

Opportunities and Challenges

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Outline

- Opportunities
- Challenges

Opportunities

Overwhelming response of Canadians

- Response which we haven't had since the Indochinese resettlement – 1979/80
 - Canadians sponsored 35,137 refugees
- For SAHs, this has been exciting and inspiring

Opportunities

Overwhelming response:

- ❑ Response was not only churches but also Canadians forming their own groups
- ❑ Canadians worked together:
 - ❑ Lifeline Syria – Toronto
 - ❑ Refugee 613 – Ottawa
- ❑ Chance to set up links and networks

Opportunities

Government commitment to resettlement

- 2015 – SAHs allowed to submit as many sponsorships as they wanted
 - SAHs could involve more sponsoring groups
- Processing was fast/arrivals came quickly
 - Sponsors were excited (and sometimes stressed)

Challenges

Government response to Syrian crisis did not include ways to accommodate the high level of interest of Canadians.

- Attention to achieving GAR targets put sponsorships on the back burner
- Reduced the chance to involve Canadians in sponsorships
- Fast processing was great but made planning difficult and no time for developing a website

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- Lack of Syrian cases to sponsor (very few on the BVOR list)
 - Sudden change in processing times have created great sponsor frustration

Challenges

Ongoing challenges:

- This year there are limits to number of persons a SAH can sponsor
- There is interest to respond to other refugee situations – but sponsorship limits prevent these sponsorships

The gift of sponsorship

- A place to call home
- A chance to rebuild life in safety and dignity

