

Fact Sheet Questions and Answers on Resettlement Referrals from Africa

1. How can a refugee apply to UNHCR for resettlement?

There is no application process for resettlement. Individuals are identified for resettlement through UNHCR staff based on the criteria outlined above. A refugee who has urgent protection needs or consider themselves in a vulnerable situation should meet with local UNHCR staff to discuss his/her circumstances. UNHCR staff will then review and assess the case for a durable solution which includes resettlement.

2. Is there an appeal process for a negative UNHCR resettlement assessment?

There is no formal appeal process for a negative assessment. However, if the refugee's situation changes, he/she may bring the new facts to the attention of UNHCR officers who may again review the case.

3. What happens after UNHCR determines a refugee to be in need of resettlement?

UNHCR will refer eligible persons to one of several resettlement countries (Australia, Canada, Finland, USA, etc). Each country of resettlement has its own policies, criteria and practices that a refugee must follow before he or she can be resettled. The final decision on resettlement will be made by a resettlement country, not by UNHCR.

4. What is the process for refugees who are referred to the US Resettlement Program?

UNHCR identifies and refers potential resettlement cases to the US Embassy. If the referral is accepted, the Embassy then passes on the case to the Joint Voluntary Agency (JVA) in Nairobi or the Overseas Processing Entity (OPE) in Accra, which have been designated by the Department of State to prepare documentation on individual cases for the US Resettlement Program. To be resettled to the US, each individual will have to be interviewed and approved by an officer of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. If approved, all individuals will also have to pass medical tests and security checks, in addition to other administrative requirements. Please note that UNHCR has no decision making role or authority in the resettlement process after the referral is made to the US Embassy.

5. I have been told I need to pay money for resettlement to the US, is this correct?

Neither UNHCR nor the US Resettlement Program charges a fee for filing of AORS, resettlement interviews or decisions. Applicants and their relatives should be wary that persons soliciting money for resettlement might be involved in fraudulent and illegal activities.

Refugees approved for resettlement to the USA will receive a travel loan from International Organization for Migration (IOM), and will be asked to sign a promissory note to repay that loan in the future.

6. I would like to sponsor a friend or relative to come to the United States. Is this possible?

All refugees are assigned a "sponsor" when a case has been interviewed and approved by the US government. The resettlement agencies along with volunteers from communities and US family members are responsible for providing resettlement services to newly resettled refugees. These resettlement agencies receive funding from the US government and the private community to help refugees resettle. Refugees sign for travel loans to assist with their airfare expenses. Friends and extended family are not able to "sponsor" refugees to grant them an interview with Department of Homeland Security or a UNHCR/US embassy referral.

7. Where should I direct further questions regarding refugee relatives/friends seeking resettlement to the US?

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You should first contact a resettlement/immigration agency in your area or an immigration attorney with your questions. If needed, the agency may contact the UNHCR office in Washington:

- By mail: UNHCR Washington, 1775 K St. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC, 20006.
- By fax: 202-296-5660.
- By email: USAWAINQ@UNHCR.ORG

8. How do I file for my family to bring them to the United States?

If you came to the United States as a refugee or were granted asylum in the United States and your family are nationals of one of the 20 countries listed below, your family may be eligible for family reunion under the United States Resettlement Program. Your family members must be refugees residing outside of their country of origin. As the relative, you must file an "Affidavit of Relationship" (AOR) which is a document used by the US Resettlement Program (administered by US Department of State) for persons applying for family reunification.

Note: The United States State Department has temporarily suspended this program for certain nationalities. The program will reopen when the State Department has finalized and implemented new measures to verify family relationships.

For Fiscal Year 2009 (October 2008-September 2009) eligible nationalities include:

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|---|--------------|
| ➤ Afghanistan | ➤ Ethiopia |
| ➤ Bhutan | ➤ Haiti |
| ➤ Burma | ➤ Iran |
| ➤ Burundi | ➤ Iraq |
| ➤ Central African Republic | ➤ Somalia |
| ➤ Colombia | ➤ Sudan |
| ➤ Cuba | ➤ Uzbekistan |
| ➤ Democratic People's Republic of Korea | ➤ Zimbabwe |
| ➤ Democratic Republic of Congo | |
| ➤ Eritrea | |

Persons of these nationalities interested in applying for their immediate family members for resettlement to the US should contact a local resettlement agency for assistance and advice. AORs must be filed through a resettlement agency. All of the national agencies have affiliate offices located throughout the United States.

Please do not send Affidavits of Relationship or Interest forms to any UNHCR office. UNHCR has no decision making role or authority in the US Resettlement Programs. If you have questions about your individual case involving a P-3 family reunion case- please contact the voluntary agency or the JVA directly. UNHCR is unable to assist in this process.

9. Are there any other ways to help my family members to reunite with me in the US?

Persons with asylee or refugee status, permanent residents and US citizens may be eligible to file immigration visa petitions on behalf of certain immediate family members. UNHCR has no role or authority in the processing or issuance of US immigration visas. This falls under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. For information and assistance, contact an attorney or immigration organization in your area. You may also use the following sources for information.

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Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services:

- www.uscis.gov

Department of State, Consular Affairs:

- http://travel.state.gov/visa_services.html (see FAQ and Immigrant Visas)
- Visa Services' Public Inquiries Branch: 202-663-1225
- National Visa Center: 603-334-0700 (For inquiries about a petition that has already been approved by INS)

JVA Kenya:

Mail Address: Inquiries at JVA Kenya, PO Box 14176, Westlands, Nairobi Kenya 00800 or
email: inquiries@jvakenya.org

10. Where can I obtain more information about resettlement?

The best source for information on US resettlement is a US voluntary agency in your community which specializes in resettlement and immigration. To locate one of these agencies in your area, please contact the agencies on the chart below. You can also find general information about resettlement on UNHCR's web site: www.unhcr.org

U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES – Headquarters

<p>Church World Service (CWS) 475 Riverside Drive New York, New York 10115-0050 Tel: 212-870-2164 Fax: 212-870-3194 E-mail: cws@nccusa.org www.churchworldservice.org/</p>	<p>International Rescue Committee (IRC) 122 East 42nd Street, 12th Floor New York, New York 10168-1289 Tel: 212-551-3000 Fax: 212-551-3184 E-mail: irc@theirc.org www.theirc.org</p>
<p>Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc. 901 South Highland Street Arlington, Virginia 22204 Tel: 703-685-0510 Fax: 703-685-0529 E-mail: info@ecdcinternational.org www.ecdcinternational.org</p>	<p>Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) The Episcopal Church Center 815 Second Avenue New York, New York 10017 Tel: 212-716-6252 Fax: 212-972-0860 www.episcopalchurch.org/emm</p>
<p>US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20036 Tel: 202-797-2105 Fax: 202-797-2363 E-mail: uscra@uscra.org www.refugeesusa.org/</p>	<p>Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) 333 Seventh Avenue New York, New York 10001 Tel: 212-967-4100 Fax: 212-967-4483 E-mail: info@hias.org www.hias.org/</p>
<p>Iowa Department of Human Services (IOWA) 1200 University Avenue, Suite D Des Moines, Iowa 50314-2330 Tel: 515-283-7926 Fax: 515-283-9160 E-mail: refugee@dhs.state.ia.us</p>	<p>United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCC) Migration and Refugee Services 3211 Fourth Street, N.E. Washington, DC 20017 Tel: 202-541-3352 Fax: 202-501-3399 E-Mail: mrs@nccbuscc.org www.usccb.org/mrs/</p>
<p>Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) 700 Light Street Baltimore, MD 21230 Tel: 410-230-2700 E-mail: lirs@lirs.org www.lirs.org</p>	<p>World Relief 7 East Baltimore Street Baltimore, MD 21202 Tel: 443-451-1900 www.worldrelief.org www.wr.org</p>

Link to List of Local Agencies: www.usaforunhcr.org/usaforunhcr/uploadedfiles/affiliatedirectoryjan13.pdf