



# CHARITY SPOTLIGHT SERIES

**LYNX INVESTMENT ADVISORY**

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*Lynx's commitment is not just to its clients and colleagues, but also to the community in which we live and work. From its founding in 1992, Lynx and its employees have supported local organizations that are engaged in uplifting communities. This Charity Spotlight profiles one such organization, Refugees International, an independent organization that seeks better support for refugees and internally displaced people.*

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## CHARITY SPOTLIGHT SERIES:

# REFUGEES INTERNATIONAL

*Providing a voice for refugees and internally displaced people worldwide*

The economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have reverberated across the world. As countries work to recover, they have an often-overlooked resource to assist them—refugees and internally displaced people. Indeed, nearly 70 percent of refugees resettled in the United States have served as essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Today, there are some 80 million people who have been forced from their homes due to conflict, persecution and human rights abuses. The majority are displaced within their own countries, but more than 26 million are refugees who have sought protection across borders. While hot spots such as Darfur are brought to our attention through celebrity advocacy, most refugees and internally displaced people continue to struggle to be heard.

**Refugees International (RI)** provides them that voice. By maintaining its independence—it receives no government or U.N.-funding—RI is better able to seek greater resources and policy changes from the main providers of assistance, primarily the United Nations and other multilateral organizations and national and local governments, and encourage them to “do the right thing”.

Founded in 1979 as a citizens’ movement to help people fleeing Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, RI’s work now covers nearly every part

of the globe. Through partnerships with organizations on-the-ground, they receive first-hand accounts of the effectiveness of aid being delivered. Using these insights, they advocate for policies and actions that can make a real difference in the lives of the refugees, as well as to the communities that host them.

RI’s work focuses around four core principles:

- protecting refugees’ rights, dignity and security;
- exposing and preventing atrocities;
- addressing humanitarian needs and policy solutions; and
- raising public awareness globally.

In all that they do, RI works toward the goal of promoting long-term, sustainable solutions.

As with most organizations, over the past 18 months RI has grappled with how to operate effectively amidst the outbreak of COVID-19. Recognizing the particular impact the pandemic has had on refugees and other displaced persons, they have pivoted their advocacy to focus on issues such as the severe food shortages caused by supply chain disruptions, the increase of gender violence in refugee communities, and equitable access to the vaccine.

It is unlikely that many refugees will be able to return home any time soon given the protracted nature of many of the conflicts.





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More fully incorporating refugees into the host communities will not only improve the lives of the refugees and reduce poverty, but will also help boost economic activity through higher incomes, increased revenues for businesses and provision of new services.

As Eric Schwartz, president of Refugees International, said in a recent interview for this profile: "While the humanitarian challenges are daunting, securing human

rights for the displaced is well within the capacity of governments, international organizations, civil society and refugees themselves. Basic decency and justice demand no less."

You can find out more about Refugees International and the important work that they are doing at:

[www.refugeesinternational.org](http://www.refugeesinternational.org).

