35TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE 2022 HOUSING MATTERS



Addressing Housing Challenges Experienced by Refugees





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David Zverow
Program Consultant
Chair, RAN Housing Committee



Mission: Refugee Action Network is a statewide advocacy group supporting the inclusive integration of refugees in Illinois through public policy and community education.

About us: We are a coalition of refugees, resettlement agencies, mutual aid societies, community organizations, and other advocates working together to advocate for refugees, asylees, asylum-seekers, and those with similar status.

Formerly named **The Golden Door Coalition**, we've advocated for refugees in Chicago and throughout Illinois for more than a decade. We are committed to creating welcoming communities that value refugees and empower them to lead fulfilling lives of safety and dignity.

Refugee Action Network's work focuses on:

- Creating an inclusive network that uplifts the voices of refugees
- Educating communities, civic leaders, and the media about refugees
- Mobilizing individuals and organizations to advocate for refugees

Refugee Action Network Member Organizations

Arab American Family Services

Asian Human Services

Building Peaceful Bridges

Catholic Charities

Chicago Jews for Refugees Coalition

Chicago Refugee Coalition

Chinese Mutual Aid Association

Compass Partnerships

Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago

CPS - Office of Early Childhood Education

> Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago

Exodus World Service

FORA

GirlForward

Heartland Alliance

HIAS

ICNA Relief

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Iraqi Christian Relief Council

Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago

MIRA (formerly IMAS)

RefugeeOne

Syrian Community Network

United African Organization

Vietnamese Association of Illinois

World Relief



RAN Housing Committee Activity

Refugee Action Network

- Origin and activity of Housing Committee
- Partnership with Housing Action Illinois
 - State advocacy:
 - HB 2775-Source of Income discrimination prevention
 - \$150M in American Rescue Plan Act funds for affordable housing
 - Federal advocacy:
 - Legislator visits for Build Back Better Act
 - Municipal advocacy:
 - Meet with mayors and/or housing officials in designated suburbs

Refugee Resettlement Flow Chart

- 1. Oversees United Nations and U.S. vetting of refugee family
 - a. Families often wait years for resettlement from refugee camps
 - b. Most Afghan and Ukrainian families come in as parolees, not refugees
 - i. Parolees are not guaranteed benefits by the U.S., just emergency placement
 - ii. Afghans, Ukrainians are granted most refugee benefits
 - c. Asylees proceed through a different process
- 2. Resettlement agencies in placement city

 Government agencies
 - d. Three months of government services are mandated. Sometimes service period is extended.
 - e. Chicago area resettlement agencies: Refugee One, Ethiopian Community Association, World Relief, Heartland Alliance, Catholic Charities, JCFS (HIAS Chicago), Muslim Women's Center, Arab-American Family Services
 - f. Resettlement agencies are responsible for finding families housing, jobs, and applying for benefits
- 3. Mutual aid societies/local independent agencies
 - g. ICNA Relief, Building Peaceful Bridges, Compass in this category
 - h. Provide wide variety of case management and other services in languages of most common refugee groups.

Refugee Action Network Housing Poll

We would like to ask you the following questions so we can better understand your housing needs. We hope that your answers will help us to better advocate for housing assistance on your behalf with our state and federal legislators. Your participation will in no way affect your ability to get services from the agency. We will not share any personal identifying information. Your information will only be used to tabulate anonymous totals.

(Optional) Name:
Country of Origin:
(Optional) Phone number to call for more information if needed or want to share their
story:
Zip code:
Neighborhood:
1. How many people live in your home?
2. How many bedrooms is your unit?
3. How much is your monthly rental/mortgage?
4. (Optional) What is your monthly income?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Date:



Refugee Action Network Housing Poll Results

Survey of housing data from 120 refugees from:

- ICNA Relief
- Refugee One
- Arab American Action Network
- World Relief

Average family rental cost \$1,105

Average family income/mo \$1,521

Percentage of family income spent on rent 73%

What is ICNA Relief? Islamic Circle of North America Relief

- ICNA Relief is a national non-profit social services organization.
- Our work centers on empowering families, preventing hunger, rescuing homeless women, preparing students for school, providing basic healthcare, and more.
- Our organization is faith-inspired, "Muslims for Humanity"
- Our services are open to the public regardless of religion, gender, nationality, etc., serving right here in our local neighborhoods.
- Our team consists of 80% volunteers.







ICNA Relief Flagship Programs

- Muslim Family Services
- Hunger Prevention
- Transitional Home
- Back2School
- Health Services
- Disaster Response
 - + Seasonal Drives





Patterns and Outcomes in Illinois

Refugee Housing



Galya Ben-Arieh, J.D., Ph.D.
Professor, Northwestern University
Founding President, COMPASS –
Community Partnerships for Settlement
Strategies



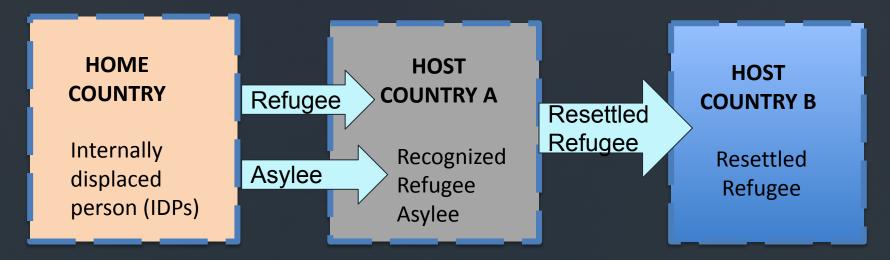
1st Country

2nd Country

3rd Country



TERMINOLOGY



REFUGEE: Afforded legal protection to stay in host country on account of past or future persecution – cannot return – states who signed the Refugee Convention are obligated to recognize refugees through an administrative process

UNDOCUMENTED: yet undetermined legal status or basis for protection in the country

ILLEGAL: determined legal status – adjudicator determined person has no legal right to be in the country as per the county's <u>ADMINISTRATIVE</u> law and policy (not criminal law).

• **Exclusion** from entry at the border vs. **Deportation** (removal from the interior for unlawful presence)

16

ART 1: LEGAL RECOGNITION AS A REFUGEE

A REFUGEE IS SOMEONE WHO "OWING TO A WELL-FOUNDED FEAR OF BEING **PERSECUTED** FOR REASONS OF RACE, RELIGION, NATIONALITY, MEMBERSHIP OF A PARTICULAR SOCIAL GROUP, OR POLITICAL OPINION, IS **OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY OF HIS NATIONALITY**, AND IS **UNABLE** TO OR, **OWING TO SUCH FEAR**, IS UNWILLING TO AVAIL HIMSELF OF THE PROTECTION OF THAT COUNTRY..."

The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees

1



UNHCR identifies refugees who will need resettlement based on their vulnerabilities and specific needs.



UNHCR assesses each individual case, gathers all the background information and submits the case to be considered for resettlement.

- City Locations- go to local UNHCR offices and apply for status
- Refugee Campsregister for status
- UNHCR ID Card



- Do not choose country they would like to live
 - US Ties can increase odds of going to particular country
- UNHCR identifies most vulnerable refugees for resettlement and makes recommendations to countries
 - Urgent protection cases
 - Single parent households
 - Women head of households
 - Chronic illness/significant medical needs

Less than 1% of the world's refugees are resettled into a 3rd country

Memorandum on Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2023

SEPTEMBER 27, 2022 • PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

Presidential Determination No. 2022-25

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2023

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, in accordance with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the "Act") (8 U.S.C. 1157), and after appropriate consultations with the Congress, I hereby make the following determinations and authorize the following actions:

The admission of up to 125,000 refugees to the United States during Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 is justified by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest.

The admissions numbers shall be allocated among refugees of special humanitarian concern to the United States in accordance with the following regional allocations:

The 5,000 unallocated refugee numbers shall be allocated to regional ceilings, as needed. Upon providing notification to the Judiciary Committees of the Congress, you are hereby authorized to use unallocated admissions in regions where the need for additional admissions arises.

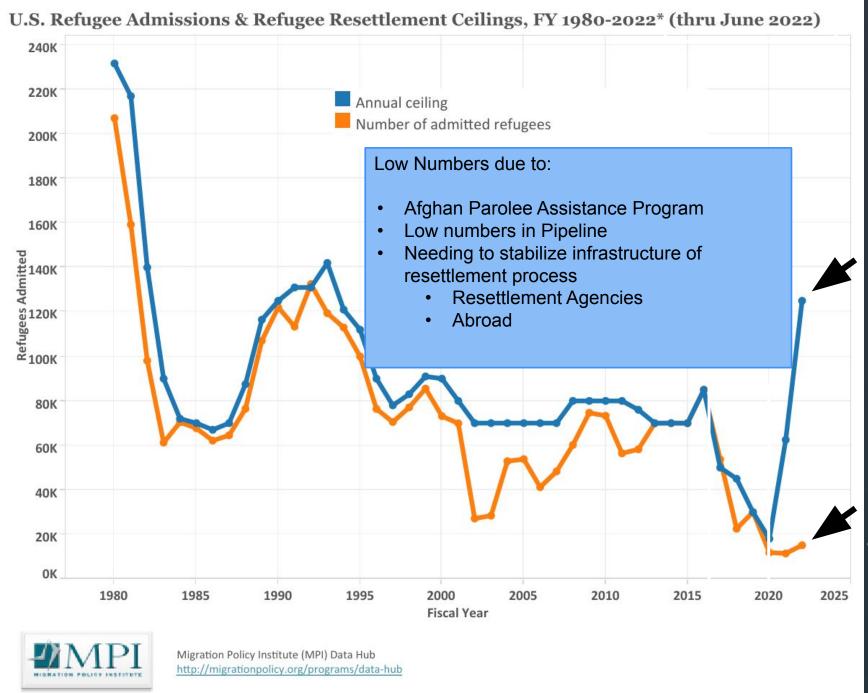
Additionally, upon notification to the Judiciary Committees of the Congress, you are further authorized to transfer unused admissions allocated to a particular region to one or more other regions, if there is a need for greater admissions for the region or regions to which the admissions are being transferred.

Consistent with section 2(b)(2) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962 (22 U.S.C. 2601(b)(2)), I hereby determine that assistance to or on behalf of persons applying for admission to the United States as part of the overseas refugee admissions program will contribute to the foreign policy interests of the United States and designate such persons for this purpose.

Consistent with section 101(a)(42) of the Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 (a)(42)), and after appropriate consultation with the Congress, I also specify that, for FY 2023, the following persons may, if otherwise qualified, be considered refugees for the purpose of admission to the United States within their countries of nationality or habitual residence:

- a. Persons in Cuba:
- b. Persons in Eurasia and the Baltics;
- c. Persons in Iraq;
- d. Persons in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras; and
- e. In certain circumstances, persons identified by a United States Embassy in any location.

You are authorized and directed to publish this determination in the Federal Register.



FY2022 October 2021-Septembe r 2022 125,000

FY2022 Number of admitted 15,000

Department of State Summary of Refugee Admissions as of 30, September 2022

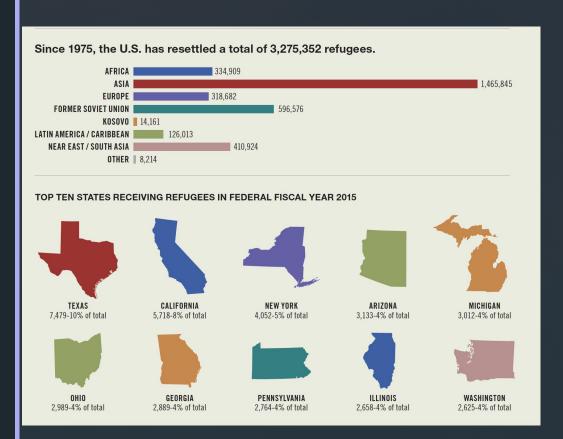
Region	Refugee Admissions Ceiling	FY Total Admitted to the U.S.
Africa	27,500	31,624
East Asia	14,000	12,518
Europe & Central Asia	4,000	3,957
Latin Am/Caribbean	1,500	1,340
Near East/S.Asia	38,000	35,555
Grand Totals	85,000	

- Africa: Somalia (9,020), Democratic Republic of Congo (16,370), Burudi (694(, Sudan (1,458), Eritrea 1,949), Ethiopia (1,131)
- East Asia: Burma (12,347)
- Europe/Central Asia: Ukraine (2,543)
- Latin America/Caribbean: Columbia (529)
- Near East/South Asia: Pakistan (545) Bhutan (5,817), Syria (12,587), Afghanistan (2,737), Iran (3,750), Iraq (9,880)

Refugee & Asylees – two pathways to admission as a refugee under the 1980 Refugee Act

3,515,366 resettled refugees since 1975

Approximately 124,644 of whom were resettled in Illinois



610,000 individuals granted asylum since 1990

Table 16.			
INDIVIDUALS GRANTED ASYLUM	AFFIRMATIVELY OR DEFENSIVELY: FISCA	AL YEARS 1990 TO	2020
La constitución de la constitución	Total	4.65	Defension
Year	Total	Affirmative	Defensiv
1990	8,472	5,672	2,80
1991	5,035	2,908	2,12
1992	6,307	4,123	2,18
1993	9,543	7,509	2,03
1994	13,828	11,775	2,05
1995	20,703	17,573	3,13
1996	23,532	18,624	4,90
1997	22,939	16,380	6,55
1998	20,507	13,216	7,29
1999	26,571	18,150	8,42
2000	32,514	23,278	9,23
2001	39,148	29,147	10,00
2002	36,937	25,960	10,97
2003	28,743	15,367	13,37
2004	27,376	14,354	13,02
2005	25,304	13,547	11,75
2006	26,352	13,048	13,30
2007	25,318	12,459	12,85
2008	23,022	12,130	10,89
2009	22,303	12,003	10,30
2010	19,777	11,258	8,51
2011	23,631	13,493	10,13
2012	27,912	17,337	10,57
2013	24,866	15,099	9,76
2014	23,083	14,447	8,63
2015	25,813	17,673	8,14
2016	20,165	11,472	8,69
2017	26,218	15,653	10,56
2018	37,511	24,317	13,19
2019	46,130	27,226	18,90
2020	31,429	16,864	14.56

Refugee Arrivals by State and Nationality Fiscal Year 2022

October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022

Affiliate State Name	DA Nationality	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Anu	May	Jun	Jul	Λιια	Son	Grand Total
Illinois	Total	17	18	26	38	51	72	Apr 79	59	106	103	Aug 83	Sep 244	896
	Afghanistan	N 20 20			4		1	2	9	3		2	13	34
	Burma		2	1	6	13	1	27		12	3	15	68	148
	Burundi									2	11			13
	Central African								2		4			6
	Colombia									5		5	3	13
	Dem. Rep. Con		7			2	26	13	3	36	43	16	85	231
	El Salvador												1	1
	Eritrea	6			2								1	9
	Ethiopia							4			1	6	2	13
	Guatemala					4			12	12	3		6	37
	Honduras					3		6					1	10
	Iran		2	2							1			5
	Iraq				3	3	6	4	3			6		25
	Moldova				3								2	5
	Somalia											5		5
	Sri Lanka (Ceyl											4	1	5
	Sudan	5	6	13	9	10	10		5			9	11	78
	Syria	6		9	11	11	28	23	23	34	36	10	35	226
	Uganda		1	1							1			3
	Ukraine					3						4	15	22
	Venezuela					2			2	2		1		7

What does Refugee and Asylum Status provide?

Asylum Seeker

Asylee

Resettled Refugees

Work permit after 180 days if their case has not been heard

Immediate access to SS card and Work **Permit**

Immediate access to SS card and Work **Permit**

No formal status – limbo

Asylum for individual and family

Green Card after 1

year, May be granted

citizenship in 5 years

Green Card after 1 year, May be granted citizenship in 5 years

No support (EU countries there is support)

May be eligible to

receive help from **ORR** refugee agency

Can be a **2-10 year** process

Reception & Placement support services w/ a Refugee Agency (90 days)

IDHS > Customers > Services by Division > Family & Community Services > Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees >

Refugee Program

Since 1975 Illinois has resettled more than 123,644 refugees from more than 60 countries. The Refugee Program facilitates relocation and social service assistance to people who are victims of political and religious persecution that have been granted the legal right to rebuild their lives in the United States. Due to the diverse ethnic characteristics, the Refugee Program designed a unique social service program to provide specialized multi-lingual services.

The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago administers this program through a network of community-based partner agencies.

The Refugee Program procures community-based services which include adjustment counseling, orientation, English as a Second Language, vocational training, job readiness, and job placement. Multi-lingual mental health services are provided for those refugees who experienced severe trauma and require therapy. Of a total of 9 program sites, 6 are in Chicago and 3 are outside Chicago city limits.

The Refugee Program also procures health screening services with local health care providers to ensure that newlyarrived refugees are provided with a complete health screening. The goal of the program is to prevent any public health problems resulting from lack of detection and treatment of communicable diseases.

Refugee Resettlement Agencies in Illinois

- Catholic Charities
- Ethiopian
 Community
 Association of
 Chicago
- Heartland Human
 Care Services
- JCFS Chicago/HIAS
- Refugee One
- Rock Valley College (Rockford)
- The Refugee Center (Champaign)
- World Relief

Reception and Placement (R&P) Period



30 to 90 days



Core services with specific timelines



Designed to help with integration and obtaining self-sufficency

Preparing for Arrival

Agency

- Receive Case Manager
- Housing
 - Furniture, kitchen utensils, etc.
- Food
 - Welcome meal- hot culturally relevant food
 - Culturally Relevant groceries
- Spending Money
 - \$200 per person
- Planning Airport Reception

Participant

- Cultural Orientation
- Final Medical Screening
- COVID-19 Test

Core Services Include...

- Housing
- Furnishings
- Public Benefits
- Health Screening
- English Class
- K-12 school enrollment
- Employment Services
- Social Security Card
- State ID
- Transportation

- Home Visits (24 hr and 30 day)
- Intake
- Reception
- Service Plan
- Pocket Money
- Selective Service
- AR-11
- Budget
- Cultural Orientation

Refugee Agencies Overwhelmed with Housing Placement

- Federal funds for other services have been diverted for pressing need of housing
- Scrambling to house new arrivals
 - Hotels
 - Airbnb

Beyond Reception & Placement – Mutual Assistance/Aid Associations (MAA)

- Historically ethnically based organizations to provide longer term support for refugee newcomers (Chinese Mutual Aid, Cambodian Mutual Aid, Iraqi Mutual Aid, Syrian Community Network)
- Provide a range of services such as ESL, career training, citizenship preparation, child afterschool programs, legal aid, food pantry

Greatest overall impact of Reception & Placement is cost of housing due to underemployment

Back on

Track



Graduate high school and enter college at the same rate as U.S.-born residents of similar ages

Lower-than average educational levels due to language barriers and need to support families



Much lower levels of education and poorer language skills:

- Initially poor with lower employment, higher welfare use, and low earnings
- After about 6 years in country, refugees work at higher rates than US-born respondents
- Refugees never attain the earnings level of natives





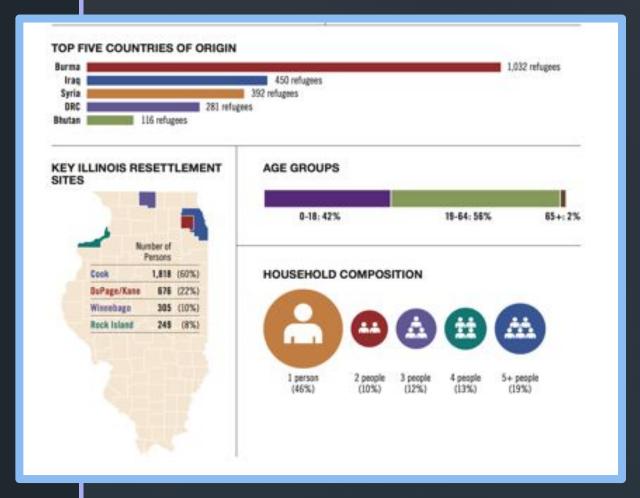






United States Refugee Assistance Program (USRAP)

- USRAP Reception & Placement Program Local refugee resettlement agencies are responsible for refugee housing placement
 - World Relief, HIAS Chicago, Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago, RefugeeOne and Heartland Alliance
 - Private Sponsorship circles
- Federal regulations stipulate that agencies must find housing that is "suitable":
 - regulated 15 mile radius from the core refugee resettlement services offered during the first five years of settlement
 - supports refugee cultural, educational, health and social needs.
 - little is known about how refugee agencies or private sponsors define "suitable" and negotiate competing demands of cost and availability of housing, the prevalence of social supports, or lack thereof, and resettling refugees' economic realities in the context of resettlement.
- Challenges:
 - Rising rental costs
 - Reluctant landlords



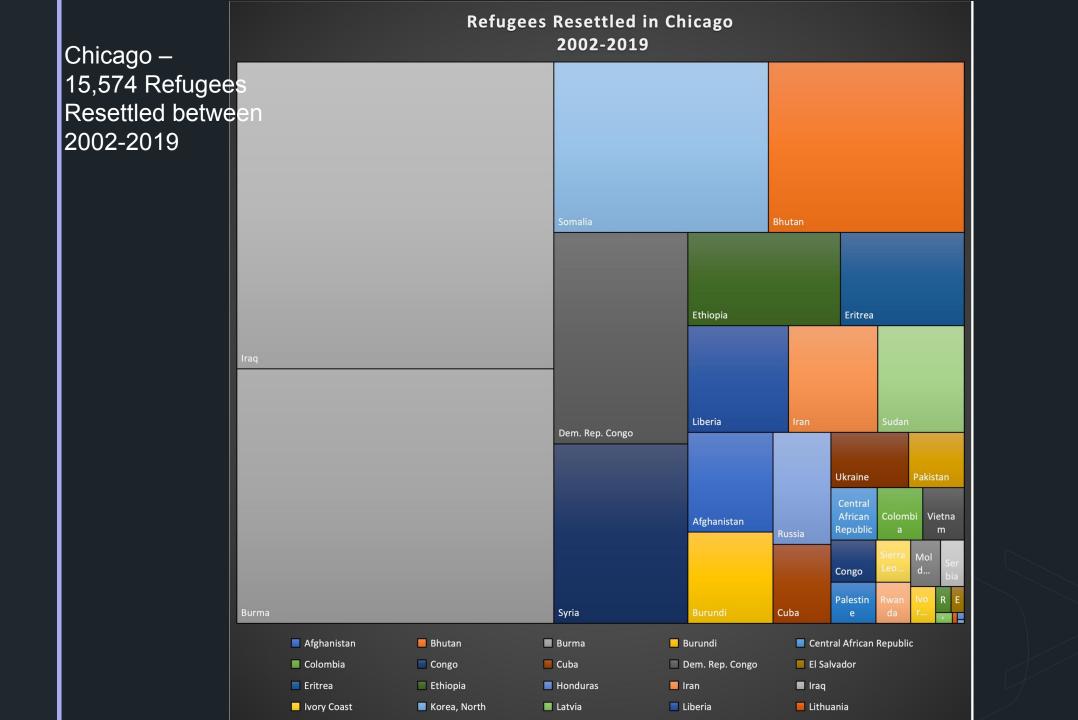
ILLINOIS (2016)

- □ 3,048 Individuals (3.5% of the total)
- □ 1,706 adults
 - \$10.64 Average full-time hourly wages
 - Many have marketable skills that are untapped

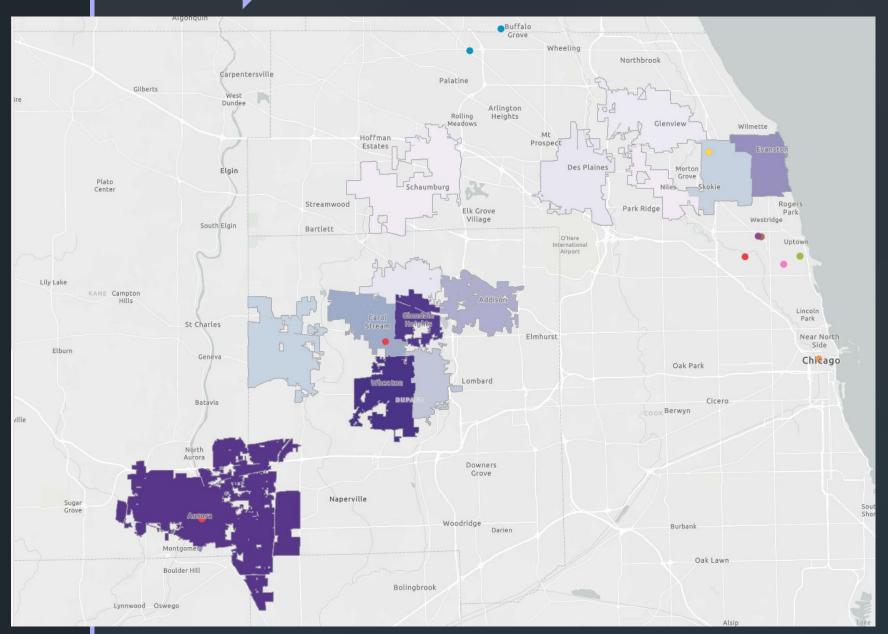
RESETTLED REFUGEE PLACEMENT DATA

Geographic Information System (GIS) research on refugee housing patterns in Illinois indicates:

Refugees are placed in low-income neighborhoods and, even then, depend on rental assistance.



Greater Chicagoland



Refugees have been resettled in mainly 14 localities that are within 15 miles of the Resettlement Agency responsible for their initial resettlement

Addison

Aurora

Bloomingdale

Carol Stream

Des Plaines

Evanston

Glen Ellyn

Glendale Heights

Glenview

Niles

Schaumburg

Skokie

West Chicago

Wheaton

Designing Effective Refugee Settlement Strategies







The mission of COMPASS is to support the well-being and long-term potential of adults who arrived in our communities as refugees or asylees and have not yet been able to attain a high school diploma, certification or professional degree that would enable them to attain a living wage career

- COMPASS supports the removal of barriers so that refugees can be producers of their own well-being
- We enable our grantees, members of the community, to build on their strengths and we support the things that will enable them to grow and attain financial well-being

GRANTEE SUPPORT

- Individual coaching and mentoring,
- Networking opportunities and job shadowing,
- Technical training grants can be used towards housing, certification programs or repayment of refugee travel loan
- Workshop grants refugees receive a stipend to test out career ideas by organizing a workshop







Addressing Housing Challenges Experienced by Refugees

Housing Matters 2022 October 20, 2022, Bloomington, IL



Lori Lucchetti Building Peaceful Bridges President and Co-Founder





















Bridging the Hearts and Minds of All People

The Challenge: Forced Migration

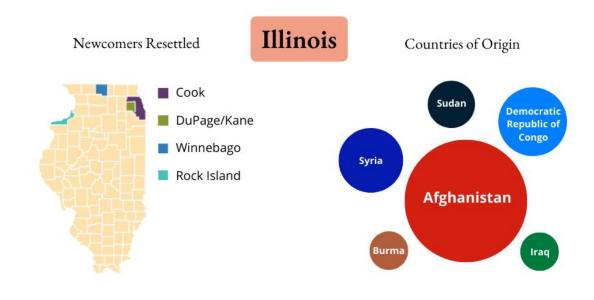
A Global Issue at a Local Level

Worldwide





Source: UNHCR 2021

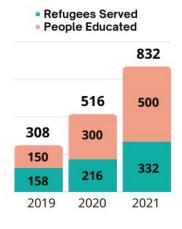


United States



CUMULATIVE AMOUNT OF REFUGEES RESETTLED 2010-2021 Source: usafacts.org

Building Peaceful Bridges





Mission

Vision, Values and Approach

Building Peaceful Bridges

- assists in the integration of refugees into American society
- educates communities on the challenges they face



To "bridge the hearts and minds of all people."





KNOWLEDGE Bridges to ACHIEVEMENT

Holistic | Family Based

E.			

Mentoring and Sponsoring

- Our Mentoring Volunteers build lifelong relationships with our refugee families. Home visits provide the foundation of the BPB Mentoring and Sponsoring Program.
- BPB helps families **navigate their communities** to find the resources, **such as housing**, which they need to achieve a sense of belonging.



BPB's Mentoring
and Sponsoring
Program is built
upon hope,
compassion, respect
and inspiration.





February 28, 2022 Learning Luncheon

Housing Challenges for Afghan Newcomers



<u>D</u>avid Zverow ICNA Relief Refugee Action Network



Bob Palmer Housing Action Illinois



Jessica Schaffer HIAS / JCFS

ISSUES ADDRESSED

- Finding housing: one of the most difficult part of the resettlement process
- Not enough affordable housing
- Lack of credit and rent history
- Afghan crisis created unique housing challenges for resettlement agencies
- Discrimination

Refugee Housing Stories

"There is nothing more important than a good, safe, secure home."



An American Dream Bushra and Zeyad

- Arrived IL in December 2014 Special Immigrantion Visa (SIV) from Iraq
- Unaffordable housing in Chicago and moved to affordable housing in Indiana 2018
- Rent assistance provided by ICNA and BPB
- Sold home in Iraq; purchased a house and renovated; sold for double the price
- Achieved a sense of belonging in America and independence over 8 years



Average Refugee Housing Story Asha's Family

- Arrived 2019 from the Democratic of Congo
- Pandemic 2020 BPB partners with RefugeeOne and provides 9 months rent assistance and food support
- BPB bridges the gap for Asha's family until employed steadily in low income jobs
- Provide clothing and household needs support continuously
- Achieved a sense of belonging in America and working towards independence



American Housing Nightmare Basharmal and family

- Evacuated from Afghanistan August, 2022
- Arrived Fort McCoy, Wisconsin; relocated to Chicago by Catholic Charities
- BPB provides 1 year Rent Guarantee to landlord and pays rent until family employed
- Unprofessional landlord; court action by neighbors; home uninhabitable
- Immediate relocation to professional landlord property
- Working toward a sense of belonging in America; not independent

Three Months is Not Enough

Bridge to Belongings

Turning a house into a home











- BPB collects, stores, and provides food, clothing, furniture and household items for refugee families.
- We conduct spring and fall clothing drives, providing clothing for over 300 refugees with dozens of extra bags for distribution through ICNA Relief, Muslim Women's Resource Center and Hispanic organizations.











Afghan Evacuation

Initiated letter writing campaign to the President, Congress and State Legislatures to encourage them to evacuate Afghans in the aftermath of U.S. troop withdawel.



Humanitarian Parole

Worked with Baker McKenzie global law firm to apply for Humanitarian Parole for Afghan family members. Collaborated with multiple organizations for application approval.



Affordable Housing

Worked at a state and local level to provide affordable housing for our refugees. Initiated rent guarantee to replace landlord credit requirements.

Afghan Adjustment Act

BPB, with the Refugee Action Network, worked to improve funding and status for Afghan evacuees. Efforts continue in 2022 for Congressional passage.





Never doubt that a small group of thoughful, committed citizens can change the world; Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead



Partners

"I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot, together we can do great things." - Mother Teresa



























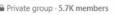








Refugee Community Connection







Challenges

Solutions

U.S. Resettlement Policy provides 3 or 4 months of rent support upon refugee arrival	 Federal legislative changes in resettlement policy Housing vouchers at state level 		
• 73% of income spent on rent	 50% of monthly rent payments for 6 months or 12 months. Partner with other organizations (ICNA, Catholic Charities) to split rent payments 		
 Occupancy issues for large families; Per person bedroom occupancy (e.g., Skokie - 2 per room) House occupancy issues: 2 families or more living together 	 Waiver from community or landlord Settle in communities without these restrictions 		
Landlord reluctance	 Identify realtors willing to partner with BPB to benefit refugee housing Build relationships with landlords to show how refugees make good tenants 		
Zoning: limits refugee access to neighborhoods	Legislation, education, and avoidance		



Addressing Housing Challenges Experienced by Refugees



DISCUSSION





