



INTERNATIONAL REGION
Resettlement Program Activities Overseas
SAH Conference 2016





Overview - Processing Priorities 2016

- Overall immigration levels to Canada highest in recent memory; 300,000 permanent residents to be admitted, emphasizing refugee admissions.
- Commitment to finalize Syrian PSRs received prior to March 31, 2016.
- Continued backlog reduction remains a priority.





Area Trips



Eritrean refugee family being resettled from Khartoum
Source: IOM, 2015

Some of the PSR interview trips completed in 2015-2016:

- Dadaab camp (Kenya)
- Nyarugusu camp (Tanzania)
- Khartoum (Sudan)
- Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)
- Kinshasa (DRC)
- Dushanbe (Tajikistan)
- Baku (Azerbaijan)
- Abidjan (Republic of Côte d'Ivoire)
- Yaoundé (Cameroon)
- Kathmandu (Nepal)
- Malta



Area Trips – Common Activities

- Refugee selection interviews;
- UNHCR generally arrange interpreters and facilities for interviews – IRCC visa officer often completes 6-7 interviews per day;
- Biometric data collection;
- Often visit transit centres and partner projects (e.g. Red Cross facilities);
- Outreach with key partners including non-governmental, UNHCR, IOM and Canada's Visa Application Centre (VAC);
- Relationship with IOM: coordinate refugee medical examinations, cultural orientation sessions, travel loans and travel itinerary.



Above: Canadian Orientation Abroad pre-departure course for 163 Afghan refugees residing in Tajikistan. (Source: IOM Tajikistan, 2013); Below: Mobile Biometrics kit used by Dakar visa office for area trips (IRCC, 2016)



Partners



*IRCC visit to the Macedonia-Serbia border and migrant registration camp in October 2015.
(Source: IRCC, 2015)*

- Strong working relationships with UNHCR (protection officers, resettlement staff) and IOM.
- Area trips may include meetings with UNHCR, IOM representatives and other stakeholders to discuss resettlement operations.
- Camp governance by host country government department (e.g. Tanzania Ministry of Home Affairs).
- Joint UNHCR and government registration of refugees in camps (e.g. Thailand).



Nairobi Processing

- High volume office with large territory of responsibility and complex inventory.
- Countries of responsibility: *Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan*
- Focus on cases that have been interviewed and next steps to lead to final decision.

Challenges:

- Restrictions on movement of refugees/inaccessibility (e.g. Kenyan encampment policy).
- Applicants often do not have fixed contact information and/or reside in remote areas.
- Logistically complex territory for officer travel.
- Heavy reliance on sponsors to contact clients, high no show rate for interviews and incomplete form submissions.
- Application delays caused by difficulties establishing identify and relationships, additional dependents.
- Exit permit requirements and delays: between finalization, travel arrangements, no-shows, new dependants, and exit permits, visas must often be cancelled and re-issued.



Dar es Salaam Processing

- Immigration section opened in July 2015.
- Countries of responsibility: *Burundi, Comoros, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia*

Challenges:

- Logistical challenges and travel restrictions to schedule interviews. Some populations currently inaccessible (e.g. Burundi).
- Exit permits required for **ALL** refugees in the territory and in order to obtain exit permit, refugees must be legally registered with UNHCR and/or local government. In Uganda, permits are only issued where a positive refugee status determination has been made.
- Medical assessment delays (e.g. with positive TB tests).



*With partners at new dorms in NMC Transit Camp Kigoma, Tanzania
(Source: Embassy of Canada in Tanzania, @CanadaTanzania)*



Rome Processing

- Very large inventory of older cases to process, where family configuration has often changed once processing begins.
- Countries of responsibility: *Albania, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Sudan, Vatican City*
- This year, Rome aims to put into process all cases received up to December 31, 2015.

Challenges:

- The majority of the caseload is located in countries which do not have a permanent IRCC presence (Sudan, Greece, Cyprus).
- Logistically complex territory for officer travel.
- Applicants may withhold information about membership in groups and/or any experience with military, particularly in armed conflict, complicating assessments.
- Exit permits required by Sudan - IOM Khartoum assists in this process but can be delayed.





Cairo Processing

- The Canadian Embassy in Egypt has moved to a new, permanent location, which has normalized operations.
- Countries of responsibility: *Egypt, Palestinian Authority (Gaza)*
- Majority of PSR applications from Sudan were transferred to Rome in 2015; however, Cairo is still processing Sudan cases received before August 2011.

Challenges:

- Age of inventory: loss of contact between applicant and mission.
- Working to finalize remaining Sudan inventory, while continuing to focus on Syrian cases in Egypt.
- Marriages and births occur frequently, requiring additional dependents to be added. These are not part of the inventory but do take up target space, slowing inventory reduction overall.
- Establishing bona fides of new marriages in refugee community.





Pretoria Processing

- Countries of Responsibility: *South Africa, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana, Namibia, Angola, Zimbabwe and Malawi* (11 countries)

Challenges:

- Logistical challenges, significant travel for officers.
- Some credibility concerns, inconsistencies in applicants' information.
- Political instability (e.g. Burundi elections, South Africa xenophobic violence).
- Encampment policies in southern African countries.
- Heavy reliance on sponsors to contact clients.





Islamabad Processing

- Resource-intensive resettlement operations; large inventory (Afghani) and reduced IRCC staff complement due to regional security concerns.
- Country of responsibility: *Pakistan*

Challenges:

- High incidence of false and fraudulent claims.
- Establishment of bona fides of family relationships/dependent children, sometimes through DNA-testing.
- Lengthy background checks, especially on Afghan nationals, and non-disclosure of military service.
- Delays in file creation due to mismatch between information on application form and sponsorship submission.
- Repatriation to Afghanistan and misrepresentation of country of residence to pursue refugee claims in Pakistan.
- Exit permit requirements.





Tel Aviv Processing

- Small refugee processing mission, with substantial growth in the last few years.
- Countries of responsibility: *Israel, Palestinian Authority (West Bank)*
- At present, there are approx. 44,000 asylum seekers in Israel
- PSR caseload in Tel Aviv is virtually all Eritrean (99%) with a very small cohort of Sudanese.

Challenges:

- Growing inventory of PSR cases, from 760 persons in 2014 to more than 2,000 persons in 2016.
- Most asylum seekers given a renewable “conditional release” visa that does not permit them to work or study or to be entitled to any benefits. For those who do formally apply for refugee status, the recognition rate is less than 1%.





Ankara/Middle East Hub

- Ankara, Beirut and Amman missions work collectively under the Area Director in Ankara to manage resources and targets.

Processing:

- Ankara: provides support to Beirut and Ankara, also processes former Moscow PSR caseload.
- Beirut: small office, with increased responsibilities due to processing of Syrian, and to lesser extent, Iraqi applications. Processing centres have been used to meet Syrian commitments.
- Amman: small office with a big role to play in the region for Syrian and Iraqi commitments.





Ankara/Middle East Hub

Challenges:

- Significant increase in inventories and applications, particularly in Beirut.
- Admissibility concerns;
- Incomplete applicant information and credibility concerns related to eligibility and identity;
- Presence of an alternate durable solution (second nationality or permanent residence in another country);
- Out-of-date contact information and family composition information;
- Hard to access populations (e.g. Afghans in Iran, Iraqis in Syria);
- Increased migration to and through Turkey and Lebanon;
- Exit permit requirements.



Beirut Ops Centre: May/June 2016

- Opened May 10, 2016 for at least six weeks
- 40+ additional staff processing
- IRCC visa officers on temporary deployment to Beirut
- Aiming to interview 3,000-3,500 PSR applications
- IRCC visa officers on temporary deployment to Beirut
- DND, CBSA personnel assist with processing



Syrian children playing while waiting for interviews.

Source: IRCC Beirut, May 2016

Accessing hard-to-reach refugee populations

Sponsored Afghan Refugees in Iran

- Inventory of 611 persons (some transferred from Damascus) dating 2008-2015
- Considering creative solutions to process
- No Canadian Embassy in Tehran
- Convocation to Third Country – high no-show rate and inability to enter legally
- Concerns about privacy, potential risks to applicants



The Dogharoun repatriation centre in Iran provides assistance to Afghan refugees to return home voluntarily
Source: UNHCR Canada, 2015



Accessing Refugees in Dadaab Camp

- Due to ongoing security considerations in Dadaab camp that do not allow for officer travel, applicants have been brought to Nairobi for interviews.
- Spring 2016 PSR processing blitz at Nairobi office.
- Interviewed almost every Dadaab case in inventory
- Very high approval rate, now undergoing medical screenings
- Video-conferencing planned to interview handful of families not able to secure permits to travel to Nairobi.



General Challenges

- Concerns around exclusion - war crimes, crimes against humanity and civilians.
- Populations are heavily dependent on international aid (e.g. World Food Programme).
- Surrounding country conditions and regional instability (e.g. protracted armed conflict, election time disorder).
- Significant number of survivors of violence and torture.
- Increased vulnerability of single head of family households.
- Gender-based violence.
- Continue to explore use of videoconference, especially for inaccessible populations and Urgent Protection cases



*Refugee family in Nyarugusu camp, Tanzania
Source: @CanadaTanzania*



Friendly Reminders

- Please ensure that forms are properly completed and all documents listed in request/interview convocation letters are submitted.
- Advise visa offices of changes to applicants' contact information, family composition (e.g. marital status, additional dependents, removal of family members), or resettlement to another country / repatriation, as soon as it occurs.
- Continue to assist missions by passing on correspondence to applicants.
- Encourage applicants to be forthcoming about military histories and not use fraudulent documentation.
- Specify relationship to applicant and file number in all correspondence with missions. Only those listed in the undertaking should submit enquiries.
- Consult information available on UNHCR's *RefWorld* to assess the credibility of claims (<http://www.refworld.org>)

