



The IRC in Tanzania: Child and Youth Protection and Development Program Overview

Globally, the IRC has developed niche expertise in child protection work through the design and use of unique models to address traditional humanitarian program areas such as alternative care, work with unaccompanied and separated children, mental health and psychosocial support, family strengthening and case management. Unique to the IRC is the presence of a [research lab](#) within the organization, which helps to ensure our work is grounded in evidence and can be replicable in multiple contexts.

In Tanzania, the IRC has been providing child and youth protection and development (CYPD) services to refugees since it began operations in the country in 1993. As part of the IRC's Great Lakes region – also comprising Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR) – the IRC in Tanzania continues to focus on regional displacement and its impact to leverage cross-border opportunities to contribute to child protection. Since we

CYPD Program Areas:

- ✓ Parenting skills to support positive parenting
- ✓ Social and Emotional Learning
- ✓ Safe Healing and Learning Spaces
- ✓ Community education, awareness and engagement to enhance child protection
- ✓ Youth skills development, life skills, financial literacy and economic empowerment
- ✓ Adolescent sexual and reproductive health

began working in Tanzania, we have worked with over 10,000 boys and girls, including as part of our ongoing response to the 2015 Burundian refugee response, to create a safe environment for children and build their resilience.

Key Program Areas

Positive Parenting: The IRC's *Families Make the Difference* program is an evidence-based approach that focuses on preventing and decreasing violence against children in the home and improving positive developmental outcomes for children in development contexts and conflict settings. We developed and successfully tested our [parenting interventions curriculum](#) in Tanzania in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children and the Institute of Social Work (ISW), and positive parenting has been identified as a priority intervention by the Government of Tanzania as highlighted in the National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children.

In 2019, nearly 350 parents attended positive parenting sessions and an evaluation of our parenting curriculum revealed that 98% of all parents who completed the 6-week program improved child wellbeing through parental care.

The IRC under child protection together with Tanzania government under community development department managed to conduct joint training to positive parenting curriculum to 10(4F,6M) ToT in the host community from five wards in Kasulu Town Council and Kasulu District Council where we merged the IRC curriculum (FMD) with the Government curriculum which will be used in facilitating positive parenting in the host community. This training conducted in 2020.

Throughout project implementation, positive parenting sessions has been a key programming model and resource package that seek to prevent, respond, and

enhance children's wellbeing by strengthening their parents' and caregivers' knowledge, skills, and practice of positive parenting. For 2020 up to 2022 the IRC under child protection has managed to enrol 386(294F, 92M) Parents under the IRC FMD merged with Government curriculum in host community.

Again, on 16th June 2021 the IRC were invited to participate in regional commemoration of the Day of African Child which held in Kakonko District Council. The IRC participated by sending two parents 2(1F, 1M) Parents who benefited with positive parenting where they testified what they have learnt, how it helped in modelling Children's behaviour and attitudes as well as intervening in proactive parental upbringing.

During the commemoration the guest of honour who was Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) of Kigoma region where he appreciated on what the IRC have been doing on positive parenting in the host community based on the report been received from Regional Community Development Officer (RCDO).

During this commemoration the IRC managed to distribute positive parenting handbook to high table staff and other invited guests aimed disseminate the parenting education to their family through parenting handbook.



Parents in the host community keenly listening to their facilitator.



participants during group visit.

Safe Healing and Learning Spaces (SHLS): An [SHLS](#) is a secure and caring area where children and adolescents can heal from trauma, learn and feel protected. Our SHLS toolkit includes math and reading lessons to build literacy as well as [Social Emotional Learning](#) (SEL). SEL interventions help children acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

The IRC currently runs six SHLS in Nyarugusu camp. 6,735 children are registered across the six SHLS and visit the spaces daily to participate in various SEL and recreational activities organized by the IRC. In 2020 up to 2021 a total of 512(286G,226B) Children aged 6-11 participated in SEL session.



Children participating in a mobile child friendly space (CFS) raising awareness about child rights in Nyarugusu camp.



Child parliament during question-and-answer session during the launch of 16 days of activism in 2021.



SEL participants participating in parachute opening where every child chooses his/her colour to explain feelings and expectations of the day from the session.

Community Awareness and Advocacy: The community can play a key role in protecting vulnerable children. To strengthen their capacity to identify and respond to the needs of vulnerable children, the IRC conducts advocacy and awareness raising through several channels. These include using community structures, community and religious leaders, public announcement systems, house-to-house visits, and activities on international commemoration days.

Skills Development and Financial Literacy: Youth in the refugee camps have very limited opportunities to pursue tertiary education. As a result, the IRC is

investing in skills-based training and livelihoods support to build technical skills among youth. We provide skills training in tailoring, basic computer skills, soap making and embroidery. We also provide financial literacy through easy-to-use applications such as Learn to Earn, Arifu and Jijenge, which provide insights into savings, budget management and development of business plans and supplement trainings on business development and management.

In 2019, 306 adolescents and youth participated in and completed our various skills training programs. Many youths who have graduated from our skills training courses have established small livelihood groups in the camp, and in 2019 our staff helped advise and monitor 724 individuals who were a part of active businesses in Nyarugusu refugee camp.



A Burundian girl participating in a recreational activity organized at an IRC SHLS in Nyarugusu camp

Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH):

Through ASRH programs, the IRC has been able to create an enabling environment for [youth and adolescents](#) to learn about and be confident about their development and bodily changes. We use an adolescent curriculum to educate youth through peer educators in community groups as well as at three youth center's in Nyarugusu camp. ASRH messages are relayed through interactive sessions involving debates, poetry, group discussions and storytelling. In 2019, our peer educators organized nearly 300 ASRH and HIV/AIDS prevention and care sessions involving more than 8000 adolescents and youth.

We have also set up Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) rooms in our youth centres for youth to access HIV testing, counselling and family planning with support from a medical practitioner.

Past Case Management Achievements

- Placed over 900 children in foster care arrangement and pre-screened, selected and oriented 800 foster parents on caring for children.
- Introduced coaching and supervision in case management to enable case management supervisors to provide more support to case workers and ensure case management is provided at global standards.
- Led the move to introduce and set-up CPIMS+/Primero, a cloud-based case management platform, in the camp setting in Tanzania to enhance data management and improve provision of services.

CYPD Priorities for 2020:

- ✓ Safety at home through positive parenting to prevent and respond to violence against children;
- ✓ Scaling up social emotional learning interventions out of camps by working with local organizations while maintaining the work in the camp setting;
- ✓ Enhancing youth programming by working closely with youth-led organizations for child protection outcomes;
- ✓ Safety in schools through close coordination with the IRC Education sector to achieve learning outcomes for children by making schools safer.



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