



# The Urgency of Inclusion

# Message from the President



## Dear Friends of IREX,

Extending access to prosperity and justice will improve the lives of millions while contributing to greater security and political stability for us all. At a time when poverty persists for too many people, youth populations are bulging, and both terrorism and repression are on the rise, the need for greater inclusion and opportunity is urgent. It is a moral imperative and a matter of human dignity. It is also in our interest.

At IREX, we strive to reduce barriers to opportunity on many dimensions. In 2016 alone, IREX and our partners touched the lives of almost 9 million people in 118 countries. To name just a few examples, we've trained thousands of secondary school teachers to give students the 21st century skills they need; matched students with education and jobs in Iraq and Morocco; helped bridge the gender digital divide from Myanmar to Moldova; supported young African leaders who are making change in their communities; supported independent media in restrictive environments; provided youth in Tunisia opportunities to enter the workforce; and helped Ukrainians discern fact from fiction in media.

Please take a moment to learn more about IREX and the impact of our work. I hope you will join us in building a more just, prosperous, and inclusive world.

Sincerely,

**Kristin M. Lord**

President and CEO

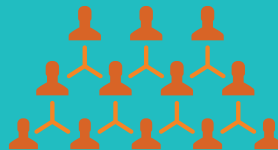
2016 Annual Report

Cover photo by Rajiv Raman • Kristin Lord photo by Liz Lynch • Left back cover photo by IREX Mozambique staff

IREX's work touched the lives of

**8,518,230**

people



Countries reached

**118**



Leaders trained

**9,537**



People who benefited  
from community  
initiatives led by  
IREX-trained youth

**367,925**

People who benefited  
from IREX-trained leaders

**143,393**



Institutions  
assisted

**2,402**



# Empowering youth



IREX invests in youth by promoting quality education, professional development, civic engagement, and job skills. We focus especially on supporting underrepresented young women and men to become community leaders and active, informed citizens.

Participants in the Tech Age Girls Program led projects that benefited

**11,250+**

people through 2017

# Cultivating leaders



IREX cultivates leaders who strive to serve others in their communities. We enhance their leadership skills, as well as deepen the expertise and networks they need to lead.

Young African leaders trained by IREX served

**35 million**

people in Africa

# Strengthening institutions



IREX helps institutions at every level of society become more effective, accountable, and responsive to the diverse populations they benefit. We partner with educational, media, government, business, and civil society organizations that want to excel as they serve others.

In 2016, IREX directly assisted

**265** higher education institutions

**387** libraries\*

**162+** news outlets

# Extending access to education and information



At IREX, we believe educated, informed citizens contribute to broad-based prosperity, lively civic engagement, and hold those in power accountable. We work with partners around the world to increase people's ability to engage with vibrant information, strengthen independent media, and broaden access to quality education.

**359** IREX-trained teachers taught

**60,000** students in 2016

# Empowering youth



## IREX SUCCESS STORY

### Youth help youth gain employment skills

Tunisia emerged from the Arab Spring as a democracy. But this momentous achievement is threatened by a lack of opportunity for young people, making the country a frequent target of extremist recruiters. In Tunisia, almost 60% of young people with tertiary degrees lack the soft skills—problem-solving, time management, teamwork—and experience that employers seek. To help their peers meet employers' needs, three alumni of IREX's Thomas Jefferson Scholarship Program drew on their newly acquired skills to develop online platforms to bridge the gap between what students learn in school and what employers seek.

Sarah and Saber launched an online platform called GoodNess, which connects eager volunteers to community-based organizations that need their help. Students that use GoodNess demonstrate their soft skills and build deeper connections with their communities—making them more attractive candidates to local employers.

Like her fellow alumni, Leila is developing an online platform, Opus, to connect university graduates with freelance opportunities. Companies can post jobs on Opus, while freelancers can create profiles and attach their portfolio and references with ease. By using these platforms, youth not only gain key technical and soft skills, but also help their communities and local economies thrive.



**89%**  
of Thomas Jefferson  
Scholarship Program  
alumni who graduated  
with a tertiary degree  
are employed vs. 38%  
of youth with a tertiary  
degree nationally\*

\* Based on a 2016 survey of alumni who completed the program in 2014 and 2015

# Cultivating leaders



## IREX SUCCESS STORY

### Social entrepreneur saves women's lives in Nigeria

Mandela Washington Fellow Adepeju Jaiyeoba is an emerging global entrepreneur. Her company, Mother's Delivery Kit, manufactures and distributes affordable, lifesaving birth supplies to women in Nigeria. Rural communities often lack sterile equipment and use alternative methods for delivery, resulting in the death of both mothers and their children. Adepeju founded the company after a close friend died during child birth and realized that deaths like this could be prevented.

IREX helped Adepeju secure an internship in the United States with the United Nations Foundation, further enhancing her knowledge of the global health field. Her experience as a Fellow not only helped her improve her company, but also prepared her to train midwives and delivery assistants on safe delivery methods. These women earn a commission on delivery kit sales, enabling them to build financial sustainability for their families, and become agents of change in their communities.





**Mother's**  
Delivery Kit

Mother's Delivery Kit helps train birth attendants and delivers with sterile supplies helping to save the lives of countless mothers and their babies.



Every **CHILD** should be given a **CHANCE** to live his or her **POTENTIAL**



Every **MOTHER** should have the **opportunity** of **watching** her **BABY GROW**



**84%**  
of Mandela  
Washington Fellows  
said their internships  
made them more  
effective leaders\*



\* Based on a 2015 alumni survey

# Strengthening institutions



## IREX SUCCESS STORY

### Helping universities prepare students for jobs

Youth unemployment of over 18% is troublingly high in Iraq. This dims the country's economic prospects. It creates fertile ground for extremist groups that seek to recruit and exploit young people who feel frustrated by a lack of opportunity in the labor market and undermines efforts to promote reconciliation and good governance.

Samer Mobarak at the University of Baghdad is changing that narrative, offering students a path of education and opportunity in Iraq's economy by matching them with employers. To show alumni and current students alike that opportunities still exist in Iraq, Samer established the university's Career Development Center, inspired by his time in IREX's Iraq University Linkages Program.

Since then, the University of Baghdad has hosted two annual job fairs, featuring 40 companies offering a total of 450 jobs in media, telecommunications, engineering, and finance. The Career Center also offers training that builds students' skills to gain employment and augments their technical knowledge, connecting them with relevant and meaningful opportunities in the workforce.



400

Iraqi university faculty received curriculum training that equips them to prepare students for real-world employment\*

\* Based on 2016 survey

# Extending access to quality education and



IREX SUCCESS STORY

## Helping Ukrainians discern fact from fiction in media

Ukrainians are subject to surging levels of misinformation at a critical time of political reform, conflict, and economic stagnation. Environments saturated with misinformation can have chilling effects on public trust, civic participation, and political polarization. Many brave journalists are providing reliable news and information, but many Ukrainians struggle to discern fact from fiction.

In response, IREX developed a customized skill-building and awareness-raising initiative to help citizens detect misinformation and discern fact from fiction. Learn to Discern's unique approach provides practical media literacy skills to citizens of all ages through videos, games, and other interactive learning experiences. More than 15,000 Ukrainians participated in the workshops, improving their critical thinking skills and their ability to detect bias and manipulation in media. Participants demonstrated a 24% increase in their ability to distinguish trustworthy news from false news.

# information

24%  
increase in Ukrainians'  
ability to distinguish  
trustworthy news  
from false news\*

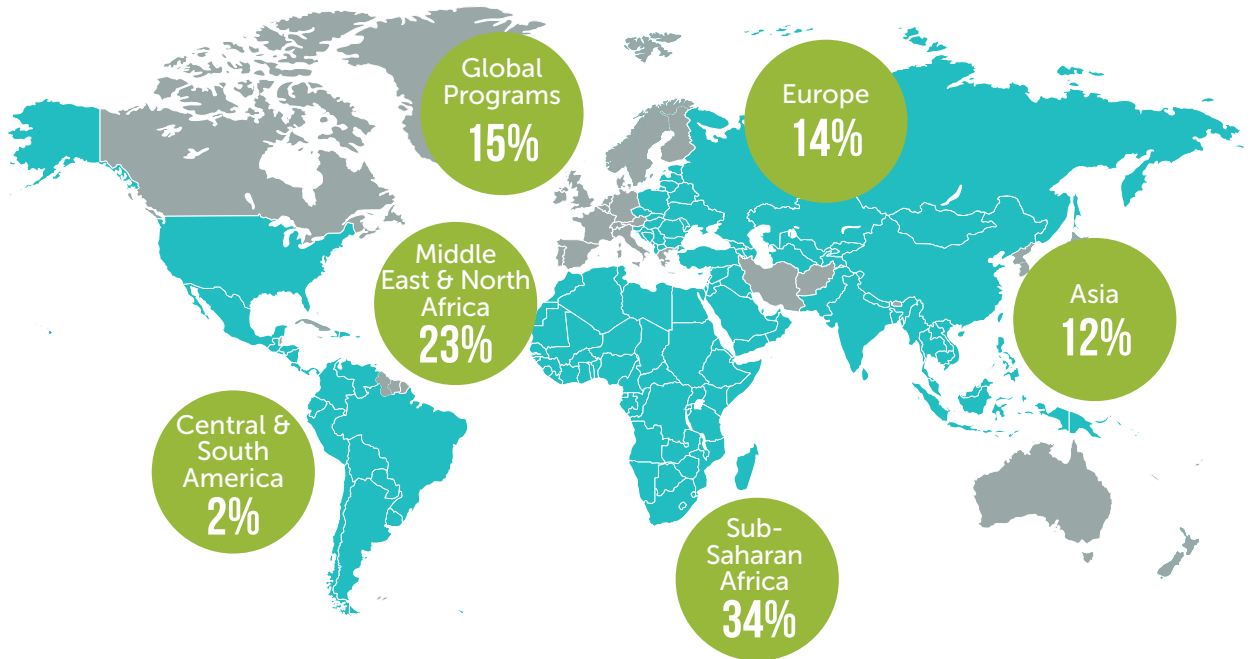
91%  
of participants  
shared their new  
knowledge and  
skills

with an  
average of  
6  
friends, relatives,  
or colleagues  
each

reaching  
over  
80,000  
Ukrainians\*

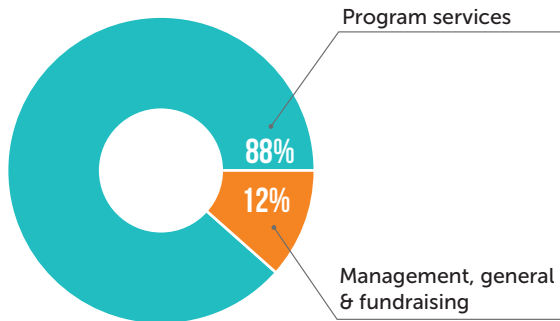
\* Based on a survey of Learn to Discern participants in 2016

# Program expenditures by region



\$80+ million portfolio  
100+ countries  
400 global staff

## Functional expenses, fiscal year 2016



# About IREX

IREX is a global development nonprofit that strives to build a more just, prosperous, and inclusive world by empowering youth, cultivating leaders, strengthening institutions, and extending access to quality education and information. With an annual portfolio of \$80 million and 400 staff worldwide, IREX works with partners in more than 100 countries to help societies advance their own solutions.

IREX is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit. We are grateful to the more than 250 individuals and organizations that generously support our efforts.



Learn more > [www.irex.org](http://www.irex.org)



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