2021 Annual Report

Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.

Empowering refugees and immigrants since 1983
The Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc. (ECDC) is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit, community-based organization (CBO) established in 1983 to respond to the needs of a growing Ethiopian community in the U.S. ECDC quickly became a multi-cultural, multi-service provider with local, national and international reach.

ECDC’s headquarters are located in Arlington, Virginia, just minutes from the nation’s capital. For 39 years, ECDC has been helping refugees and immigrants re-establish their lives as productive, self-sufficient members of their new communities. Program support comes from corporations, faith-based institutions, foundations, individual contributions, in-kind donations, and local, state, and federal agencies.
Looking back at 2021

This was a year of resilience and growth for us at the ECDC and our affiliates. With the new administration entering office in January, refugee resettlement programs were revived from the bottom-up. Both at the national and affiliate levels, we engaged in capacity building.

We partnered with four existing local organizations to expand their services to include refugee resettlement, and we also opened two new branch offices in Vermont and Wisconsin. We worked to support communities to overcome any residual negative anti-refugee, anti-immigration sentiments so prevalent during the previous four years. Bolstered by these positive developments, ECDC staff and affiliates continued to deliver outstanding results despite remote work caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to expanding and rebuilding, we also engaged with our community neighbors and hosted three community-wide immunization events. In all, ECDC administered nearly 3,000 COVID-19 vaccines to members of our local community.

When the Afghan crisis unfolded, ECDC and its affiliates were able to respond by expanding ECDC resettlement sites and successfully resettling 4,347 Afghans between October and December. Moreover, in FY 2021, our Resettlement and Placement (R&P) program also resettled 1,264 individuals through a network of 11 affiliates and five branch offices. During this period, 315 individuals and 119 cases enrolled in our Matching Grant program; by the end of the reporting period, 89% had reached economic self-sufficiency.

Our Preferred Communities (PC) program, aimed at supporting vulnerable refugees, served 457 clients. PC clients received services to address housing, food security, finances, financial management, and health and mental health issues.

ECDC’s subsidiary, the Enterprise Development Group (EDG), disbursed 254 loans totaling $5,098,791.16 through its Payroll Protection Program and the Wells Fargo “Open for Business” program.

In 2021, the ongoing war in the Tigray region of Ethiopia caused significant challenges to the Axumite Heritage Foundation. All current projects were halted, and communication blackouts prevented operations, salary disbursement, and contact with staff. Suspended banking services also caused setbacks, which included stopping the renovation of a high school in a Tigray village. We hope these disruptions will cease and the situation will be resolved soon.

Through the generous giving of resources from our donors, funders, state and federal partner agencies, and volunteers, and the resilience and dedication of our staff and affiliates, we were able to meet the challenges we encountered in 2021 and help thousands of refugees rebuild their lives. We continue to be committed to serving and advocating for refugee and immigrant communities.

Tsehay Teferra, Ph.D.
President, and CEO
Our Board and Staff

Board of Directors

Gebre-Selassie Gebre-Mariam, Chairman
Henning W. Leidecker, Jr., Ph.D., Vice Chairman
Tsehaye Teferra, Ph.D., President
Allene F. Wright, Secretary
Ferede Workneh, Member
Yemane Yohannes, Ph.D., Member

Headquarters Senior Staff

Tsehaye Teferra, Ph.D., President and CEO
Allene F, Wright, Vice President and Director,
Refugee Resettlement
Azeb Tadesse, Director of Finance
Mulugeta Belay, Senior Finance Officer
Anam Gnaho, Associate Director, Community
Integration Programs
Rebecca Hailemeskel, Associate Director,
Refugee Resettlement Program
Carolyn Lamere, Associate Director, Refugee
Resettlement Program (resigned in January 2021)
Jessica Chapman, Director of Development
Wossen Hailu, IT Manager
Yewubdar Eshete, Human Resources Associate

Branch Offices Senior Staff

ECDC African Community Center,
D.C. Metro
Sarah Zullo, Director
Bethlehem Desta, Senior Program and
Technical Assistance Manager

ECDC African Community Center
Denver, Colorado
Ron Buzard, Managing Director
Haider Khalaf Twaigge, Finance
Manager
Chelsea Primak, Program Manager,
Mani Dahal, Resettlement Manager

ECDC African Community Center
Las Vegas, Nevada
Milan Devetak, Managing Director
Elizabeth Wendmagegnhu, Admin. &
Finance Manager

Multicultural Community Center
Brattelboro, Vermont
Joe Wiah, Managing Director
Amanda Kenyon, Finance Manager
Mark Clark, Program Manager

Multicultural Community Center
Wausau, Wisconsin
Adam VanNoord, Managing Director &
Program Manager
Melanie Neilitz, Finance Manager

Our Affiliates

Alliance for African Assistance, San Diego, CA
Arizona Immigrant and Refugee Services, Phoenix, AZ
Acculturation for Justice, Access and Peace Outreach, Pittsburg, PA
Alliance for Multicultural Community Services, Houston, TX
African Services Coalition Greensboro, NC
Della Lamb Community Services Kansas City, MO
Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago Chicago, IL
Nashville International Center for Empowerment Nashville, TN
Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center Roxbury and Worcester, MA
Refugee Empowerment Center Omaha, NE
Uplift Charity Anaheim, CA
Refugee Immigrant Self-Empowerment Syracuse, NY

Our Subsidiary

Enterprise Development Group
Arlington, Virginia

Fikru Abebe, Managing Director
Haddish Welday, Finance Manager
Esayas Gebrehiwot, Senior Loan and
Technical Assistance Manager
Our Programs

ECDC’s programs include Refugee Resettlement, the Matching Grant Program, Preferred Communities Integration Programs, and the locally-based Co-Sponsorship Program. In 2021, the Afghan Placement and Assistance (APA) program kicked off when Operation Allies Welcome was set in motion by the U.S. government to evacuate our Afghan allies from Afghanistan.

Our Vision

We envision a world where human rights are upheld, and people have an opportunity to live up to their full potential in safe and inclusive communities that respond effectively and fairly to the concerns and needs of their members.

Our Mission

To work towards our vision, we implement our mission of resettling refugees and immigrants and advocating for them to lead a life of dignity, attain self-sufficiency, and integrate successfully into their new communities in the U.S. while promoting education and equitable access to resources, opportunities, and services in Africa.

Where We Work
Refugee Resettlement

Refugee Resettlement services were funded by the Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), which oversees America’s U.S. Refugee Admissions Program: Reception and Placement. In 2021, 1,264 refugees were resettled by 15 ECDC branch offices and affiliates combined. From October to December 2021, an additional 230 were resettled. The top eight nationalities resettled included Afghan, Burmese, Colombian, Congolese, Iraqi, Pakistani, Sudanese, and Syrian refugees. PRM also funded a COVID Relief Program that provided housing assistance and technology—computer and/or internet assistance—for 88 refugee clients at three ECDC branch offices and nine affiliates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona Immigrant and Refugee Services, Phoenix (AZ)</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uplift Charity, Anaheim (CA)</td>
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<td>Alliance For African Assistance, San Diego (CA)</td>
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<td>Refugee &amp; Immigrant Assistance Center, Roxbury (MA)</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Refugee &amp; Immigrant Assistance Center, Worcester (MA)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Della Lamb Community Services, Kansas City (MO)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
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<td>Refugee Empowerment Center, Omaha (NE)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>African Community Center in Las Vegas, Las Vegas (NV)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina African Services Coalition, Greensboro (NC)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acculturation for Justice, Access &amp; Peace Outreach, Pittsburgh (PA)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nashville International Center for Empowerment, Nashville (TN)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Alliance for Multicultural Community Services, Houston (TX)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>African Community Center, D.C. Metro, Arlington (VA)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,264</strong></td>
<td><strong>230</strong></td>
</tr>
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*Q1-Q5 Total: Oct 2020 - Dec 2021 1,494

(*Joined after Oct 2021)
ECDC’s Preferred Communities (PC) program served 457 clients who received services to address housing, food security, finances, financial management, health and mental health, transportation, navigating social service benefits systems, English language education, family wellness, social adjustment, and immigration status needs.

The PC program provided 10 hours of training and technical assistance for affiliate PC case managers on topics including assisting clients in navigating social security, using the ECDC database, and sharing best practices across affiliate locations.

Community Integration services, funded by the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement, included the Matching Grant (MG) and Preferred Communities (PC) programs. ECDC’s Matching Grant (MG) Program network enrolled 315 individuals. The average starting wage for full-time employment was $14.11/hour. The average starting salary for part-time jobs was $13.75/hour. At 120 days of enrollment in the MG program, 70% of our clients were self-sufficient. At 180 days after the completion of the MG program, 89% of our clients had reached economic self-sufficiency.

The ECDC MG program provided affiliates with training and technical assistance for COVID-19, ECDC MG policies and procedures, and using the ECDC MG database.

Farida Popal and her three children arrived in Las Vegas as Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders on July 10, 2019. The family was assisted with all core services through the Reception and Placement program. They were also enrolled in the Matching Grant program. The older son got a job as a cashier at a gas station less than a month after they arrived, and the second son started working within two months of their arrival as a Housekeeper. Both sons began working for Amazon a few months later.

During the fall of Kabul, Farida’s husband fled Afghanistan and joined the family in Las Vegas. As a result, the family moved into a larger apartment. Farida started working for ACC-LV as a Receptionist/Administrative Assistant through the AARP’s Senior Community Service Employment Program. In this role, she assists with clerical duties and provides interpretation and translation support to ACC-LV staff. Farida, her husband, and her children are very grateful to the African Community Center for its services. They look forward to giving back by assisting other refugees and newcomers.
At the start of FY 2021, the COVID pandemic impacted ECDC and its affiliates’ operations. Meetings, training, and even fund-raising events were hosted online, and creative approaches were required to ensure refugee clients received needed support with limited contact and respect for social distancing. To support its affiliates in adapting, ECDC’s Community Engagement staff hosted a series of webinars focused on helping affiliates develop and implement community engagement plans to meet their needs.

Two key topics included how to host a successful online fundraiser and how to identify new partners to meet clients’ needs during the pandemic.

For example, ECDC’s affiliate in Nashville, TN, the Nashville International Center for Empowerment, moved their fundraiser online and delivered a traditional Ethiopian dinner from a local restaurant to all participants, allowing everyone to enjoy the festive event even though they could not be together in person. ECDC’s branch office in Arlington, VA, also opted to distribute Thanksgiving baskets and gift cards instead of holding its traditional First Thanksgiving celebration. In Kansas City, MO, ECDC’s affiliate Della Lamb Community Services similarly reimagined their traditional Thanksgiving and Christmas events as “Operation Holiday,” distributing food and gifts in one event that allowed for contactless pickup of items.

Anastase and Bahati arrived with their son Femi and daughter Chanelle in Colorado in June from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All spoke very little to no English. Both parents had only received primary school education in their home country.

The ACC’s First Friends program partners with newly arrived refugees to help them achieve their short-term integration goals and learn English.

Matched as their First Friends, Trish and her 16-year-old daughter, Suntali, were eager to meet the family. The pair soon became one of ACC’s First Friends success stories as they consistently empowered the family to learn more about their new community and exposed them to new opportunities.

As First Friends, they were willing to walk alongside the family, whether riding the city bus together or visiting a nearby thrift store. The family attended a World Refugee Day celebration event where they met other Swahili speakers in the community. They were exposed to American culture and way of life by attending an American-style party, a black muralist’s art exhibit at Civic Center Park, the Martin Luther King Library, and more.

Thanks to the hours of one-on-one support from their First Friends, this family became self-sufficient quickly. All three adult family members were employed in less than two months after arrival and continued to set goals for themselves—like learning how to use the Chromebook ACC provided and getting a driver’s license. The family is grateful for becoming a part of Colorado’s community!
Co-Sponsorship

With funding from the Community Sponsorship Catalyst Fund, ECDC’s branch offices in Denver and the D.C. Metro area—Northern Virginia and Silver Spring, MD—collaborated with national staff to develop and pilot co-sponsorship programs. This innovative approach to welcoming and integrating refugees is based on community members organizing themselves into teams and assisting the local resettlement agency in providing the services newcomers need and orienting them to their new community and culture.

Co-sponsorship teams also fundraise and collect in-kind donations to help meet the family’s basic needs. Co-sponsorship benefits newcomers and community members by creating friendships, increasing two-way understanding, strengthening support networks, and building positive attitudes.

Impressed by ECDC’s progress and commitment to developing co-sponsorship programs, the Catalyst Fund awarded ECDC a national grant and another local grant for the agency’s proposed Brattleboro, VT, branch office.

With support from the Open Society Foundations for a project called Wider Welcome, ECDC worked throughout 2021 to develop a training guide and toolkit to help resettlement agency staff critically think through how issues of race, privilege, and bias play out in community sponsorship for refugee resettlement and put strategies in place for overcoming barriers that might exist for diverse and immigrant groups to get involved. At both national and local levels, ECDC experienced an outpouring of support and interest from community members, businesses, and coalition partners to support Afghans to resettle and integrate successfully.

Volunteers committed to a year-long term of capacity-building activities on behalf of the ECDC branch office in Denver. As a result of the Community Engagement program, the branch office quickly created its temporary Housing Host Program in August and September, preparing for the influx of Afghan evacuees. As more volunteers and community members got vaccinated, they made 35 matches during the year. Causal Design, a social enterprise based in Denver, was the first to be matched with a refugee family.

There was an outpouring of support from local communities for Afghan refugees. Cash and in-kind donations ranged from clothes, school supplies, and household goods for our clients.

Community members, local churches, professional organizations, and volunteer networks stepped in to help.
Response to the Crisis in Afghanistan

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover of the country in mid-August created an unprecedented challenge for the resettlement system in the United States. More than 70,000 individuals were evacuated and brought to the U.S. for immediate protection and ultimate resettlement. This crisis required all actors involved in resettlement to step up and innovate to accommodate large numbers of arrivals in a short amount of time.

ECDC provided technical support to its resettlement network by creating a media kit and having a virtual meeting related to engaging with the media during this period of high interest to harness public support.

Local affiliates and ECDC headquarters were featured in various media outlets, which resulted in increased donations, in-kind items, and volunteer support at the community level. ECDC set up a volunteer interest form on its website in late August and received more than 1,000 expressions of interest in a few weeks, primarily from individuals in the D.C. metro area.

An Afghan Allies donation designation was also added to the donation page of ECDC’s website, and nearly $50,000 was raised by the end of September alone from community members.

ECDC also formed new partnerships at the national level by becoming a coalition partner of Welcome.US, a preferred implementation partner of the Tent Foundation, and a grant recipient from Airbnb, to name a few. ECDC started resettling Afghans in mid-September.

### APA Arrivals in September 2021 by Affiliate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliate</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCDC</td>
<td>Silver Spring, MD</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCDEN</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCLV</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCVA</td>
<td>Arlington, VA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIRS</td>
<td>Phoenix, AZ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMCS</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>Greensboro, NC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REC</td>
<td>Omaha, NE</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIAC2</td>
<td>Worcester, MA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** | 63
2021 Branch Highlights

ECDC Opens Two Branch Offices

Multicultural Community Center
Brattleboro, VT
Ribbon-cutting event at the new office.

Multicultural Community Center
Wausau, WI
Welcoming the first Afghan family to Wausau

World Refugee Day

ECDC organized its second national virtual fundraising 5k Run for Refugees event for World Refugee Day. All of ECDC's branch and national offices participated.

More than 110 people joined the event from across the country, and nearly $18,000.00 was raised. Support from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Charities helped fund key Community Engagement positions.

Program Re-imagined

As COVID-19 continued to pose challenges, ACC Denver staff could not hold regular in-person programming yet its team of 28 served 894 clients during the year. The RAH (Ready for American Hospitality) program continued to be on hold for most of 2021 until September, when a new cohort was launched for the first time since the start of the pandemic. The Program Manager, Anthony Cherwinski, used this time to reimagine the program, conducting interviews with previous program participants and refugees interested in sharing their experiences transitioning to the U.S. workforce. Anthony secured a new partnership with Sage Hospitality Group, leading to a 100% job placement rate for all RAH participants in the September 2021 cohort.

Neighborhood immunization

ECDC made COVID vaccinations available at ECDC in Arlington in collaboration with Van Dorn Pharmacy. Nearly 3,000 shots were administered for each of the first and second rounds in three community-wide events in 2021.
Financials

Revenue

Total Revenue in the past Fiscal Year: $18,409,023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percent of Total Revenue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal, state, and local government grants</td>
<td>$14,575,331</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private grants</td>
<td>$977,234</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monetary contributions</td>
<td>$469,885</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fees for service</td>
<td>$336,485</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental Income</td>
<td>$493,373</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Microloan origination, penalty fees, and interest</td>
<td>$445,136</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributed goods and services</td>
<td>$231,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$880,579</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>$18,409,023</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2020 REVENUE SOURCES**

| 88% Federal, state, and local grants |
| 8% Income generation                |
| 4% Other grants and contracts       |
| 1% Contributions                    |

**2019 REVENUE SOURCES**

| 76% Federal, state, and local grants |
| 7% Income generation                |
| 5% Other grants and contracts       |
| 1% Contributions                    |

**NET ASSETS**

| 21.6M 2021 | 17.8M 2020 | 17.7M 2019 |

Program Breakdown

- Refugee Reception & Placement: 61.01%
- Employment services: 17.32%
- Community Leadership: 8.69%
- Microenterprise Development: 10.90%
- Legal, Immigration, & Information Referral: 1.16%
- Health Services: 0.92%

$6,994,317 Refugee Reception and Placement
$1,985,157 Employment Services
$1,249,921 Microenterprise Development
$995,903 Community Leadership
$133,540 Legal, Immigration, and Information Referral
$105,728 Health Services
Another project initiated by the AHF aims at availing school children in the northern Ethiopian village of Dimbaza, Tigray, with proper classroom facilities. The project had been underway until it was disrupted by the ongoing war in the Tigray region beginning in November 2020.

In 2021, the Axumite Heritage Foundation faced severe challenges and setbacks. The projects have been disrupted due to the ongoing war in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. Due to the communication blackout imposed on the region and the closure of banking services, contact with project staff has been lost, and their salaries could not be paid for the year 2021.

Inspiration for the restoration of the historic governor's palace in Axum came from ECDC's president, Dr. Teferra's visit to the city in 1992, where he saw the state of disrepair it was in. That year, ECDC developed a plan of action to restore the 'Inda Nebri’id" and transform it into a cultural center promoting Axum’s unique heritage.

In addition to the construction of a primary school, AHF's renovation project of a high school in Dimbaza has also been suspended.
Empowering refugees and immigrants since 1983

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Arlington VA, 22204

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Fax: (703) 685-0529
Email: info@ecdcus.org
website: www.ecdcus.org

Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.