

2017-18 Annual Report



IRCOM Highlights



IRCOM Isabel is now completely full and a welcoming home for over 250 newcomers.

The community spaces are in full use with hearty meals prepared daily for child and youth programs and the sight of students engrossed in their English classes.



To help newcomer families settle rapidly and successfully, we conducted over **3000 home visits**, **6000 drop-ins** and **4500 referrals**. This year, we leveraged an incredible **\$1,065,503** in public and private benefits for newcomer families, through the Access to Benefits Program. This does not even include all the tax returns completed in March!



The **Common Ground, Stronger Voices Project** co-organized hugely popular “Meet the Neighbours BBQs” for tenants and community members in the Isabel courtyard as part of our **bridge-building efforts** with our Indigenous neighbours..



Quality child care helped newcomer children learn English and be ready for school. This year, we provided over **2400 hours** of on-site childcare at **3 different locations**, while parents attended English classes and settlement programs.



The popular **Family-to-Family Program** matched 8 IRCOM families with families well established in Canada, to develop networks, make friends, and build belonging.



We presented at a national conference in Edmonton on our newly developed **First Nations History Simulation**. This educational tool evoked strong appreciation and understanding from our refugee students as they learned of First Nations’ experiences of residential schools.

Mission and Objectives



Mission Statement

IRCOM strives to empower newcomer families to integrate into the wider community through affordable transitional housing, programs, and services.

IRCOM Objectives

HOUSING: To provide safe and affordable transitional housing to low-income newcomer families in their first three years of living in Canada. To ultimately provide newcomer families with a comfortable and nurturing environment that empowers both parents and children to smoothly adapt to their new community.

PROGRAMMING: To connect people with quality and accessible programs that support participants and community members to gain the tools they need to integrate and settle into Winnipeg life. Our programs will consistently aim to fill gaps and build partnerships with others working in the community and settlement sectors.

BE AGENTS OF CHANGE: Help to facilitate systemic change by engaging the public and policy makers to better understand newcomer issues, while highlighting the stories and voices of newcomers with the goal of achieving wider societal change.

BUILD COMMUNITY: Create and support a community within and beyond IRCOM where individuals feel safe, loved, cared for, welcomed, supported, respected, and included.

DEVELOP AS A 'LEARNING ORGANIZATION': To be a 'learning organization' that is always developing, adapting, and growing, as we work to meet the changing needs of our staff, stakeholders, and community members.

Executive Director's Message



It has been a full year; IRCOM Isabel is part of the Centennial community landscape. Filled with families from over 20 nations, the walls now have the warm feeling of home, the scent of spices from afar, and the echo of languages never spoken here before.

We have broken bread with our neighbours and have taken time to get to know each other; we are just beginning a relationship that will take years to build, but we are heartened by the welcome we have received and the willingness of our new community to engage in these first conversations with us.

IRCOM Ellen shines as the model we set out to replicate at Isabel, a community in which each person builds their capacity, expands their knowledge, and most importantly finds a welcoming family.

I am deeply thankful to have celebrated ten years at IRCOM this past January. IRCOM has a way of becoming a part of each of us, my colleagues, our partners, our generous funders; they see something that is unique and inviting. IRCOM is unpretentious, often lackluster, and a bit scuffed. It is well loved by the thousands of children and families who have called it home for nearly three decades.

Thank you to the passionate and generous staff who choose to be here and choose to give of themselves. Thank you to the Board who trust us to carry the work. Thank you to the over 150 volunteers who give of their time and talents. And thank you to our partners, friends and funders – you are the ground upon which we are built.

Dorota Blumczyńska, Executive Director

President's Message

It is a great pleasure for me to be a part of the IRCOM family. We now serve our community in two fully occupied and operational buildings known as IRCOM Ellen and IRCOM Isabel.

We had yet another successful year in 2017. We accomplished some of the priority activities from our most recent three-year Strategic Plan, with a strong focus on particular pillars – namely Nurturing Stronger Indigenous and Newcomer Relations and Building Long Term Financial Sustainability. Relationships take time, they require opportunities to share stories, food, and laughter. We hope to journey with our Indigenous sisters and brothers for years to come. Building long-term financial sustainability is crucial to the current and future success of IRCOM. We are committed to upholding this priority while remaining true to our values and our story.

Our passionate and committed leaders, Dorota Blumczynska and Shereen Denetto, believe in the unique model of long-term transitional housing coupled with supportive programs and services. They continue to learn promising practices from the settlement sector across Canada and build these into the programming at IRCOM.

On the behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express our thanks to the staff and management for their contributions to the ongoing success of IRCOM and the well-being of our community members.

I would also like to extend our thanks to the many partners that collaborate with us and who generously provide space for our adults to learn English, our youth to develop into award winning athletes, and our children to prepare for and succeed in school.

At the same time, we cannot forget our dedicated volunteers the many donors, foundations, and funders, and award winning scholars and athletes who believe in IRCOM. Without any of them, our journey would be much more challenging, if not impossible.

Nedzad Brkic, IRCOM Board President



Our Journey with IRCOM

Settlement
and
integration

After School Program has lots of activities for my siblings and me like cooking and Girls' and Boys' Nights. We also learn about leadership and how to find a job. I did much better in school this year with help from the Homework Program and we met professionals like engineers and lawyers to learn about their careers. We also had fun! We visited the Rec Plex, Skyzone, and went swimming. In the summer there are programs for all of us, and I can keep coming to IRCOM even after my family moves out!

House We were so excited when the staff in House called to show us an available suite at IRCOM. Not only was it clean and beautiful, it was accessible for my sister who uses a wheelchair. We came for a tour and signed our lease right away! Once we moved in, House kept our suite in good repair. My neighbour got on-the-job training fixing up suites in the building. This provided him with Canadian work experience and now he has a full-time job in construction!



Our family had been in Canada less than 6 months when we applied to live at IRCOM

Community Resource Program

Staff helped us to develop a settlement plan as soon as we moved in. Having an interpreter and meeting in our home made us feel more comfortable. It is great to have staff on-site to help us with all of our questions. They helped me understand important letters relating to taxes, bills, immigration, and more. IRCOM paid me to cook a meal for our community meeting where we can share our concerns and tell staff what kinds of workshops and programs we want to see at IRCOM. When my eldest daughter was struggling, the social worker really helped our family.

Wrap-around
holistic
services

The Greening Program

allows us to garden here in Canada using both the seeds and knowledge from back home! We have container gardens on every balcony where we can put our skills to use, work side-by-side with our neighbours, and beautify our community by growing our own healthy and nutritious food. This year, I was given a plot at Dufferin School to grow vegetables. I like to visit our garden while my daughter plays basketball with her friends.

Asset and Capacity Building Programs

provide us with many ways to learn about money management and improve our financial knowledge. I was able to save money and get a matched amount to buy an item important for our family – I bought a laptop to help me with my education and saved for a college course. The Newcomer Driver Education Program has special driver education classes and in-car training just for newcomers! I hope to use my licence to look for work. We were even able to get our taxes done!



Volunteer & Community Services Program

I really wanted to find a job in Canada so I started volunteering at IRCOM as a Tenant Leader. In our first year at IRCOM, we were paired with a Canadian family who met with us many times for fun activities. Our children played together and we were able to learn about each other's cultures. We learned a lot of useful tips about living and working in Canada and we remain friends still today!

Nurturing
Indigenous
- Newcomer
Relations



Common Ground, Stronger Voices

When I first arrived in Canada, I knew very little about the history of this country. In my English classes, I began to learn about treaties and Canada's relationship with the first peoples of this land. In the summer, IRCOM had community barbecues in our courtyard where I got to meet my neighbours that I had never spoken with before! I learned so many new things and realised we have a lot in common. I love learning about Indigenous cultures and sharing stories about my history too!



Community
(economic)
development,
capacity building,
empowerment



Newcomer Literacy Initiative

Learning English is one of the main goals in our settlement plan. I am able to attend my half-day classes at IRCOM and at a nearby school (Hugh John Macdonald) while my children are in child care right on site. This is a great opportunity for our whole family and will help my wife and I find jobs soon!



Child Care Program

I was worried that I could not start English classes without anyone to watch my two-year-old son. Then I learned that IRCOM has a Child Care Program that my son can attend while I am attending classes and programs. He loves his friends in Child Care, and many staff speak our language. They are like family to him! He is also learning English and his numbers, I'm so proud of him!



House

Winnipeg's vacancy rate remains at 2.8%, unchanged from 2016 (CMA, 2017). One of the most important things we can do to help newcomers settle successfully in Canada is to provide safe, affordable housing.

At IRCOM, we offer **3 year transitional housing** through an agreement with Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. As soon as tenants move in, they can easily access settlement and wrap-around supports right at their doorstep.

This year, we are running **two full buildings**. In House, we provide great opportunities for tenants to obtain valuable Canadian work experience while improving the building in which they live.

“ We enjoyed the housing most about IRCOM. There were many programs to help immigrants to settle and integrate. Someone who spends three years at IRCOM can easily settle and integrate as compared to someone who is living in private housing. You can save money, survive better, than the person who did not live at IRCOM when they arrived.

Diomede Burihabwa, IRCOM Ellen Tenant Leader, recently moved out. Originally from Burundi, Diomede speaks 8 languages.

Isabel House

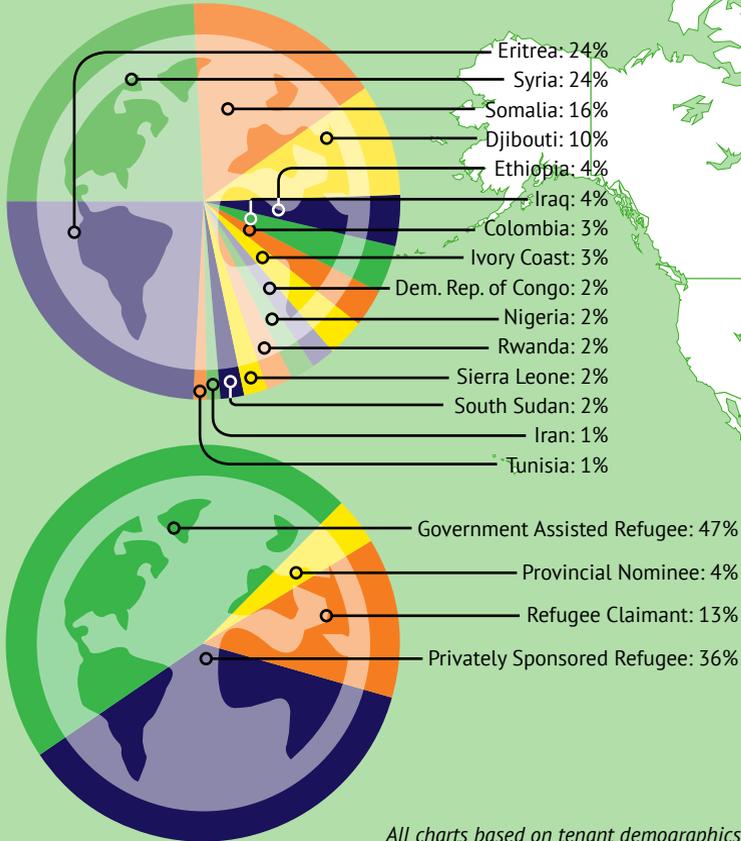


Ellen House



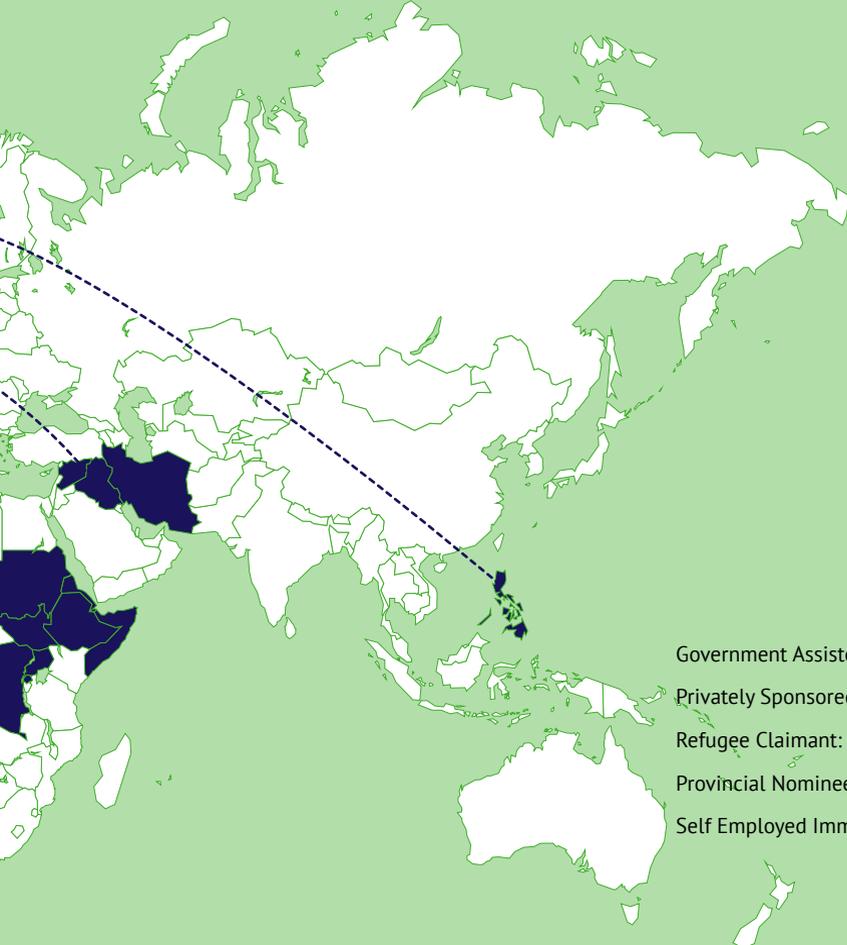
Welcome to

Ellen House

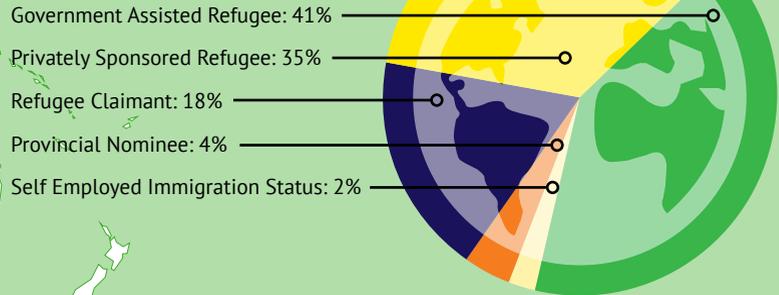
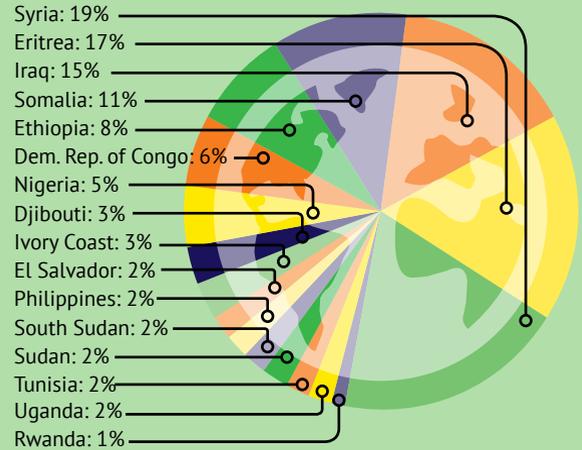


All charts based on tenant demographics for March 2018

IRCOM House!



Isabel House





After School Program

This year we saw a record number of our HEY Program (Homework Education for Youth) students graduate from high school. **27 students graduated** and **18 students were accepted into post-secondary education**.

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The IRCOM Leadership Group hosted the **Youth Action Gathering** with the **Canadian Council for Refugees**. This brought together newcomer youth and allies to learn, share, and collaborate on strategies to address common challenges. Nearly **200 participants from across Canada attended**, representing 8 provinces and 15 communities.

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Youth Employment Program students learned **essential skills** in resume writing, job interview skills, and workplace etiquette. Students were provided with **internship placements** at local businesses. 25 of our students **secured long-term employment!**

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This past year we partnered with the **Millennium Library** to assist in our **Children's Literacy Program**. Children from both sites attended the library for staff-led literacy activities. They also brought their **Mobile Library** to our sites to promote reading not only for our children but also their families.

“ This is like a home to me, and like a home to all the kids here, they feel safe, they feel welcomed. You know I came here when I was 13, in 2012, and since then I started going to the program here. Sometimes I would do my homework here and get help from the staff. After graduating, I applied here and got a job for the summer. Hopefully after that going to the University of Winnipeg studying Kinesiology... I want to be a gym teacher. IRCOM is like a family to me, like to trust somebody is a big thing to me, so I really trust the staff here, they took me in as their family, so they're like my family.

*Beathe Marie Tuyisenge,
Rwanda, 18 years old*





Community Resource Program

This program provides a variety of **core settlement services** for all families living at IRCOM. Families receive **referrals to agencies and services, home visits, needs assessments, support with systems navigation**, outings, mental health supports, and regular **educational workshops** on a variety of topics including parenting and family law, gang awareness, and winter survival.

This year we were able to **combine programming** which brought together families from both sites. This helps to **expand networks for newcomers and builds community**, a critical component of settlement work. With the help of our Life Skills Workers, many tenants received services at home and in their first languages.

Community involvement was overwhelmingly positive this past year with **over 400 families** attending various activities such as; **Community Barbecues, Neighbourhood Watch Safety Patrols and Community Meetings** and **Clean-Ups**. Parents and their children actively participated and attendance at these events was beyond expectation.

“ IRCOM is good, they help us. I was helped personally because I got a volunteer opportunity with IRCOM and now I have a job working as a childcare assistant. My kids also learn a lot from the After School Program and their communication has improved a lot. They learn many things and how to behave. All the staff are nice... My family really enjoyed the benefit we have from in-house child care, all the outings to see Winnipeg and surrounding areas, the fact that we have someone to ask any questions and get support on site and all the programs they have at IRCOM for children and families.

Mehret Abrehaley, Eritrea





Greening Program

The Greening Program offers IRCOM tenants **growing plots on the balconies** of IRCOM Ellen and at Dufferin School. Single parents are often prioritized, as there is always a huge demand for space to grow vegetables.

This year, there were **18 growers** from IRCOM Ellen who **received garden plots**. They planted cucumber, basil, tomato, radish and many other vegetables from all over the world.

The Dufferin School garden had **21 different families with allocated garden plots**. There was a mix of teachers, students, Indigenous and newcomer community members, and participants from the Boys and Girls Club who planted at this garden. At the end of the season, growers came out to a community meeting and enjoyed some vegetables from the garden as they discussed the successes and lessons of the past year.

“*Safaa, a mother from Syria, was assigned two plots last year. Often growers will get one plot but she requested to have more space for growing. Safaa's daughter was born with a difficult medical condition. When Safaa thinks of the garden around the spring time, it reminds her of Syria. She explained that every day in Syria she would harvest vegetables and fruits from her family farm. Now, she is happy to have the garden here at IRCOM. Safaa mentioned that having a place to grow vegetables gave her peace of mind and she got to apply some of the farming knowledge she had at home to her garden here.*”

Safaa Jaber, from Syria, arrived in Canada in 2016





Asset and Capacity Building Programs

The **Asset and Capacity Building Programs** support individuals and families to **access benefits, increase financial literacy, and meet savings goals**. All of these boost household incomes. Through individualized one-on-one support, workshops, and money management training, participants are supported in navigating complex systems that create barriers to social and economic inclusion.

The **Saving Circle Program** enabled **59** newcomers to save for needed assets. Participants purchased **11 new computers, 44 sets of furniture** and a few appliances. Four participants used the funds to save towards their children's post-secondary education and Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs).

Refugees brought to Canada by the government have huge transportation loans to pay back. They start their lives here in debt. While repayment rate is 97%, many families cut corners on food and clothing to make payments. **32 participants took part** in the **Transportation Loan Repayment Program**. There were huge smiles as some paid off their loan in full!

“When I saw the poster for the Saving Circle program on the bulletin board, I was immediately interested in the program. Ohhh I was very excited! I attended every Money Management Training session and made lots of friends. I learned how to save money, budget for the needs of my family, and share my experience in a group setting. I purchased a bed and dining table with four chairs. Through one-on-one meetings, I learned the importance of filing income tax, benefits of having a driver's license and saving for future goals. I tell all my friends to apply for any of [these programs].”

Abdulahi Elmi, Somalia



Education opens doors. In the Individual Development Account Program, 15 people were able to save \$1000 each which was matched by \$3000 (a total of \$4000 per family) directed towards either their or their children's post-secondary education.



Child Care Program

IRCOM provides child care while parents are attending programs or workshops. The Child Care Program **supports children's early development and adjustment to Canada**. Our diverse staff team can communicate with the children in their first language making them comfortable and improving their confidence while learning English.

We have strengthened and developed our program this past year by being mindful and **intentional in planning play experiences** for the children. We have begun implementing **child portfolios** to help **map out each individual's strengths and learning goals**.

We teach and encourage the children to **use their voice** in ways that make sense to them. It really is amazing to watch them grow more comfortable and explore the world around them with the natural wonder and curiosity that children possess.

“ I know staff are taking good care of the children. It is good to come because he doesn't have to stay home, and he gets more experience with friends, learning, sharing, and communicating. If there wasn't this program I could not go to school. My son is very happy to come here and I am happy to come here too.

Mulu (Emmanuel's Mom), Ethiopia



We had 78 children attend long-term child care programming, 20 of whom were under the age of 2! Short-term child care had over 200 sessions that included 591 individual children ages 6 months – 12 years old.



Volunteer and Community Services Program

Hundreds of people volunteer their time and talents to support newcomers in their settlement journey. This year we narrowed the focus of our **Adult Language Partners Program** to prioritize **families who are most likely to be isolated from the community** because of health or mobility challenges.

This year's **Family-to-Family Program** matched **8 IRCOM families with families well established in Canada**. In one partnership, the Canadian family's 5-year-old twins wanted to be in touch with their new friends, so they wrote a letter and mailed it to IRCOM! It was very sweet. The IRCOM family was touched when they received it.

At our **annual Volunteer Mingle**, volunteers participated in a **communal art project** where they built the different elements that make up a community. It was a **great expression of creativity** and a lot of fun!

“ It is not just volunteering. You're building friendships, and improve your skills and confidence in yourself and the students.”

Anonymous volunteer

“Every day I leave the homework program inspired by the young students. I regularly work with a few students who I've gotten to know quite well. I am surprised (but very honoured) by how some students have shared their stories with me. This is something very special and has truly opened my eyes to life outside my 'Canadian bubble.'”

Anonymous volunteer



72 volunteers helped out in the After School Program, 96 volunteers worked in the Homework & Education for Youth Program, 12 volunteers worked in the Child Care Program, and 51 volunteers supported the Newcomer Literacy Initiative.



Newcomer Literacy Initiative (NLI)

The Newcomer Literacy Initiative provides Adult English as a Secondary Language literacy classes to newcomers who cannot access mainstream programs due to child care commitments or mobility issues. With **on-site child care and language supports**, the NLI program currently **runs 7 classrooms** serving over **100 learners** and their children.

We are a community-based program with students from IRCOM and the larger newcomer community in Winnipeg. Our **strong partnership** with **Hugh John Macdonald School** and the Child Care Program, as well as other IRCOM supports and programs, ensures that all our students are given equitable access to the resources and opportunities NLI can provide.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission focused two Calls to Action on educating newcomers, so this year, our students have been learning more and more about **Indigenous cultures and histories** through speakers and creative workshops.

“ English class is very nice for me because I learn more new English words. At first I didn't know about Indigenous peoples. Now I have many information for Indigenous peoples because teacher teach me and I read history books.

**Mulu Mengistu, Ethiopia,
Canadian Language Benchmark 3 / 4,**

“ I learn different headlines about find job, food and health. Every day we learn a lot of different things. My teacher gives us a spelling test every week to improve our reading and writing. She asks everybody how they feel to improve our speaking and listening. That's why I like to come to class every day.

**Yordanos Beraki, Eritrea,
Canadian Language Benchmark 3 / 4**





Wahkohtowin – Strengthening Families Program

This year, our innovative and powerful **14-week program** worked with **26 newcomer youth aged 11-17 and their families**. By teaching parents and youth **new skills** and by providing **supportive counselling**, and by making referrals to supports, we helped protect vulnerable youth from behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties.

SFP helps with family cohesion and school connection and reduces challenging behaviours. Parents learn how to bond with and set fair expectations of their children. Families also **explore the systemic challenges** and barriers faced while integrating in their neighbourhoods, schools, and communities.

Youth learn to **communicate with love and understanding**, accept criticism, **cope with anger**, and **resist peer pressure** to engage in substance abuse and other negative behaviours.

Wahkohtowin (pronounced Wah-KOH-toh-win) is a Cree word. It refers to kinship, or the state of being connected.

“ *The steps out of anger enabled me to control my emotion, calm down and make wise decision.*

Hadas Meles, from Eritrea, arrived in Canada 2016

“ *The program assisted me in making my mom an intimate friend of mine.*

Male Youth Participant



Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Inc.





Early Childhood Development (ECD) Hub

We are very excited to announce that the ECD Hub completed its first year this January! With **20 licensed child care spots** (4 infant and 16 pre-school) provided by Freight House Early Learning and Care, along with **weekly parenting programs** and **individualized home visits**, the IRCOM ECD Hub has been an incredible addition to our holistic wrap-around approach to settlement.

The ECD Hub model is uniquely tailored for refugee parents. 20 childcare spots are divided into **8 full-time spots, 12 part-time spots** (AM and PM), and **2 crisis spots**. Crisis spots are for families needing temporary care to deal with emergencies and other urgent matters. We also have respite care on Friday afternoons for those parents that just need some space for grocery shopping, rest, or self-care.

The ECD Hub uses the **Abecedarian Approach** – an approach to early childhood development that includes **playful interactions, enriched care, and stable relationships among children and adults**.



In an environment where time is money, where parents need all available time to settle, work and even study, ECD Hub came as a rescuer, [and] tension remover for us, and home away from home for our children. No word is too big to describe the joy they gave us.

**Bolarinwa Adewale and
Abimbola Mercy, Nigeria**





Common Ground, Stronger Voices

Our **Common Ground, Stronger Voices** project was designed to take a leading role in **bringing together the newcomer community** with Indigenous communities by sharing food, ideas, and physical space.

Several of IRCOM's programs organized workshops for their participants. Two of our NLI classes participated in our **First Nations History Simulation for Newcomers** to help students **understand the impact** that the history of colonization has left on Indigenous peoples. Our full staff team participated in the **Kairos Blanket Exercise**, a simulation of Canadian history from an Indigenous perspective.

We partnered with several other organizations to **provide community events** such as 100 Soccer Balls and 100 Basketballs in the summer, the Grill'n'Chill BBQ in the fall, and a youth conference in the winter to allow **people from different backgrounds to come together** and learn from each other.

“ Tenants and community members got to share food together which increased the feeling of community.

Anonymous volunteer

“ I think some tenants, staff, participants have had some stereotypes and barriers challenged which could potentially increase empathy from newcomers to Indigenous peoples.

Anonymous volunteer



IRCOM co-organized 5 Community BBQs, 2 Sharing Circles and 2 Neighbourhood Safety Walks to bring nearly 400 members of the community together. 75% of IRCOM staff say their program helped participants get involved in events that brought together newcomers and Indigenous peoples.

Changing the Narrative

One of IRCOM's objectives is to *“Be agents of change: Help to facilitate systematic change by engaging the public and policy makers to better understand newcomer issues, while highlighting the stories and voices of newcomers with the goal of achieving wider societal change.”*

This is a lofty but critical goal if we hope to see change in the world and in our communities. Misunderstandings and fear of “the other” create barriers between people. The lack of a meaningful relationship, the absence of a handshake, the fear to look one another in the eye – this keeps communities fragmented and unwelcoming. When we greet strangers with a smile and allow ourselves to be touched by their kindness and desire to be known, we become good neighbours, close friends, fair employers and encouraging colleagues, and we become inspiring teachers and empathetic leaders. To help build relationships and shift our society to become more welcoming, and in the hope of sharing our knowledge and learning from others, IRCOM staff are present at many tables, on community-based boards, advisories, networks, and coalitions including:

- **Refugee Public Awareness Coalition (MB)**
- **Access without Fear**
- **Newcomer Education Coalition**
- **Manitoba Financial Empowerment Network**
- **Immigration Partnership Winnipeg – Indigenous Newcomer Sector Table & Inclusion Sector Table**
- **Gang Inter-Sectoral Group**
- **Refugee Sponsorship Group**
- **Social Planning Council**
- **Refugee Mental Health Committee**

We aim to contribute to a positive public discourse and work with the media so newcomers can share their stories, highlight the contributions they make to our communities, and so their voices advance the causes that impact them.

As proud members of the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), IRCOM believes that  **Protecting Refugees** **Stronger Communities**

IRCOM joins the CCR and calls on the Government of Canada to:

- **Resettle 20,000 government-assisted refugees annually.**
- **Ensure applications of privately sponsored refugees are processed within 12 months.**
- **Reform the refugee determination system so that all claimants have access to a fair hearing before an expert independent tribunal (the Immigration and Refugee Board).**

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Mike Dudar
Past- President

Paula Hamilton
Vice President

Harun Kibirige
Treasurer

Lawrence Deane
Member at Large

Menno Peters
Member at Large

Maryam Al-Azazi
Member at Large

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Member at Large

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Member at Large

Stephanie Dyck
Member at Large

Denis DePape
*Strategic Planning
and Programming
Committee Member*

Mpho Begin
*Strategic Planning
and Programming
Committee Member*

Shauna Labman
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and Programming
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Valorie Block
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and Programming
Committee Member*

Alice Ndanyuzwe
*Strategic Planning
and Programming
Committee Member*

Carla Kirkpatrick
*Strategic Planning
and Programming
Committee Member*



(Back row, left to right)

(Front row, left to right)

Harun Kibirige

Menno Peters

Lawrence Deane

Ivy Mannil

Stephanie Dyck

Mike Dudar

*Missing from photo:
Nedzad Brkic, Board Chair*

Paula Hamilton

Maryam Al-Azazi

Dorota

Blumczynska

Quinn Saretsky

IRCOM Staff



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Vanessa Kornelsen
Veronica Curtis
Warka Solomon
Zebiba Ibrahim

Strategic Plan 2015-18: Highlights

Successfully Transition & Open IRCOM Isabel

“**IRCOM Isabel**” is completely full and a welcoming home for over 250 newcomers. Grand Opening ceremonies were held in June and October, welcoming neighbours, friends, partners, and funders with drumming and remarks from our Cultural Advisor John Houle, followed by tours of the building and an opportunity to share food and well wishes.

Nurture Strong Indigenous-Newcomer Relations

In May 2017, we co-hosted the Building Bridges Conference at the Circles of Life Thunderbird House. It brought together Indigenous and newcomer community members and leaders as well as service providers. The Kairos Blanket Exercise and the Bread and Borders Exercise raised awareness of the history of colonization and of refugee claimants. Panelists from across Canada shared learnings on building bridges through arts, knowledge exchange and relationship building. IRCOM was excited to launch the Common Ground, Stronger Voices Project to help improve neighbourhood relations especially in the Centennial neighbourhood, and through staff training and public speaking, moved IRCOM forward on our path to reconciliation, opening the door to important conversations about who we are and who we want to be.

Build Long-Term Financial Sustainability

IRCOM is supported by over 43 different funding sources. Together with the Strategic Planning and Programming Committee, we defined what Long-Term Financial Sustainability means to IRCOM in an inherently unstable funding environment. These guidelines emphasized the importance of multi-year funding, untied funds, identifying goals for the proportion of funding from varied sources, multi-level governmental funding, and the importance of maintaining funding diversity so that IRCOM can serve anyone who comes to us, regardless of immigration status.

Pause to Strengthen the Organization

Just ten years ago IRCOM had about five staff and an operating budget of \$164,000. Today, we are a team of 80 strong, operating two housing facilities, and offering over ten distinct programs. While this growth has been incredible, it is important to pause to tend to our own garden. Highlights this past year include reducing program complexity, improving organizational structure, and addressing employee retention. We saw improved cross program collaboration and continued to meet as a whole staff team monthly to help retain our sense of community.



Our 2015-18 Strategic Plan provided IRCOM with a roadmap to guide us through 3 critical years of growth and change.

We are proud of the progress we've made this year on our four strategic priorities!

IRCOM Thanks Our Amazing Volunteers!

Abby Ofonwo	Constance Decorby	Gillian Tham	Kadmiel Abat	Melissa Harris	Ramoji Nyonje
Abdul Ahmed	Crystal, Jeff, Max & Juliette Kobe	Ginelle Baur	Katia Occhino	Melody Faulteaux-Scott	Raphael Lwoba
Aira Villanueva	Cynthia Gaudreault	Gloria Enns	Katie Dangerfield	Michelle Johnson	Richard Pham
Akriti Sharma	Daberechi Anele	Gordon MacKintosh	Kelsey Haas	Mikaila Collins	Rochelle Comte
Alex Kozielko	Daryl Raymundo	Halimatu Olajide-Sani	Kelsey Wiebe	Mohamed Musse	Rosanne Fife
Alana Ramnauth	Dahlia Calucin	Halimo Farah	Kierra Ferguson	Mona Manaigre	Ryan Day
Alanna, Jon, Ivan & Brennan	Dhal Dahl	Hannah Thiessen	Kristen Nguyen	Mona (Paramdeep) Singh	Ryan Schneider
Stromberg/ Bahrychuk	Daniela Njai	Hayley Jonasson	Kristina Paguio	Muna Ali	Saheed Olawoyin
Alyssa Sherlock	Danielle, Chris, Jacob & Luke Gaucher	Heather Barkman	Kristjana Peterson	Nahid Foroughi	Sam Manchulenko
Andrea Duncan	Darria Volochina-Shoell	Heather Frayne	Kyla Doll	Nahla Abdelwahab	Saman Mahmood
Anindita Banik	David Kariuki	Heba Zeinmedine	Laura Cheah	Natali Dibs	Samira Dawd
Amy Ross	Dinesh Khadka	Helen Halphin	Laura Wishnewski	Nelson Jensen	Sarah Altwayjery
Angeline Deng	Donna Sharpe	Hengameh Habibi	Lidia & Scarlett Vasquez	Norina Jimeno	Sarah Chan
Ashley Green	Drocella Mukankubana	Hilda Larson	Lillian Fridfinnson	Nanditha Murugesan	Senait Nesur
Audrey Young	Elaine Chabbert	Ian Wilson	Lisa Peters	Odile Craybeck	Shayne Bloomfield-Wong
Barry Hammond	Elizabeth Schirmer	Ivan Lumbera	Louis Ciza	Olivia Berchard	Sherry Wallis
Braedon Cruise	Elizabeth Gould	Janet Allen	Magie Muirhead	Oyindamola Ogunlana	Sheeza Haroon
Britt Chetyrbrok	Elizabeth Jones	Janet Mobisa	MacKenzie Ratcliffe	Paige, Floyd, Victoria, Ashur & Jessica Buhler	Shoshanna Cook-Libin
Brynn Morrison	Erik Friesen	Jason Maas	Maggie Armstrong	Parisa Mahilipour	Stacey Line
Carlos Sosa	Ethan Charles	Jeremy Jackiew	Maia Doucet	Pat Hogue	Shenna Fauni
Catherine Nguyen	Eun-Ah Hong	Jaime Campos	Manar Majani	Patrick San Vincent	Simone Dowhanik
Charlene Elsley	Eugene Cerin	Janviere Nyandwi	Marcus Askar	Patrick Susi	Sonia Kaplan
Chelsea Guidon	Farhan Irteza	Jerni Stewart	Maria Berghaenel	Paul Sheridan	Sonu Rana
Cherry Gapas	Florance, Olumide, Funmilade, Fisayo Sofoluwe	Jennifer Barnes	Marla Rae Warkentin	Paula Hamilton	Sydney Warkentin
Chioma Kalu	Fotunat Kandolo	Jessica Espiritu	Marianne Bagaybagayan	Quinn MacNeil	Stephen Kesselman
Chloe Heinrichs	Francess Thomas	JinJin Liu	Marko Gjuristic	Rachel Wonnek	Steph Taurai Chimwanda
Christina Beyere	Freyja, John, Kai, Aria, Brynja Thompson	Jiri Marek	Martha Ayele	Rachele Yerec	Teresa Senderwich
Christine Massinon	Gabe Goldstone	Joanne Toupin	Mary Mathias		Thandi Shawa
Christine Muzibao-Agabe		Johanna Jonker	May Liu		Theresia Mahobe
Colleen McAndrew		John Aragon	Matilda Van Aggelen		Thomas Kaethler
Colleen McGuckin		Jonathan Macatangay	Maureen Perlmutter		Teo Mateja
		Judith Sackey	Maysaa El-Assady		Tracy Zziwa
		Julia Garcia			

Tenant Leaders

Elen 2017/2018

Diomede Burihabwa
 Hibret Nigussie Tekle
 Hazar Al Sayfi
 Batlah Al Shareaa
 Isata Kamara
 Musau Kalombo
 Lemlem Mammo W Senbet
 Ibrahim Elzain Hago
 Lassad Ben Ali
 Maryam Hassan
 Mohamed
 Seid Barkadle Moussa
 Isra Abdirahman Hachi
 Omar Seid Omar

Isabel 2017/2018

Mohamed Agha
 Abdullahi Elmi
 Clement Ilunga
 Mehret Abrehaley
 Alemayehu Gidey
 Erkolano Evelind
 Logale
 Dawit Goitom Kiflow
 Sosina Seifu Fantasy

Troy Smukowich
 Tusia Kozub
 Tyler Retzlaff
 Victoria Pruden
 Virginia Gonzales
 Virginia Toni
 Wayu Ojwato
 Wingki Chu
 Yigia Zhong
 Zelalem Kasse

Funders and Donors

Anonymous Donors	Local Investment Towards Employment (LITE)	Rotary Clubs of Winnipeg
Apuckalypse Now	Manitoba Public Insurance	SEED Winnipeg
Assiniboine Credit Union	MB Mission	Sport Manitoba
Canadian Tire Jump Start	MTS Future First	United Way of Winnipeg
City of Winnipeg	Province of Manitoba - Children and Youth Opportunities	University of Manitoba
Communities for Families	Province of Manitoba - Education and Advanced Learning	University of Winnipeg Foundation
Credit Union Central of Manitoba	Province of Manitoba - Healthy Child Manitoba	Wawanesa Insurance
General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres	Province of Manitoba - Manitoba Early Learning and Childcare	Winnipeg Foundation
Government of Canada - Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship	Province of Manitoba - Manitoba Housing & Renewal Corporation	Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Graham C. Lount Family Foundation	Rotary Club of Charleswood	Youth Agencies Alliance
Great-West Life		
Investors Group		
Jays Care Foundation		
KidSport Manitoba		

Donations from the public through direct donations, CanadaHelps, United Way of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Foundation donor advised grants, and All Charities Campaign.

We would like to say

a special 'Thank you' to three of our core staff who have completed 10 years of service to IRCOM this past year: Dorota Blumczynska – Executive Director, Allyson Watts – Accountant, and Manolo Revidad – IRCOM Ellen House Manager



Marty Dolin passed away on February 14, 2018. In 1990 he burst into the settlement sector scene as Executive Director at the Manitoba

Interfaith Immigration Council (MIIC). Marty's influence on the sector at both, the local and national level, is legendary. At MIIC, Marty created a singularly utopic organization that thrived under his leadership, developing unique paralegal services for refugee claimants and a path to Canada for thousands of privately sponsored refugees. Marty stepped in as volunteer Executive Director to keep IRCOM going during a critical time in its early life. He will be remembered for his one-of-a-kind brash, effective advocacy on behalf of those who are marginalized. Marty's influence will be missed as he made everyone he backed bigger and stronger than they could ever be on their own.

Dorota Blumczynska – Executive Director

Partners

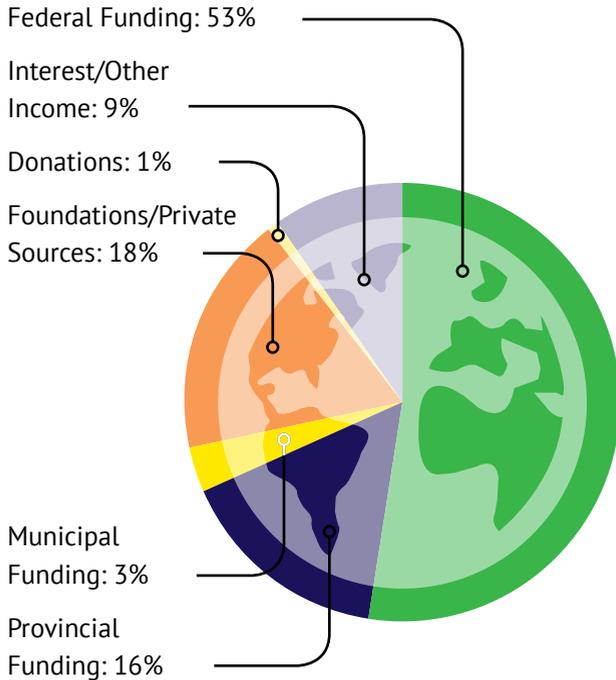
Aboriginal Youth Opportunities	Canadian Muslim Women's Institute	Hugh John Macdonald School	Manitoba Start	Sudanese Canadian Community Centre
Accueil Francophone	Centennial Community Improvement Association	Immigrant Centre Manitoba	Menno Simons College	Spence Neighbourhood Association
Addictions Foundation of Manitoba	Central Neighbourhoods Development Corporation	Immigration Partnership Winnipeg	MERC (SNA)	Sport Manitoba (KidSport)
Agape Table	City of Winnipeg	Insight Bookkeeping and Tax Services	Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network	St. Charles Soccer Association
Art City	Community Volunteer Income Tax Program	Ka Ni Kanichihk	Mount Carmel Clinic	St. John Brebeuf School
Assiniboine Credit Union	Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute	Knox Centre	N.E.E.D.S Centre	Technical Vocational High School
Aurora Family Therapy Centre	Dufferin School	Mama Bear Clan	Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad Inc.	University of Manitoba
Axworthy Health & Recplex- University of Winnipeg	Elmwood Community Resource Centre	Mamawichitata	New Journey Housing	University of Winnipeg
Better Fathers Inc.	Family Dynamics	Manitoba Children's Museum	Red Card Soccer South	Victoria Albert School
Booth College	Freeze Frame	Manitoba Financial Empowerment network (MFEN)	Red River College	West End Cultural Centre
Boys & Girls Club of Winnipeg	Freight House Door #1	Manitoba Financial Literacy Forum	Rosbrook House	William Whyte Neighbourhood Association
Calvin High School Seven Oaks MET School	Freight House Early Learning & Care	Manitoba Human Rights Commission	Rotary District 5550 World Peace Partners	Winnipeg Art Gallery
Campbell, Gunn, Inness	Frontier College	Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council	SEED Winnipeg	Winnipeg Harvest
Canadian CED Network	GCWCC (General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres)	Manitoba Museum	Sexuality Education Resource Centre Manitoba (SERC)	Winnipeg Police Service
Canadian Council for Refugees	General Wolfe School	Manitoba Research Alliance	Siloam Mission	Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Canadian Mennonite University			SOAR Heartland	Winnipeg Repair Education and Cycling Hub (WRENCH)
			Society for Manitobans with Disabilities	

Special Projects & Networks

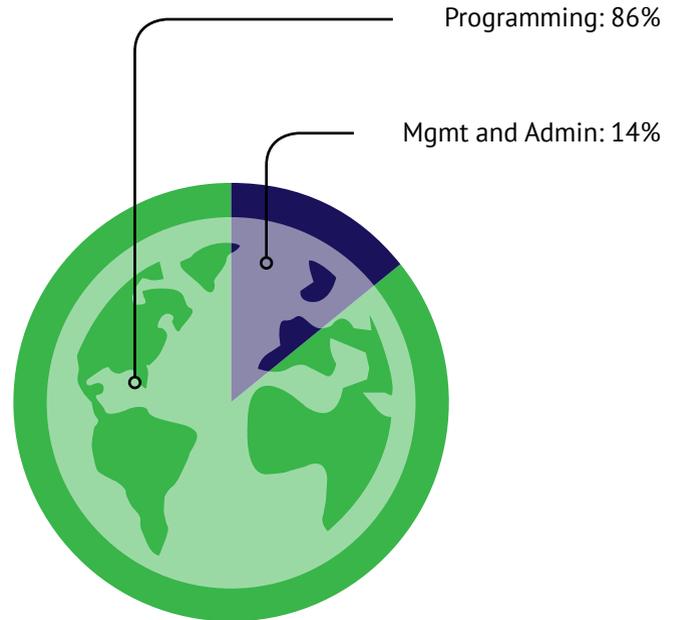
Asset Building Partnership	Gang Action Interagency Network (GAIN)	Rotary Adventures in Human Rights
Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet)	Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)	Thunderwing Hub Advisory Committee
Centennial Community Improvement Association	Network of Organizations for War Affected Newcomers (NOWAN)	UMOJA
Centennial Neighbourhood Fall Carnival Grill n Chill Committee	Newcomer Early Childhood Development Hub Project	Wahkohtowin – Strengthening Families Program: with Ka Ni Kanichihk, N'dinawe, Spence Neighbourhood Association, and University of Manitoba

2017-18 Financials

INCOME (\$3,330,466)



EXPENDITURES (\$3,322,239)



Surplus (\$8,227)

These figures are based on IRCOM's audited financial statements for 2017-18. A copy of our annual audited financial statements is available upon request.



Immigrant and Refugee
Community Organization of Manitoba

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www.ircom.ca/donate

or cash/cheque at our office: 95 Ellen St.