



2026 Consultations on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways: CCR priorities

The 2026 CRCP is taking place in the context of a global crisis affecting refugees, with grave consequences for resettlement and complementary pathways. Commitment and concrete strategies are required to protect and rebuild resettlement.

1. Protecting the Humanitarian Mandate in Challenging Times

The CCR's goal of expanding resettlement must now be balanced against the "severe pressure" and "decreasing resettlement quotas" noted in the 2026 landscape.

Upholding Protection-Based Selection: States must ensure that resettlement remains grounded in protection needs and human rights and must not be guided by the "employability" lens. While refugees do contribute economically, resettlement must not be motivated by economic or narrow domestic political considerations.

Countering Forced Returns: When refugees are at threat of refoulement, resettlement must serve as a "strategic gain" and a life-saving alternative.

Protecting Family Unity: States must ensure that resettlement policies keep families together and facilitate timely reunification, taking into account the vulnerabilities of those left behind.

Ensuring Durable and Rights-Respecting Resettlement: Safeguards are essential to ensure refugees maintain legal status and protection even if State support falters. Refugees must not be moved to third countries without a guaranteed, timely path to a permanent and dignified life.

Advancing Equitable Responsibility-Sharing: States must ensure that financial contributions to host countries are accompanied by transparent and accountable mechanisms so that resources meaningfully improve refugees' access to services, support opportunities for integration where possible, and uphold dignified living conditions while resettlement or complementary pathways are pursued.

2. Strategies for rebuilding resettlement

Canadian Resettlement Leadership: Call for Canadian leadership to address the urgent situation of resettlement systems on life-support.

Recognizing Global Impact: Recognize the value and global reach of Canada’s resettlement program.

Sharing Expertise Globally: Leverage Canadian expertise in settlement and private sponsorship to support other States in building “welcoming and inclusive communities”.

Building Positive Global Narrative: NGOs and CRCP partners need to work together to build a more positive global narrative about the rights and contributions of refugees in countries around the world to counter political retraction.

3. Equity

There must be commitment to equity on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and other factors. Particular attention must be given to Anti-Black racism.

Centering Equity in Emergency Response: States must ensure that emergency responses do not create a two-tiered system of protection by maintaining fairness and consistency across all refugee populations, and that responses to high-profile crises are additional rather than diminishing access for other vulnerable groups in protracted situations.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability: States must establish transparent emergency response processes so that all refugee populations are treated fairly and without exceptionalism, with clear criteria and equitable access to protection pathways.

4. Complementary Pathways (CP) and the “Additionality” Audit

While the CRCP emphasizes expanding CP, the 2026 focus shifts to an “evidence-based discussion” on whether these pathways are eroding traditional resettlement.

Ensuring Additionality in CP: Require that CPs (e.g., education and labour mobility) result in an overall net increase in protection solutions and are not used to justify cuts to humanitarian resettlement quotas.

Removing Barriers to Access: States must reduce the “growing barriers” such as high fees, costly biometric data, and DNA requirements, which currently prevent refugees in high-risk regions (like those in the Middle East or Africa) from accessing CPs.

Guaranteeing Permanence and Support: CPs must lead to permanent solutions with full access to legal status and social support systems, ensuring refugees are not left in situations of precarity or legal limbo.

5. Route-Based Approaches

Providing Safe Alternatives to Smuggling: Using resettlement and CPs, in line with the Route-based approach (RteBA), as concrete and accessible alternatives to dangerous journeys and reliance on smugglers, particularly for those transiting through high-risk regions such as North Africa, Southeast Asia, and South and Central America.

6. Meaningful Shared Leadership and Participation Amidst Capacity Shrinkage

The 2026 CRCP has moved to a “renewed shape” with only 70 selected participants, significantly limiting the space for diverse voices. The leadership role of NGOs has been weakened.

Ensuring NGO-led Representation: Enable the NGO community once again to have control over its representation in CRCP.

Countering Tokenism: Despite the reduced scale, refugees with lived experience must be well-represented and not be just observers but “fully integrated” into the in-person roundtable discussions.

Equitable Representation: Selection of the 70 participants must prioritize voices from the most neglected crises and marginalized groups, including LGBTQI+ individuals and racial minorities, to ensure the “smaller scale” does not lead to a “homogenized” perspective.