



# CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES REFUGEE

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CANADIAN REFUGEE POLICY

## The Three S's: Selection, Status Determination, Settlement

The core of refugee policy falls into three main areas: the numbers and sources of refugees selected abroad for resettlement in Canada, the refugee status determination process for those refugee claimants making a claim to refugee status within Canada, and the Canadian process of resettling refugees. There are, of course, other aspects of government refugee policy (including special programs for unaccompanied minors that we dealt with in the last issue, as well as support for international agencies abroad, which we intend to focus on in a future issue). All three major areas of Canadian refugee policy are dealt with in this issue.

The byword for all three areas is fairness. But fairness is an equivocal term. In the area of refugee selection, the fundamental criterion for fairness is the degree of need as determined by the number and condition of the refugees in different areas and the degree to which they would benefit from resettlement in Canada. In the case of status determination, fairness takes on a legal

coloration rather than a humanitarian one, and the principle of fairness becomes due process, a fair hearing, etc. In resettlement, fairness takes on a third meaning — equity in the delivery of services and the support given to all refugees whatever the mode of arrival in Canada.

Selection of refugees abroad is a matter of government policy. The private sector may advocate a specific number in its distribution, and may be consulted by government on that number and distribution. The private sector may augment those numbers and affect the numbers brought from a particular

source country through private sponsorship. The private sector may, by participating in the resettlement process as described in the report in this issue, even help save government funds so that monies are freed up to resettle more refugees. But the primary basis of selection policy is rooted in government decisions. In the global approach to planning and allocating a limited number of spaces, the government must distribute those spaces among many source countries. The key question is whether the total allocation is adequate and whether the distribution is fair.

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