



## Founders' Message

July 2021

Reaching Across Borders was born out of our commitment to bear witness to other peoples' sufferings and to fill a huge gap in Mental Health services for refugees and disenfranchised people globally.

Our motivation is based on simple ideas about humanity, human dignity, responsibility, caring, and our personal need to use our skills, expertise, time, and passion in a meaningful way. We believe in living simply. We feel that the material world, while necessary in some ways, should not define us.

In our humble way, we want to focus our energies on something that is bigger than us and our everyday lives. We want to use our skills, expertise, and passion to provide Mental Health services to refugees and displaced people worldwide. Mental Health is often the "invisible" disease that is ignored or not treated. Funding, resources, and access to Mental Health services in most countries are very limited at best.

Both of us have traveled the world, we have experienced different cultures and lifestyles, and through our journeys, we keep circling back to the poverty, the hardships, the lack of opportunity, and, most of all, the pain and despair we have seen in children's eyes. While we feel very blessed with our privileged life, knowing that there is so much pain in the world, we cannot help but feel responsible to bear witness to other peoples' suffering.

Just because it is not happening to us, in front of us, it does not mean that it is not happening, and it does not mean that we should be oblivious to it. When we see photos and videos of peoples' sufferings, poverty, famine, etc. we turn away, because it is too painful to watch, and Raiza would say, "we must bear witness, we must face this suffering, because: think about this person or these people to whom this is actually happening, they are enduring it, they are courageous in the face of such adversity, we owe them the respect and dignity to bear witness to their suffering, and we have a responsibility to invite others to bear witness with us.

*"If I were to remain silent, I'd be guilty of complicity."* – **Albert Einstein**

All of us who have the ability and means to do something about the sufferings of others have the responsibility to do so. Every act, no matter what it is – a smile, a hug, sharing of information and, of course, monetary donations – however small, does make a difference.

While serving Syrian refugees in Lebanon, they often say to us, “*Thank you for thinking of us... Thank you for not forgetting about us.*”

At Reaching Across Borders, we want to provide a space for people worldwide to learn, to serve, to contribute, and to engage.

We welcome all of you to visit our website: [www.ReachingAcrossBorders.org](http://www.ReachingAcrossBorders.org), or on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ReachingAcrossBorders/>, or follow us on Twitter: @ReachingAcrossB, ask us questions about the work we do and the communities we serve, and... contribute to our mission in whatever way to can.

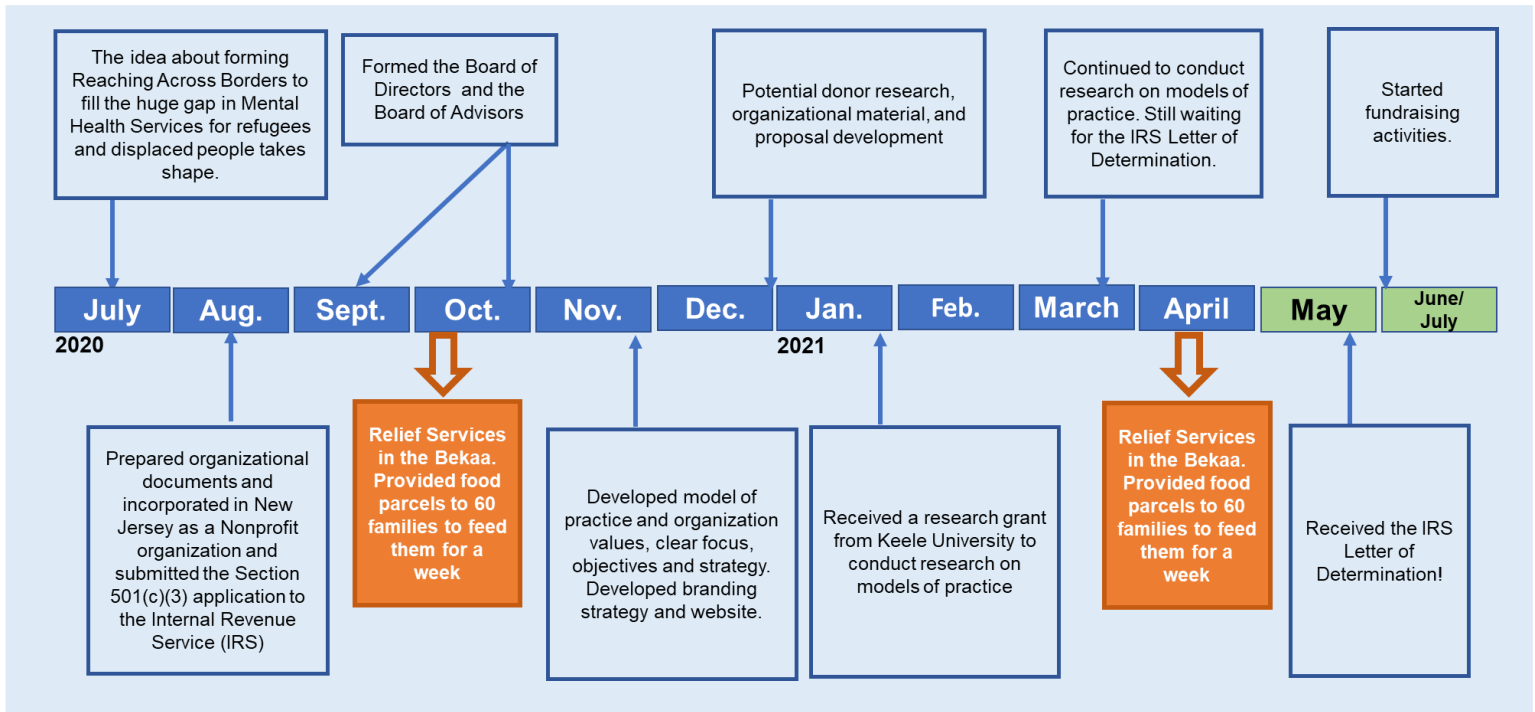
2020-2021 is our inception year, our “Year One”: *And Boy!* what a time in our history to start something like this, yet, if we wait for the perfect time, we will be waiting forever. Now is, as good a time as ever. We look forward to engaging with our donors, our supporters, our friends, and families to continue to bear witness, to contribute to the emotional and mental wellbeing of others, and to use our mission to guide our responses to mental health needs around the world.

Humbly,  
– Ernst Mucke & Raiza Kolia



# Year One Activities

This inception year has been spent mainly on organization formation, infrastructure creation and planning, and when possible, we have provided some relief services. While, at times, we grew impatient about waiting for our Internal Revenue Services (IRS) Letter of Determination, we used that time to continue to plan and to prepare for our fundraising efforts and services offerings. The waiting period gave us more time to be introspective and thoughtful about our plans.



## Year One Financials

The dollar amounts are small, but the intention, determination and passion is unwavering. In Year One the co-founders have lived by their motto of “putting your money where your mouth is” – funded all the administrative, business and overhead expenses and some of the relief activities.

| <b>Reaching Across Borders - Financials<br/>(08/01/2020 the 07/30/2021)</b> |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Support (Funds Received)</b>   |                    |
| Donations by Co-Founders  | \$ 2,539.83        |
| Donations and contributions   | \$ 781.58          |
| Non-government Grants   | \$ 5,816.96        |
| <b>Total Support (Funds Received)</b>                                       | <b>\$ 9,138.37</b> |
| <b>Expenses</b>   |                    |
| Relief  | \$ 970.00          |
| Administration  | \$ 2,217.88        |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>   | <b>\$ 3,187.88</b> |
| <b>Funds on Hand as of 07/30/2021</b>                                       | <b>\$ 5,950.49</b> |

### Notes

1. During the first year of Reaching Across Borders (RAB), the two co-founders funded all the administrative cost incurred from their personal funds.
2. All relief efforts we funded by donations and 100% of the donations were used for this purpose.
3. The \$5,816.96 of the current Funds on Hand are funds received from Keele University, under Non-government Grants, for an on-going project beyond our first fiscal year ending 7/31/2021.

## Looking Forward – Year Two

**We are very excited about this coming year. Our primary focus is going to be on:**

- Securing the funds to standup our project in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon. This is a re-start for us, this is not new for us as a team, it is just new for Reaching Across Borders, which has been newly formed.
- Building partnerships with research institutions to ensure that our services continue to evolve and that we continue to provide services that are grounded in evidence-based research, that are measurable and that we can hold ourselves accountable.
- Demonstrate results, continue to be introspective to meet our communities where they are at, and provide services that are impactful.
- Developing our 5-year strategic plan.
- Implement a long-sustainment strategy.

## Contact us:

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