

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

Ukraine Crisis

The GRSI partnership is gravely concerned about the human toll of the crisis in Ukraine. Over [5.7 million refugees](#) have fled Ukraine since February 24, 2022, bringing the global population of refugees to an estimated 31.7 million. The increasing number of refugees worldwide highlights the urgent need for global protection solutions, including community sponsorship.

Welcoming or hosting Ukrainian refugees in your home or city? The GRSI has online training resources for refugee sponsorship, which discuss expectations, culture, privacy and confidentiality, and power considerations, which may be helpful to you and your community. The online training can be accessed [here](#).

Are you a policymaker or civil society leader designing a refugee sponsorship program?
Download the GRSI's policy design workbook.

The Government of Canada hosts a panel on Refugees and the Future and *Peace by Chocolate* screening at EXPO 2020 in Dubai



The audience watches film within the Canada Pavilion at EXPO 2020.

© Canadian Embassy in Abu Dhabi

On March 21, 2022, at Expo 2020 in Dubai, the Government of Canada screened the new *Peace by Chocolate* movie at the Canada

Pavilion. The film is based on the [inspirational true story](#) of the Hadhads, a Syrian family that came to Canada as Privately Sponsored Refugees and later opened a chocolate factory in Nova Scotia. The screening featured an appearance by Tareq Hadad, CEO of Peace by Chocolate, himself! *Peace by Chocolate* comes to Canadian theatres on May 6, 2022.

Prior to the film screening, the Government of Canada hosted a panel discussion on Refugees and the Future. This panel discussion focused on opportunities for refugees to access durable solutions through labour mobility pathways. The hybrid event provided an exciting opportunity to spark innovation, discuss current trends and best practices, and continue collaboration among representatives of the private sector, civil society, state governments, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and refugees themselves.

Ontario Provincial Police Officers Raise Funds to bring a Syrian Refugee Family to Canada



Police Staff Sargent MaryAnn MacNeil serves a bowl of chili.

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In Petawawa, a small town in Ontario, Canada, members of the St. John's Lutheran Church group have been working since last July to sponsor a Syrian refugee family, the Jokhadars, to resettle in their town.

To support the sponsorship group's efforts, on March 31st, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers from the Upper Ottawa Valley held a chili lunch and silent auction, raising almost \$3,300.

The sponsorship group hopes that the Jokhadar family, who are currently living in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, can come to Canada in late 2022 or early 2023.

Check out the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative on Twitter!

Follow @theGRSI on Twitter for more updates on #communitysponsorship

Synagogue, church and mosque team up to sponsor an Afghan refugee family



(From left) Rev. Mark Michael, Rabbi Adam Raskin, Stew Remer and Sultan Chowdhury meet in Potomac, Maryland, to discuss the Afghan family they are sponsoring.

© The Washington Post

Recognizing the predicament of many Afghan families fleeing the Taliban, Rabbi Adam Raskin of Maryland, U.S. and his congregants made the decision to sponsor a refugee family. However, once the group learned more about the resettlement process, namely how complicated it can be and how many resources it can require, Raskin pondered, "We could do this on our own, but wouldn't it be amazing to collaborate with a Christian and Muslim congregation?" Rabbi Raskin pitched the idea to St. Francis Episcopal Church and the Islamic Community Center of Potomac, and both congregations enthusiastically agreed to join the group. Kathy Herrmann, the parish life

coordinator at St. Francis, said: "We all have the same goal to help this family become acclimated and feel the love that we have for them."

The group collectively co-sponsored the Wahdats, an Afghan refugee family who had resettled to the U.S. at the beginning of the year. The church, mosque and synagogue each have unique tasks, from healthcare advocacy, to translation and cultural needs, to transportation and financial support. "This isn't a short-term project. We are in it for the long haul," added Hermann. She also noted that the three religious houses plan to continue interfaith collaborations, adding: "We are all one."

What is the GRSI?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of six organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, the Open Society Foundations, The Giustra Foundation, The Shapiro Foundation, and the University of Ottawa. It aims to help other countries set up their own community-based refugee sponsorship programs, strengthening local communities and improving the narrative on refugees in the process.

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