



January 2025

Impact Update: Immigration Legal Services

The Global Refuge Legal Services team continues to forge ahead in the fight for the legal rights of immigrant and refugee families as they navigate the complex U.S. immigration system. We know that immigrants and refugees often struggle to access immigration benefits due to cost, language and cultural barriers, case backlogs, and other factors beyond their control. Our Immigration Legal Services team is working to break down these barriers by delivering high-quality and accessible legal services — and working to improve the system for all.

2024 Impact:

325
people served

Our attorneys provided free legal consultations, case escalation advocacy, and assistance in filing immigration benefits applications to 325 individuals and families at six Afghan Support Centers across the country.

125+
SIV cases

As a leader in Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) advocacy, our team escalated over 125 pending green card cases for Afghan allies and their families.

70
legal screenings

We have provided comprehensive legal screenings involving 70 individuals and families through the federally funded Case Management Pilot (CMPP) program in Baltimore. And because of our success, Global Refuge was awarded a 29-month contract to expand CMPP to San Antonio in November 2024!

Other 2024 highlights for our Legal Service team include:

- Successfully advocating for expedited visa processing for thousands of Afghan refugees
- Helping to reopen dozens of erroneously rejected green card cases
- Representing the first-ever Special Immigrant Visas for surviving family members of Afghan allies.

What's ahead in 2025?

- **Legal Clinics**—we will partner with local organizations, faith communities, and employers to host clinics across the country
- **Local outreach**—we will ramp up our education and outreach events in communities where our services are most needed
- **New ways to serve**—we are exploring new opportunities to serve through foreign consulates, libraries, and other agencies and outlets.

Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise to a Family Torn Apart

Amir* and Aisha*'s mother was one of the tens of thousands of Afghan citizens who served as interpreters, translators, and in other key roles during our military's two-decade mission in Afghanistan. **These brave men and women risked their lives to help our country. In return, the U.S. government promised to protect them and their children** by issuing Special Immigrant Visas for Afghan allies, including Amir and Aisha's parents.

But a week before the family was set to leave for America, Amir and Aisha's parents were brutally murdered by the Taliban, leaving their young children alone, vulnerable, and in grave danger.

Amir and Aisha's aunt stepped in to raise them but struggled to provide for them without family in Afghanistan to help her. After the fall of the Afghan government to the Taliban in 2021, the aunt knew **they needed to escape**. She and their family in the United States implored the State Department to honor our country's promises to the family and bring the children to safety.

The aunt courageously relocated the children to Pakistan while she and her U.S.-based family tried to navigate a complex and uncertain immigration process. When the U.S. family met the Global Refuge team, they were desperately seeking help because the family's lives were at risk once again in Pakistan.

The Global Refuge Legal Services team was asked by the U.S. government to



help the family in their immigration processes. Over the next six months, our team:

- **Advocated for the children** – requesting the State Department review their eligibility for a new visa category
- **Advised the children's U.S.-based family on immigration options** for the aunt to remain as the children's guardian and accompany them to the U.S.
- **Coordinated with federal agencies** in the planning their relocation and arrival to the U.S.

Whether they needed legal guidance or moral support, we were with them every step of the way.

The children's turbulent journey came to a happy and emotional ending in October with the safe arrival of

Amir, Aisha and their aunt on United States soil!

As they settle into their new community, Global Refuge continues to work with partner organizations to ensure the children receive ongoing support, including assistance in enrolling Aisha and Amir in school.

Global Refuge considers it an honor to assist this family given all they have sacrificed. Despite the tens of thousands of Afghan allies still in need of family reunification following the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, **federal funding for legal services has ended and help for many refugees in the U.S. is uncertain.**

We need as much donor support as possible to help more Afghan children like Amir and Aisha access the legal protections our country has promised them.

**Names have been changed for our clients' protection.*