

Jessica Ferne

Director of Programs at IDRF (International Development and Relief Foundation)

Toronto, ON, CA

Leader in disaster response, international development, youth & women-led programming, and sexual health & rights

Biography

Jessica Ferne oversees an extensive global portfolio of humanitarian response and development initiative. As the Director of Programs for IDRF, a Canadian-based INGO, she has delivered dozens of programs serving people in need across South Asia, the Middle East, Eastern and Southern Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Americas. Throughout her career, she has deployed to Lebanon, Turkey, Pakistan, Nepal, Belarus, Zambia, Tanzania, Guyana, and across Canada.

Jessica currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Ontario Council for International Cooperation, an international development and education network working globally for social justice, as well as for Licensed to Learn, which provides over 3,500 Toronto & GTA youth with free peer-led academic support and leadership opportunities each year. She is also an ally volunteer with NU, a youth-driven collective aiming to diversify the sexual health and rights dialogue for GTA newcomer, immigrant, and second generation youth.

A passionate social justice advocate, Jessica has served in various leadership capacities in Canada and abroad, with a particular focus on emergency response; refugee, undocumented community, and criminalized community health; youth engagement; and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Prior to joining IDRF, Jessica held diverse roles with the UNDP, Bay Centre for Birth Control, Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services, Planned Parenthood Ottawa, and many others.

Jessica completed her Master of Public Health degree at the University of Toronto, and an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy at the University of Ottawa. She has completed post-graduate studies in Advanced International Project Management (University of Toronto); International Policy Analysis & Strategic Planning (Carleton University); and Humanitarian Response (Harvard University).

Jessica is currently based in Toronto, and speaks both English and French.

Industry Expertise

International Affairs, Non-Profit/Charitable, Government Relations, Women, Program Development

Areas of Expertise

Humanitarian Assistance, International Development, Disaster Management, Sexual & Reproductive Health, Refugee and Human Rights Issues, Women's Health, Youth Engagement, Human Rights, Policy Analysis, Public Health, Program Management, Non-Profit Leadership

Affiliations

Board Member, Licensed to Learn, Board Member, Ontario Council for International Cooperation

Event Appearances

Saviour Complex: Navigating Religion's Messy History & Current Role in Development
International Development Conference 2017, University of Toronto Scarborough Campus

Reflections on Moving towards the Sustainable Development Goals
Development Drinks, OCIC

From International Volunteer to Career: Pathways in International Cooperation
Go Global Expo

Responding to the Syrian Crisis - our work in Canada and abroad
When Art meets MSF

Witness: Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration
Standing Committee on the Federal Government's Initiative to Resettle Syrian Refugees to Canada

Needs of Syrian refugees resettling to Canada
Town Hall: Syrian Refugee Resettlement

Rewriting the Script: Queer-Positive Health Care in Action
32nd Annual Guelph Sexuality Conference

Sex Work and the Urban Environment
18th Congress on Women's Health Issues

Education

University of Toronto
Master of Public Health (MPH)

University of Ottawa
Honours Bachelor of Arts

Carleton University
Executive Certificate

Humanitarian Academy, Harvard University
Certificate

University of Toronto - School of Continuing Studies
Graduate Certificate

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