

Georgia

IOCC's work in Georgia began in 1994 with programs to address the needs of Georgians affected by the breakup of the Soviet Union and the economic shocks it created. IOCC's work expanded to include a response to the influx of displaced persons during regional crises. IOCC has implemented a variety of activities such as microcredit, agriculture, income generation, emergency food distributions, school lunch, and school reconstruction programs, funded by the US government, the UN, and European and private donors. The program also collaborates with various dioceses to build the capacity of the Orthodox Church to respond to needs of vulnerable Georgians.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

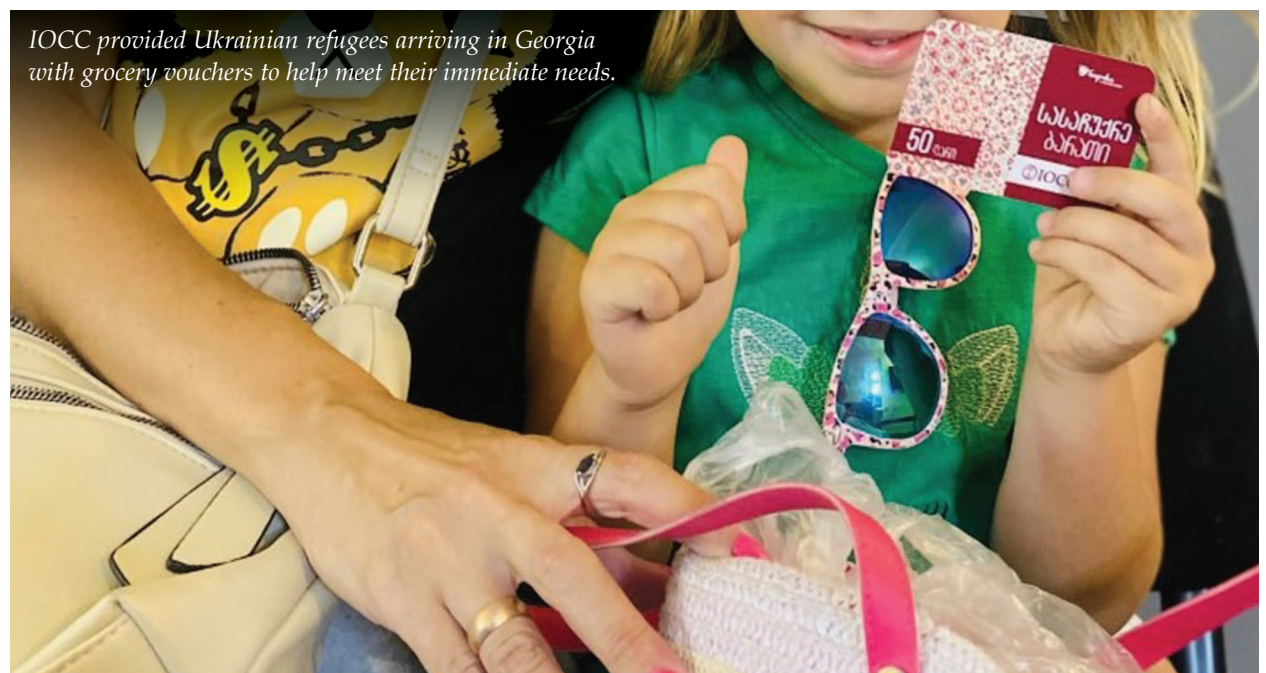
IOCC's humanitarian presence in the country of Georgia began in 1994 when the agency responded to the needs of people displaced by conflict, providing emergency assistance to thousands of families. Emergency response continues today, with more recent programs addressing needs created by the Ukraine conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, and flooding, for example.

As Ukrainian refugees began arriving in Georgia in 2022, IOCC responded in cooperation with the Davitianni-Youth Movement of the Georgian Patriarchate, providing cash assistance to 1,000 new arrivals. Projects in 2022 and 2023 supplied grocery vouchers to thousands of refugees, enabling them to shop independently for their families' needs.

In 2023, with UNICEF funding, IOCC has screened and referred hundreds of Ukrainian refugee children and adults with disabilities to identify their needs and connect them with appropriate services in Georgia.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, IOCC has worked to raise awareness among essential workers and faith leaders of various religions in throughout the country about prevention measures to combat the disease's spread. Working with local health authorities and funded by the World Health Organization (WHO), the project has provided training to 85 long-haul truck drivers, 30 farmers' market workers, 40 staff members at a Church-run nursing home, and 80 taxi drivers.

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IOCC provided Ukrainian refugees arriving in Georgia with grocery vouchers to help meet their immediate needs.

Emergency Preparedness and Response *(continued)*



By May 2022, IOCC had provided training to almost 700 faith leaders and over 100 ethnic minority community group leaders on COVID-19 risks and prevention. These program participants learned about COVID-19 mitigation, the benefits of vaccination, and ways to address common questions and concerns in their communities. IOCC also provided personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning and disinfecting supplies to the trainees, and produced and distributed COVID-19 prevention and awareness flyers to all project sites.

In June 2015, flooding caused significant destruction in the city of Tbilisi, badly damaging houses and causing at least 20 deaths. IOCC was one of the first organizations to respond, assisting affected families sheltering in collective centers through cash distributions. In cooperation with the Georgian Orthodox

Patriarchate and the Tbilisi mayor's office, IOCC reached more than 50 flood-affected families with cash assistance.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, IOCC and its local partners provided food and emergency relief supplies across the country. IOCC also supported the agricultural sector to assist farmers affected by the conflict and economic turmoil that ensued. Following the crisis, IOCC's intervention grew to include microcredit loans and a school feeding program. IOCC disbursed over \$3.5 million worth of credit in the Guria, Samegrelo, and Samtskhe Javakheti regions to almost 2,000 borrowers. Loans ranged from \$500 to over \$5,000 for both small businesses and farmers. The school feeding program in the early 2000s reached 28,000 students with food and messaging on nutrition and hygiene.

THROUGHOUT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, IOCC continued its projects around the world while taking steps to protect staff, partners, and beneficiaries. All projects are continuously evaluated for multiple risk factors, and appropriate modifications made. IOCC ensures that all staff and beneficiaries receive information about COVID-19, including testing locations, and integrates this information into ongoing projects, as indicated by local health authorities.

Food Security and Agriculture



In 2022–2023, IOCC and partner Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA) helped farmers establish and equip a new business-oriented solar-drying fruit and vegetable processing cooperative enterprise in western Georgia, with funding from the IOCC Foundation and USAID. IOCC and CNFA built and equipped the facility, where co-op members can now bring their produce and have it dried so they can sell it at market. Dried produce fetches a better price and can provide income beyond the growing season. While the cooperative initially benefits 35–40 farmers directly, over time its impacts will multiply.

IOCC has also helped local partners and Georgian farmers improve production and increase the value of their products by providing greenhouses, demonstration plots, and solar dryers in the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region. The area absorbed a significant number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Abkhazia, but the local population has also been declining as unemployment in rural areas forces residents to seek work in urban centers. The projects have helped families remain in their homes by increasing agricultural income. The greenhouses are built locally using custom-designed frames. Rather than purchase premade frames, IOCC purchased a metal-forming machine which allows site-specific greenhouses to be manufactured at low cost. IOCC has trained local welders to use the machine and fabricate the greenhouses. The structures make year-

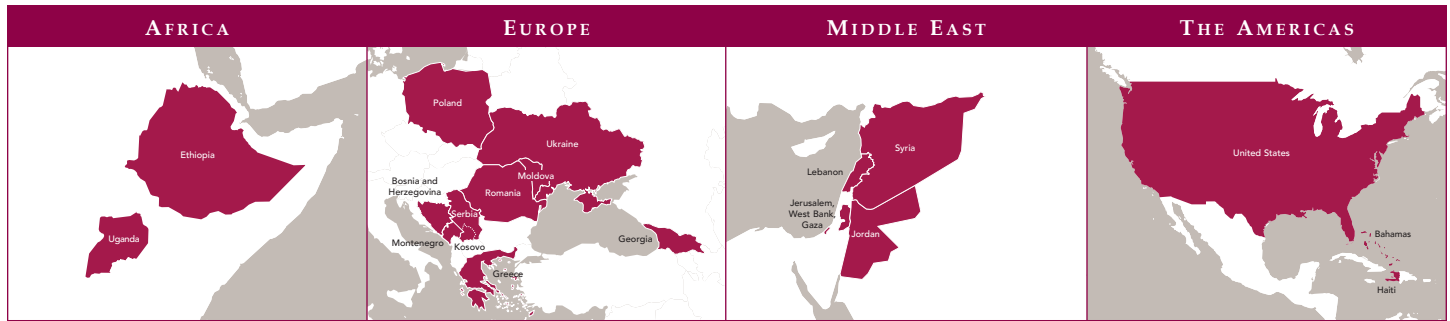
round production possible, generating a steady source of income for local partners who run them.

At the family level, IOCC has trained farmers on new techniques in sustainable agriculture and provided groups of farmers with a shared solar dryer to process herbs, fruits, and other crops. The dryers are produced in Georgia by a local company, and all associated parts are also purchased locally. The drying process allows products to be sold year-round and provides a steady source of income for families.

In 2022, at the request of the Mufti of All Georgia, IOCC constructed a 1,076 square foot greenhouse and helped the Muslim community begin vegetable production in Batumi. Proceeds from produce sales will help 20 vulnerable families in the community.



Active Worldwide Programs



- Ethiopia
- Uganda

- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Georgia
- Greece
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- Poland
- Romania
- Serbia including Kosovo
- Ukraine

- Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Syria

- Bahamas
- Haiti
- United States



● Emergency Preparedness & Response	119,043
● Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene (WASH).....	66,540
● Sustainable Livelihoods	23,912
● Food Security & Agriculture.....	112,602
● Health	658,135
● Other (Education, Nonfood Items, Shelter, Protection)	2,703

IN 2022, IOCC SERVED 982,935 PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

IOCC was established in 1992 and is the official humanitarian organization of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States. IOCC provides emergency relief and development assistance to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church and local NGO and community partners. Its global operations are managed from its headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States, with field offices in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, East Africa, and the US. Since its founding, IOCC has distributed more than \$800 million worth of aid in over 60 countries around the world, and has extensive experience implementing programs in partnership with United States government agencies (USAID, BHA, PRM) and the United Nations (UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, OCHA), as well as with European and international donors.



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