

## Congregations Help Refugee Families Succeed in Minnesota



“LSS does so much for us,” Zemaray said. “And the Circle of Welcome team — they work so hard for me. Every week, they take me to the grocery store even though the shops are so far from my home. They are very kind.”

Zemaray, an interpreter for the U.S. Consulate in Afghanistan, fled with his family before the Taliban took control of his country in August 2021.

Soon after, the family arrived in Minnesota as part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW). Through OAW, Zemaray and his family, along with 160 other Afghan evacuees, worked with LSS to find a place to live, connect to medical appointments, enroll in school and English classes, obtain a Social Security card and work permit, and learn about life in the United States.

Zemaray credits LSS Refugee Services and its Circle of Welcome volunteers from faith communities with his family’s successful transition to their new life in Minnesota.

Thank you for your life-saving support for refugee families!

### CONTACT US!

Email: [refugee.services@lssmn.org](mailto:refugee.services@lssmn.org) | Phone: 612.879.5258

[lssmn.org/refugeeservices](https://lssmn.org/refugeeservices)

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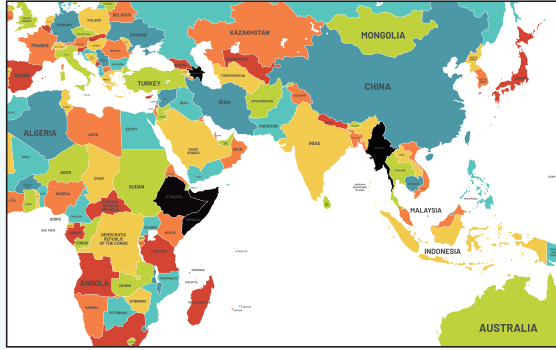
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A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence.

A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

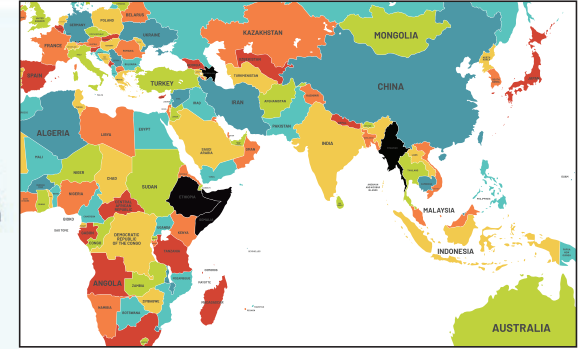
*United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*



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## You Can Help Support Refugees

There are many ways you can make a direct difference and positively impact the life of refugee families.

**Circle of Welcome:** Your congregation can walk with a refugee family to provide friendship and support, and help refugees rebuild their lives more quickly. This is a 6-month commitment that offers a more intensive volunteer experience and opportunity to build longer-term friendships.

**Direct Action Team:** When we have a one-time donation or action need — such as setting up an apartment, contributing a microwave or donating a bicycle for a child — we reach out to our Direct Action Team. This is a great way to make direct and immediate impact.

**In-kind Opportunities:** Faith communities are often interested in organizing special drives for items we need. Being able to help refugees save even a few dollars through in-kind donations makes a critical difference in their first few months here.

**Thrivent Action Teams:** If you or someone on your volunteer team is a Thrivent Financial member, you can apply for a \$250 Community Impact Card through Thrivent Financial that you can use to support our work with refugees!

**Donate:** Organizations like LSS rely on volunteers and philanthropic support to carry out this work. Please consider making a financial gift today to help a refugee family.

### Uniting for Ukraine

Right now, there is an urgent need to help refugees from Ukraine. Please visit our website to learn how you can help.

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