FOUNDING IMPACT REPORT

How a Simple Idea Grew Into a Mission.

Impact Report

Summer 2025 – June 2026

Preserving the long-form oral histories of displaced single mothers and women heading households, and connecting their experiences to research, education, and advocacy.

15	67+	6+	528K+
NARRATORS	HOURS OF AUDIO	COUNTRIES	IMPRESSIONS

ORAL HISTORY · RESEARCH · EDUCATION · ADVOCACY

A founding-period snapshot. Figures reflect the report period, not current lifetime totals.

01

A Note from the Founder

A founding story, not a conventional start-up story

I did not start with refugees. I started with young mothers in Washington, D.C. While earning my master's at Georgetown, I volunteered with homeless young single mothers and learned what happens when institutional categories determine who receives help and who is left out.

That experience shaped my doctoral research on women heading households in displacement. It also raised a larger question: what changes when women are given the time and space to tell their own stories, in their own words?

The Refugee Archive began with a small group of collaborators and early interviews with women displaced from Syria and Palestine. We had no formal nonprofit structure, no established fundraising system, and no permanent archive. We had volunteers, trust, and a commitment to preserve testimony carefully.

Our work extended to women affected by displacement in Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The first phase was exploratory: research, interviews, relationship-building, and learning what a responsible archive would require.

We incorporated at the end of 2025. In 2026, the organization began building the systems, partnerships, and programming needed to turn that volunteer-led pilot into a lasting institution.

The way a policy is written tells you exactly who the people writing it were willing to hear.

Kristi Dawn Riggs

Founder & Executive Director | Uncompensated leadership

02

Who We Are

A volunteer-led pilot that grew into a registered nonprofit

The Refugee Archive collects and preserves long-form oral histories of displaced single mothers and female-headed households. Our work seeks to connect individual testimony with research, public understanding, and the decisions that affect people living through displacement.

2025

Volunteer-supported beginnings

Research, early interviews, collaborative project design, and pilot activity, including oral history work in Goma.

DEC 2025

Formal incorporation

The Refugee Archive, Inc. established as a Delaware nonprofit corporation, effective December 30, 2025.

2026

Building the institution

Archive development, policy research, public programming, in-country relationships, donated services, and volunteers.

FOUNDING-PERIOD SNAPSHOT

IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) public charity

EIN 41-3858591 · Incorporated in Delaware

Programs and collaborators span multiple countries and disciplines.

03

What We Built

Impact indicators reported through June 2026

15

Narrators

Women who contributed recorded testimony during the report period.

67+

Hours of audio

Recorded oral-history material preserved or in the archival workflow.

6+

Countries

Geographic reach of narrators and early collection activity.

528K+

Social impressions

Reported visibility across 11 platforms; impressions are not unique people.

HOW TO READ THESE NUMBERS

These are founding-period measures reported in the original June 2026 impact report. Recorded hours, narrators, geographic scope, and impressions describe different outcomes and should not be added together or read as unique beneficiaries.

04

Financial Stewardship

Cash activity: January – June 2026

The amounts below reflect reported cash operating expenditures for the first six months of 2026. The previously published $36,000 category labeled “Core Team Wages & Fellowships” has been removed. TRA did not pay those amounts from its organizational accounts.

$45,019
REPORTED CASH EXPENSES

$45,019
REPORTED CASH REVENUE

SPENDING CATEGORY	JAN–JUN 2026
Event programming	$7,019
Website and domain development	$6,400
Oral history production	$5,500
Administrative and operations	$4,300
Art of oral history programming	$4,200
Social media management	$3,800
Subscriptions and software	$3,200
Across Archives podcast programming	$3,100
FHH Policy Tracker programming	$2,800
Annual journal programming	$2,500
Roundtable webinar programming	$2,200

05

How the Work Is Supported

Funding and resources are not the same thing

Cash funding

Reported January–June 2026 revenue: $39,392 in private donations and $5,627 from crowdfunding; total $45,019.

Contributed professional services

Separate businesses financed services that supported TRA’s programs. Those costs did not pass through TRA’s bank accounts and are not shown as cash expenditures in this report.

Volunteer contributions

Students, researchers, collaborators, and other volunteers have contributed time and expertise since the pilot period.

Uncompensated founder leadership

The Founder and Executive Director has received no compensation from TRA for leadership and organizational development.

A NOTE ON ACCOUNTING

This report describes cash amounts, volunteer support, and externally financed services separately. It is not an audited financial statement. The accounting treatment and possible recognition of any contributed professional services in formal financial statements require separate review. No dollar value is assigned to such services here.

06

Looking Ahead

A planning assumption, not a claim about actual spending

We expect recurring, non-event operating costs to grow as archival preservation, research, communications, and partner coordination expand. For planning, TRA assumes 3% to 5% month-over-month growth in these ongoing cash operating costs.

NON-EVENT OPERATING BASE: FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 2026

$38,000	$7,019
JAN–JUN NON-EVENT SPENDING	EVENT PROGRAMMING (EXCLUDED)

Non-event base = $45,019 total spending minus $7,019 event programming. For each future month, the model applies 1.03 to 1.05 times the preceding month’s non-event spending.

Growth is a projection, not a result

A 3%–5% increase is an assumption for budgeting, not evidence that a particular month’s expenditures increased. Actual financial statements should use posted transactions and supporting records.

Events are variable

Exhibition, webinar, and other event expenses are forecast separately, based on confirmed plans and money raised for those activities; no automatic monthly percentage increase is assumed.

Future professional-service arrangements

TRA intends to formalize direct, documented payments for certain professional services in 2027. Any new costs must be budgeted separately and cannot be inferred from the 2026 cash spending base.

07

Our Next Chapter

A stronger archive, with clearer institutional reporting

Preserve testimony for the long term

Strengthen consent documentation, multilingual transcripts, file integrity, and archival partnerships so that women’s accounts remain accessible under appropriate safeguards.

Connect stories to public use

Develop research, teaching materials, policy analysis, and community programs grounded in the testimony women choose to share.

Clarify how the work is funded

Report organizational cash revenue and expenditures separately from volunteer contributions and professional services financed outside TRA.

Build sustainable funding

Seek private gifts, crowdfunding, foundation support, and project-specific grants while establishing clearer financial controls for the next phase.

“The point of collecting these stories is not simply to keep them. It is to ensure that the women who tell them are not left out of the record.”

THE REFUGEE ARCHIVE · ORAL HISTORY · RESEARCH · ADVOCACY