CBO with seed funding to start a farm of their own. Farming has become increasingly important to Obote and his peers. "Even if it was just to sweep and clean the poultry sheds, I saw people really looking forward to working," Obote recalls. Read more about Obote in our blog post, ["One Queer Father's Fight for Survival."](#)

"I don't always want to keep writing my story, but even after a period, the story doesn't end – a new story comes."

- Makeenzy



Advocacy

ORAM is dedicated to spreading awareness around the challenges that LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees face and bringing about systemic change. We are determined to help increase public knowledge around LGBTIQ migration and to champion the issues that are important to our community, because all human beings deserve to live where they can feel safe in their own skin – displaced queer people included.

One of the most effective ways in which we can advocate on behalf of LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees is by developing cutting edge research, reports, and other technical documents to help more people understand the plight of queer refugees as well as bringing people together to address these issues.

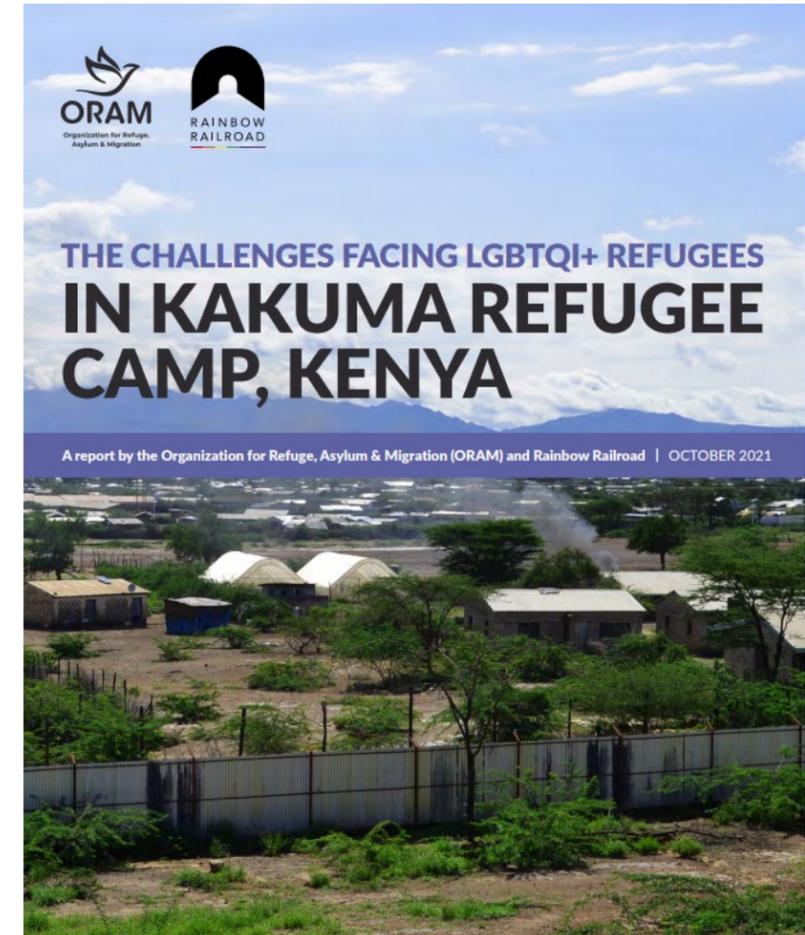
Human Rights Conference in Copenhagen

In August of 2021, ORAM served as an Executive Partner at the Copenhagen 2021 Human Rights Forum, an event that drew over 500 LGBTIQ activists. We led three panels that convened human rights organizations to discuss LGBTIQ refugees' lived experiences and challenges, as well as strategies for global support. ORAM staff spoke about providing queer displaced folks with pathways to safety and economic empowerment.

Conditions for the LGBTIQ Community in Guatemala

Together with the University of Minnesota, ORAM co-authored a Country-of-Origin Information (COI) [report](#) entitled, "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression in Guatemala." The report provides a comprehensive overview of the legal,

social, political, and religious conditions for the LGBTIQ community in Guatemala – and we expect it to be an invaluable tool for asylum-seeker advocates helping Guatemalan LGBTIQ persons fleeing persecution.



A Report on the Living Conditions for LGBTIQ Refugees in Kakuma

After months of field research, we released an in-depth report, "The Challenges Facing LGBTIQ+ Refugees in Kenya," with our partners at Rainbow Railroad. The report provides information on LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees living in Kakuma Refugee Camp in northern Kenya – who they are, their experiences, the services they receive, the challenges they face, and the opportunities they envision for their futures. We included ten recommendations for civil society organizations, governments, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to improve the safety of the camp for its LGBTIQ residents and to better ensure that they are safely resettled. You can read the report [here](#).

Corporate Engagement

Throughout its first dozen years of existence, ORAM did very little engaging with corporations. But that changed over the last two years. ORAM's staff and board members' concerted efforts to tap into the corporate world are now paying off. This year has been a watershed for ORAM in terms of engaging corporations in support of LGBTIQ refugees, with myriad opportunities to develop longer-term partnerships with major companies.



Mentorships for LGBTIQ Refugees

This year, ORAM partnered with Salesforce to provide mentoring workshops focusing on business skills and personal development for LGBTIQ refugees. The workshops covered topics such as project management, storytelling, presentation skills, marketing, and more. We received an outpouring of gratitude from the Nairobi-based community that took part in the workshops.

Adapting our Guide for Corporate Mentorship

Last year, we teamed up with Tent Partnership for Refugees and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) to author a guidebook that educates companies on how to establish and implement professional mentorship programs for LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers. We continued partnering with Tent this year to adapt the guide for both Germany and the U.K. The mentorships that we advocate for can be incredibly beneficial in helping LGBTIQ refugees to find work and advance their careers, and to integrate in their new communities. It is our hope that our new guidebooks will open the door for companies across Germany and the U.K. to give back. Read the U.K. adaptation [here](#).

Growing Partnerships

At a remote Pride kickoff event in March hosted by Global LGBTQIA+ Employees and Allies at Microsoft (GLEAM), ORAM Executive Director Steve Roth informed Microsoft employees about our work and our recent response to the crisis in Ukraine. The event raised significant funds and set the stage for a partnership that is continuing to grow – GLEAM's California Co-Lead Anton Sarkisov even volunteered with ORAM staff at an LGBTIQ refugee shelter that we serve in Tijuana.

We would like to extend a special thank you to our new corporate partners. Sponsors are vital to promoting ORAM's message and emphasizing the importance of those we serve. We are grateful for your investment in our future. The generosity of your support has allowed us to further our reach and make a greater difference in the lives of LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees globally.



2021/22 Financials

April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022

Consolidated Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets

REVENUES AND SUPPORT	AS OF MARCH 31, 2021	AS OF MARCH 31, 2022
Contributions	\$150,760	\$259,818
Grants	241,179	370,000
Other revenue	27,354	12,775
Total revenue	\$419,293	\$642,593
EXPENSES	AS OF MARCH 31, 2021	AS OF MARCH 31, 2022
International programs	\$218,850	\$328,590
General and administrative	178,990	147,565
Fundraising	74,941	55,660
Total expenses	\$472,781	\$531,815
OTHER	AS OF MARCH 31, 2021	AS OF MARCH 31, 2022
Foreign currency translation loss	(\$3,359)	(\$2,207)
Changes in net assets	(56,847)	108,571
Net assets at beginning of year	8,240	(48,607)
Net assets at end of year	(\$48,607)	\$59,964

Consolidated Statement of ORAM's Financial Position as of March 31, 2022

Assets (all in \$)

CURRENT ASSETS	AS OF MARCH 31, 2021	AS OF MARCH 31, 2022
Cash and cash equivalents	\$7,711	\$143,162
Accounts receivable	354	354
Prepaid expenses	605	1,265
Total assets	\$8,670	\$144,781

Liabilities and Net Assets (all in \$)

CURRENT LIABILITIES	AS OF MARCH 31, 2021	AS OF MARCH 31, 2022
Accounts payable	\$40,951	\$64,866
Accrued salaries and payroll taxes	16,326	19,951
Total assets	\$57,277	\$84,817

NET ASSETS	AS OF MARCH 31, 2021	AS OF MARCH 31, 2022
Without donor restrictions	(\$48,607)	(\$20,176)
With donor restrictions	-	80,140
Total net assets	(\$48,607)	\$59,964
Total liabilities and net assets	\$8,670	\$144,781

Thank you

To our partners and allies

Thank you to all the organizations with whom we partnered this year for helping us to uplift our community of queer refugees and asylum seekers. We are especially grateful to Alight, our parent organization, for their steadfast support and partnership.

- Alight
- Brand G Vacations
- Casa Refugiados
- El Jardin de las Mariposas
- Rainbow Railroad
- Safe Place International
- SPEAK

To our supporters and funders

Our work is made possible by our generous family of supporters – organizations, foundations, corporations, and individuals who believe in our mission and have a passion for helping the community that we serve. All donations, no matter their caliber or type, help us make the world a better place for LGBTIQ refugees.

- Aaron Espinoza-Dinsdale and Fredy Espinoza-Dinsdale
- Alex Orfinger Fund
- Archstone Foundation
- Ari Bilici
- Brand g Vacations
- Center for Disaster Philanthropy Global Recovery Fund
- Community.co
- Dotdash Meredith
- Eagles Wings Foundation
- Emily Rosenberg and Darlene DeManincor
- Equality Without Borders
- Etsy Impact Fund
- Fishman Wright Family Foundation
- Fred Elledge
- Illumine Service Foundation, Inc.
- Jody Cole
- John Feather
- Ken Janssens
- Krishna Omkar
- Lesbian Equity Fund, LLC
- Mark & Charlie's Fund for Moral Values
- Matthew Siegal Goodworx Foundation Inc.
- Matthew Staman & Marin Quezada Fund
- Mel Heifetz
- Microsoft Corporation
- Mo Bidair
- Monette-Horwitz Trust
- Naomi Sobel
- Novartis
- Owens Corning Sales
- Piscean Butterfly LLC
- Rainbow Railroad
- Rajiv Desai
- Resnick Fund
- Rhino Labs, Inc.
- Robert McDonald
- Salesforce
- Selisse Berry
- Steve Dumas
- Steve Roth
- Steven Walker
- The Progressive Jewish Fund
- The Voelbel Family Fund
- Thomas & Jessica Rothman Fund
- Thomas J. Hake Endowment Fund
- Vedder Price
- Visa
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- Witkin Family Fund



Our Staff

Steve Roth Executive Director

Anja Limon Senior Program Manager

Winfred Wangari Livelihoods Officer – Kenya

Katie Miller Communications and Development Coordinator

Alexandra Rodríguez Mexico Program Officer

Our Board

Rajiv Desai Chair

Selisse Berry Vice Chair

Jody Cole Secretary

Perry Witkin Treasurer

Krishna Omkar Member

Ari Bilici Member

Elodie Sampere Member

Arjun Nagarkatti Member

Our Volunteers

Aindriu O Murchu Intern

Alex Bourgeau Tech Support

Andrew Eldridge Intern

Catherine Wallace Intern

Dima Shapoval Volunteer/Translator

Luena Abigail Pimenta Ricardo Intern

Natida Nivasnanda Intern

Roberto Chavez Intern

Join us today

Donate

Give online at <https://www.oramrefugee.org/donate>

or by mail to: ORAM 1325 Quincy St NE Ste A1, Minneapolis, MN, 55413

EIN: 26-3748676

Join the discussion

Join ORAM's community at our website or on our social media to receive important updates about our work and ways to help us advocate for refugees and displaced people.

You can find us @ORAMRefugee.

Fundraise

Start your own fundraising campaign and ask your friends and family to join you in amplifying LGBTIQ asylum seekers' voices. You can start your own fundraiser on [Facebook](#).