



Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

1979-2004

25 years of resettling refugees!

It started with the "boat people"—the Indochinese who took to water and whose story moved Canadians to respond. The Government of Canada committed to resettling one refugee for every refugee sponsored by a private group, and soon found itself unable to keep up with the response. As a result of the personal commitment of thousands of Canadians and permanent residents, Canada was able to provide safe haven to far more refugees than would have been possible otherwise. In the end, over 60,000 Indochinese refugees were resettled in Canada in 1979 and 1980. Thirty-four thousand of them were privately sponsored.

But that was just the beginning of the private sponsorship of refugees in Canada. For every conflict around the globe that forced people to flee their countries, homes were created for them in Canada—mostly by strangers who, moved by compassion, offered them welcome. The program continues to respond to changing world events, and refugee sponsorships have shifted focus from Asia to Central America, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

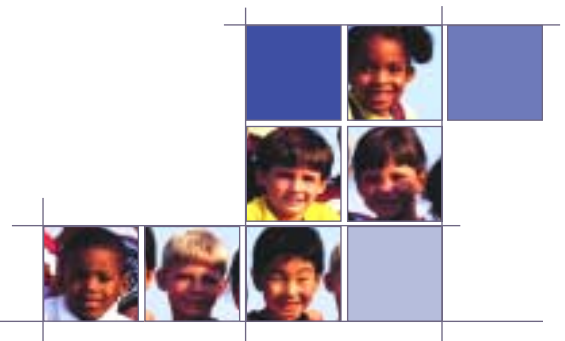
Canadians have a proud history of opening their doors to people from around the world and providing safe haven to those in need of protection. In fact, Canada is recognized around the world for its leadership in resettling refugees. Canada's unique Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program allows it to offer protection and a permanent home to a far greater number of refugees than would be possible through government sponsorship alone. It relies on volunteers: dedicated groups that make the humanitarian commitment to ensure that the refugee family's financial, material and emotional needs are met during their first year in Canada.

What is private sponsorship?

The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program provides an opportunity for Canadians and permanent residents to offer a new life in Canada to refugees and others in need of Canada's protection. Administered by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, the program is a partnership between the Government of Canada and organizations across the country. Private sponsorships are arranged by faith-based organizations, community associations, humanitarian organizations, unions, or any group of five or more individuals who take on the challenge. The program plays an essential role in offering protection to those in need, reuniting families and advancing Canada's humanitarian tradition.

Accomplishments

- Private sponsors allow for the resettlement of more than 3,000 refugees above those sponsored by the Government of Canada (Canada sponsors 7,300 to 7,500 refugees annually).
- Since 1979, more than 184,000 refugees and persons in need of protection have been sponsored in communities large and small across the country.
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees awarded the people of Canada the Nansen Medal in recognition of their outstanding voluntary efforts in the resettlement of refugees.



For more information on this
volunteer program

www.cic.gc.ca • 1 888 242-2100

