

Refugees' Steps to U.S. Resettlement

1. Refugees flee their homeland

Because of a well-founded fear of persecution, a refugee will flee his/her home country.

2. Refugees Seek Protection

A refugee seeks protection from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Protection can come from one of three possible solutions:

- Return to the home country when homeland is deemed safe.
- Settle into the country to which they fled.
- Resettle permanently into a third country.

3. Access to the US Refugee Program

A refugee can access the U.S. Refugee Program through an application process that includes referrals. The referrals can come from:

- An individual referral from the UNHCR or any U.S. Embassy (P-1 cases).
- A group referral where a person claims to be a member of a group of special humanitarian concern to the U.S. (P-2 cases).
- A referral from a relative in the U.S. seeking to reunite with his or her family member overseas (P-3 cases). Only certain nationalities are identified each fiscal year and only parents, spouses and unmarried children under the age of 21 are eligible for a family referral.

4. Permanent Resettlement into a Third Country

If permanent resettlement is deemed a possibility, the refugee is interviewed in his/her current place of residence by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to see if he/she will be granted permission to enter the U.S. Refugee Program.

5. Approval

If a refugee is approved by USCIS, the case is allocated to one of 10 domestic resettlement agencies, of which Church World Service is one.

6. Resettlement

The refugee's case is assured to a local office in the U.S., where help is found for the refugee. Assurance is based on an analysis of available resources in a given community to meet the needs of specific refugees.

