

COUNTRY
CHAPTER

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ARGENTINA

BY THE GOVERNMENT OF
ARGENTINA



Argentina Overview:

Resettlement programme since: 2005	Selection Missions: Yes	Dossier Submissions: No
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Resettlement Admission Targets for 2013:

Admissions target for UNHCR submissions:	50 persons
Total goal for resettlement admissions:	50 persons

Regional allocations for 2013: (not available)

Africa	
Asia	
MENA	
Europe	
Americas	

Sub-quota characteristics:

Designated sub-quota/reason for acceptance	Description, additional comments:
Emergency resettlement procedures	Urgent cases may be considered by dossier
Medical cases	
Cases of women at risk	No specific quota
Unaccompanied minors	
Family reunification (within the programme)	Not part of quota

1. Resettlement Policy**1.1 Resettlement Policy**

The government of the Republic of Argentina, within the framework of International Human Rights Law and International Refugee Law - expressed in its General Law for the Recognition and Protection of Refugees - signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR in June 2005, within the guidelines agreed upon in the Mexico Plan of Action to Strengthen International Protection for Refugees in Latin America: the shared responsibility and duty of international solidarity.

At the same time, the programme is framed within the open immigration policy Argentina has been developing, having as a fundamental normative instrument for this Immigration Law 25.871. In this context, Argentina has implemented its international human rights commitments and its regional immigration commitments giving differential treatment to citizens of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and Associated States, especially in terms of documentation and requirements for settlement. In fact, citizens of any member nation of MERCOSUR and Associated States can legalize their immigration

status in Argentina based solely on nationality and lack of a criminal record. Among the latter are Colombian citizens. For that reason, Argentina considers the Resettlement Programme to be an instrument of its policy of prioritizing defense and protection of human rights.

The goal of the Solidarity Resettlement Programme is to provide protection and a lasting solution for refugees whose lives, safety freedom or other fundamental rights are threatened in their first country of asylum. Consequently, it should aim for the establishment of solid foundations for local integration of refugees in the welcoming country, through self-sufficiency and their positive contribution to local society. It should promote their capacity to reconstruct a positive future, the creation of ties with the welcoming community and the reestablishment of trust in political institutions and systems, always respecting religious and cultural identities.

In terms of the legal framework, the General Law for the Recognition and Protection of Refugees (Act N1/4 26.165), legislation that fully regulates the process for determining refugee status and the rights and guarantees of asylum and refugee applicants. This Law created the National Refugee Committee (CONARE) and its Executive Secretariat within the Ministry of the Interior and assigned the Committee a series of broad functions both in determining refugee status and in seeking lasting solutions.

1.2 Ministries or Departments Responsible for Resettlement Policy

CONARE consists of one representative from the Ministry of the Interior, one from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship, one from the Ministry of Justice, Security and Human Rights, one from the National Institute Against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism, and one from the Ministry of Social Development. The Committee also includes a non-voting member from the UNHCR Regional Office and one from civil society.

CONARE is charged with choosing candidates for resettlement from a humanitarian perspective, according to criteria established in the Memorandum of Understanding and the Annual Work Plan, as well as processing documentation in coordination with the National Immigration Directorate and the National Registry of Persons. Within the jurisdiction of CONARE, appropriate personnel in the Executive Secretariat, the Subcommittee for Assistance and Integration, and specific Commissioners deal with questions related to the Programme. CONARE is empowered to call on governmental agencies to include resettled refugees in public assistance programs and policies in distinct jurisdictions. In addition, it functions as a liaison with the associated UNHCR agency that implements the Programme.

As a member of CONARE, the Foreign Ministry's General Directorate of Human Rights acts as a liaison between CONARE and the Argentine Mission to international organizations in Geneva concerning information provided by the UNHCR headquarters as well as the Annual Tripartite Consultative Meeting on Resettlement. In turn, it is responsible for facilitating and coordinating the issuance of visas, providing appropriate instructions to the consulates, and sending priority entry permits issued by the National Directorate of Immigration to the Consulates in the country of first asylum, which are charged with providing the corresponding travel documents.

1.3 Process of Determining the Annual Resettlement Quota and Composition

The Memorandum ratified by the Argentine government and UNHCR stipulates that each year the Republic of Argentina will provide the UNHCR with the number of persons who can be resettled in the country. There is no formal legal procedure to determine the annual quota and composition, nor deadlines for this purpose. In practice, the quota is defined annually in a coordinated manner between CONARE and the UNHCR, based on existing protection needs and available financial resources.

2. Eligibility Criteria for Recognition of Refugee and Asylum Status

2.1 National legislation that defines eligibility for refugee status

The criteria for recognition of refugee status in Argentina are based on the Recognition Act and General Law for the Recognition and Protection of Refugees (Act No. 26 165) that complies with the 1951 Convention and its Optional Protocol.

The Act also provides that the term refugee shall also apply to any persons who have fled their country of nationality or habitual residence -- in the event that they did not have citizenship -- because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order.

2.2 Distinction between the criteria for recognition of refugee status for asylum seekers and resettled refugees

There is no difference between the status of a spontaneous refugee and that of a resettled refugee.

3. Resettlement Criteria

3.1 Eligibility criteria for refugee resettlement

The criteria for resettlement set out in the Memorandum of Understanding signed with UNHCR are:

Need for legal and physical protection, when one or more of the following conditions exist:

- Immediate or long-term threat of return to the country of origin or expulsion to another country from which the refugee may be returned.
- Threat of arbitrary arrest, detention or imprisonment.
- Threat to physical safety or human rights in the country of refuge similar to that expressed in the definition of refugee, which makes asylum untenable.

Survivors of violence and torture

Their resettlement in Argentina is subject to the availability of appropriate services.

Women in situations of risk

Women who lack the traditional protection of their families or communities and face physical and/or psychological threats (rape, sexual harassment, violence, exploitation, torture, etc.)

Children and adolescents

Minors who are unaccompanied or separated from their families and require specialized care and specific protection measures. Their resettlement in Argentina is subject to the best interests of the child.

Refugees without the prospect of local integration in the country of first asylum

When a refugee has spent some time in a country of asylum without being able to integrate and there are no real possibilities of repatriation in the near future, that person can submit an application for resettlement.

Without prejudice to the criteria for resettlement, Argentina, as a emerging country in the resettlement programme, will be given special consideration in the selection process for family groups with children or single parent families whose breadwinner is a woman, especially cases of women at risk with their children, and with people who have relatives in the country. Special needs cases submitted by UNHCR will also be given consideration, taking into account the availability of existing services to meet those needs before making a decision about resettlement in the country.

Consideration will also be given to the fact that, at present, refugees will be resettled in urban areas. The previous is based on the understanding that the programme in Argentina is an emerging programme and that these considerations will facilitate consolidation and future expansion.

4. Resettlement Allocations / Processing Priorities

The Argentine government does not currently use a system of sub-quotas.

5. Refugee Presentation and Processing Through Dossier Selection

The MOU provides for the possibility that the UNHCR could propose to CONARE the consideration of cases entailing the urgent need of legal and physical protection, which could be analyzed solely on the basis of existing documentation. Considering the urgency of these cases, a decision must be made by the agency within one (1) week of receipt of documentation by the Secretariat.

To date, the UNHCR has formally referred to Argentina a single case by Dossier, which was accepted.

6. Presentation and Processing of Refugees through Selection Missions

6.1 Selection Mission policies

Upon receipt of the resettlement registration forms submitted by UNHCR, CONARE conducts a review of the cases to be interviewed during the Selection Mission, according to established profiles and criteria for resettlement. For this, CONARE has requested that cases be provided one month prior to the selection mission, except for cases in urgent need of legal and physical protection.

In exceptional instances, where the referred case is manifestly at odds with Argentina's ability to provide effective protection, and in order not to harm the refugees and undermine their chances of obtaining international protection in another country, CONARE may decide not to interview the referred person/family. In this case, UNHCR will be informed of the decision and the reasons that behind it, so as not to include these cases in the agenda of the selection mission.

The purpose of the Selection Mission is to interview the candidates personally, to facilitate the assessment of cases and provide information on the scope of the programme and living conditions in Argentina. In addition, during the Missions, meetings are held in first asylum countries with different actors involved in the programme to report problems, situation summaries, questions and challenges to improve the effectiveness of their participation.

6.2 Case documentation

The documents required for a person to be referred to the Resettlement Programme in Argentina include: a passport, identification card (in cases authorized according to existing laws) or travel documents from the 1951 Agreement; criminal records from the refugee's country of asylum; authorization for minors traveling with only one of their parents.

In cases involving minors entering with parents holding an Entry Permit, or with parental consent as required, besides general requirements, it will be necessary to authorize the invoked relationship by way of appropriate documents, that is the corresponding records, certificates or registrations, or in their absence, substitute documentation.

Given the difficulties in processing certain documentation, the National Immigration Directorate may accept a "global" criminal record, i.e., a general response by the government in the first country of asylum.

During the Selection Mission, interviews are conducted by household, except in cases where the need to interview a family member separately has been identified previously or at that time.

6.3 Decision on applications

Standard cases

Once the mission is complete, CONARE must decide on the cases interviewed within a period not exceeding fourteen (14) days, based on the information shared in the CONARE meeting held to discuss the results of the interviews.

Once a decision is made, the records will be signed immediately, and the UNHCR will be notified at the corresponding meeting. In case of absences, UNHCR will be sent a copy of the record drawn up at the meeting.

Urgent cases

CONARE must make its decision within one (1) week from acceptance of consideration in dossier cases, or upon the return of Selection Mission team members for cases brought to UNHCR's consideration with urgent need for legal and physical protection.

Notification

Following CONARE's decision, the UNHCR Regional Office in Argentina reports those decisions to UNHCR offices in the respective countries of asylum, which proceed to notify the refugees of the official decisions.

Review of rejected cases

If an application for resettlement is rejected by CONARE, UNHCR may request a review of the case on the basis of complementary information provided by the latter.

Arrivals

Regarding the time between acceptance of a case and the person's entry into Argentina, every effort will be made to resettle refugees entering the country in the shortest possible time. Although this time period cannot be specifically determined, it is estimated to take an average 45 days. Entry for refugees with need for physical protection, as well as urgent cases, will be given priority.

7. Emergency/Urgent Cases

As previously indicated, the MOU provides for the possibility that UNHCR could ask CONARE to consider acceptance of cases with urgent need of legal and physical protection, solely on the basis of existing documentation. Considering the urgency of these cases, a decision must be made by CONARE within one (1) week.

8. Special Categories/Specific Needs

Although Argentina takes into account cases with special needs submitted by UNHCR, based on the criteria outlined in section 3 (torture victims, women at risk, patients with specific medical needs -- but not those whose standard of resettlement is "medical necessity", since this category is not established in the MOU signed by Argentina -- unaccompanied minors, elderly refugees), before making a decision, the government of Argentina, together with the programme's implementing agency and the UNHCR Regional Office for southern Latin America consider the availability of existing services for each particular case, before making a decision about their resettlement in the country.

It has established a Sub-programme devoted exclusively to women at risk, mainly centralized in the city of Rosario. Unlike the general Resettlement Programme, the Women at Risk Programme provides material assistance for two years. This is based on the consideration that these women need more time to achieve personal development and employment in the country of resettlement.

Notwithstanding the contributions made by the national and local governments in the way of access to health, education and documentary materials, the Norwegian Government supports implementation of the Women at Risk Programme in our country.

No sub-quota is stipulated for this programme, but its beneficiaries form part of Argentina's annual quota.

9. Medical Requirements

No specific medical requirement is requested for resettlement in the territory of Argentina.

10. Orientation

Beginning in 2009, the programme began implementing a cultural orientation session for refugees in the first country of asylum, before they depart for Argentina. The cultural orientation session lasts a day and a half, and is organized by the programme's implementing agency, HIAS.

The cultural orientation session takes the form of participatory and entertaining workshops for adults, adolescents and children and has the following objectives:

- Work with beneficiaries on specific aspects of their integration into Argentine society;
- Reflect with them and begin to shape what will become, upon their arrival in Argentina, their Integration Plan;
- Review aspects of daily life in Argentina that favor greater understanding of the integration process;
- Recollect positive experiences of families in countries of asylum, which can be replicated in Argentina in order to enhance their integration;

- Promote better and more thorough preparation of families and of each family member for their new destination;
- Promote the formation of social networks among the resettled families to enhance their integration.

11. Travel

Travel arrangements, beneficiaries' moving expenses and travel coordination are UNHCR's responsibility or may be financed through international cooperation and/or individuals and institutions that support the resettlement programme. Pre-travel formalities, reservations and ticketing are coordinated between UNHCR and International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the first country of asylum.

Meanwhile, the National Directorate of Migration (DNM) provided resettled refugees with a special procedure for entering the country by which they enter the country with the status of temporary residents with entry permits issued by the DNM under the terms and immigration classification stipulated in Article 23, paragraph k) of Act No. 25871 (DNM Provision No. 45144/2005).

To this end, the Argentine Consulates in the country of first asylum issue a visa that affirms the above. Note that the visa issued by the Consulate is not an extra requirement, but a means to facilitate and speed up immigration procedures and documentation, permitting refugees to enter the Republic of Argentina as temporary residents.

12. Situation on Arrival and Paths for Obtaining Citizenship

12.1 Situation facing immigrants upon arrival

As reported previously, under Provision 45.144/05 of the National Immigration Department, foreigners entering Argentina under the resettlement programme, are admitted into the country as temporary residents. That is, they enter the country as legal residents, with authorization to perform paid work.

12.2 Documentation issued

Once in the country, refugees are provided, also through a streamlined procedure, with the National Identity Card for foreigners issued by the National Registry of Persons, under the Ministry of the Interior.

All the procedures that refugees carry out to legalize their immigration status and obtain documentation are free of charge.

12.3 Requirements, costs and deadlines for obtaining citizenship

After two years of residence in the country under temporary resident status, refugees may apply to the National Immigration Directorate for permanent residence, or opt for Argentine citizenship. The latter requires applying to Federal Court and presenting certain documents such as certification of lack of a criminal record, documents establishing residence in the country, and proof of a livelihood through employment contracts, certificates of current work, paycheck stubs or tax receipts in the case of self-employed persons.

As for children born after arrival in the country, note that Argentina follows the *jus soli*, so that children born in the country are Argentine citizens.

13. Settlement in the Country and Community Services

13.1 Services and actors

The resettlement of refugees in Argentina is a task performed jointly by the government, UNHCR and the implementing agency of the programme in Argentina, which is the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS).

As previously mentioned, CONARE has the authority to call on various government agencies, whether national, provincial or municipal, to include resettled refugees in public assistance policies and programs across jurisdictions.

13.2 Reception

CONARE's Executive Secretariat provides the Entry Control Bureau of the National Immigration Directorate with advance information of the refugees' arrival. The programme provides transportation from the international airport. In all cases, families are met at the airport by one or more members of the local team and accompanied to their place of accommodation. In cases of families who move to destinations other than the port of arrival, local Programme teams also receive them with precise arrangements as appropriate.

In each resettlement city, refugees are accompanied to the home they will occupy. In the days following their arrival, refugees begin the process of acquiring national documentation in each city.

Immediately upon arrival refugees receive a sum of money to cover the transportation and food needs of the family, which will continue for a period of twelve months.

13.3 Orientation

During selection missions in the field, the programme offers group information sessions regarding the country of resettlement and programme conditions. It also conducts private individual interviews with each family so they can continue to obtain information and guidance needed to make responsible decisions.

The guidance includes practical information about daily life in the resettlement site, culture and customs in our country. Resettled refugees are also provided with information on health services, education, employment, housing and everything related to the integration process.

In each of the resettlement locations meetings are held where the refugees are informed about the country's recent history, economic geography, aspects of the labor market, education system, labor and tax regimes, among others. These participatory meetings are held within two months of arrival in the country. Further activities, addressing similar issues, are prepared especially for minors.

13.4 Housing

Temporary housing

Upon the resettled refugees' arrival, the programme organizes temporary housing for them. It may be that the Programme already has permanent housing pre-rented, in which case refugees are placed there at the time of arrival. Temporary homes can be hostels or youth shelters, pensions or residential hotels. The time spent in the temporary homes does not usually exceed 3 months from arrival. For accommodation in temporary housing, the programme provides some of the furnishings and artifacts that are then transferred to permanent housing (such as kitchen utensils, bedding, towels, toiletries, household articles, etc.).

From the beginning of their temporary accommodation refugees are encouraged and accompanied in the search for permanent housing.

Permanent housing

The refugee and the Programme team start searching for a rental immediately, so the time spent in temporary locations does not last longer than necessary.

The programme advises and accompanies refugees searching for apartments and negotiating rents, particularly concerning submission of documentation and explanation of contract terms.

The programme provides housing rentals for a period of 12 months, except in special programs for people with specific needs that could require a longer period (such as Women at Risk), usually paid in advance. The contracts are reviewed by the implementing agency prior to closing the deal. The Programme team may find another living arrangement more convenient for the resettled refugees in accordance with the MOU.

The criteria for rental costs for families are pre-approved and agreed upon with the UNHCR. The total rental expense includes the rental fees, common expenses and payment of municipal taxes and services in each locality.

13.5 Health

In Argentina, access to health services is guaranteed to refugees and all foreigners in general, under the same conditions as nationals.

The public health system in Argentina is characterized by an excellent professional staff, who provide services to all who seek attention at health centers on an equal basis, even if they do not possess a National Identity Document. The country also has a private health system that refugees and their families can access through employer-based health insurance.

Legislation also provides for integral maternal and infant health coverage for the mother and her baby until the child's first birthday, further assuring free medication, vaccinations and regular checkups.

Resettled refugees are informed about the functioning of health services once they enter the country.

The Programme advises families of the importance of going to hospitals for their first medical check-ups as soon as possible, and staff accompanies them on their first visits. The programme also supports and advises refugee families regarding special attention provided to minors in regard to vaccinations, vision, clinical and nutritional check-ups. Women are similarly advised with respect to gynecological care and birth control.

Medical tests that refugees may require are conducted in public health centers, except in urgent or highly complex cases, and when they are accompanied by medical certificates that specify the need and are pre-approved by the programme. There are no restrictions in the country preventing refugees from accessing health practices and studies of medium and high complexity, as well as undergoing surgery in public hospitals, free of charge. The programme can cover any exceptional medical need not covered by public services.

The professional health teams have contact with professional networks in the different residential areas, which will enable easier access to public health facilities and follow-up and supervision of cases.

Medication: In some cases, the public health system covers the provision of free and/or low-cost generic medication, which the refugees and their families can access, in the same way as nationals. The programme may provide medicines that are not provided by public health services, and only in cases where a prescription is given. The programme does not cover over-the-counter medications, which families have to pay for out of pocket.

Mental health

The implementing agency staff includes mental health professionals that support and advise refugees throughout the duration of the programme. This assistance is not clinical, nor is it intended to replace professional care in the public mental health services. The counseling provided by the programme is geared to supporting and guiding refugees' integration into the country, paying particular attention to the traumatic experiences that they faced as they were repeatedly uprooted, and how these events impact on the processes they must deal with. Programme professionals seek to identify and reflect with them to allow them to regain their dignity and ownership of a new way of life.

Where the team deems it necessary, they will make referrals to public mental health services, with which they work together to monitor and supervise cases. They will also give guidance to refugees who make an explicit request for such assistance.

13.6 Language instruction

Up until now, only Spanish-speaking refugees have been resettled, thus there has been no need for instruction in that language.

If it is necessary, refugees will be included in language classes to permit their integration in Argentina. Existing links and programs will be made available to refugees, and new networks will be established with public/private agencies that address specific needs for intensive linguistic and cultural support and training, as may be required.

13.7 Education

In our country, all foreigners are ensured access to public education at all levels -- primary, secondary and university -- under the same conditions as nationals. The programme pays particular attention to the inclusion of children and adolescents at all levels in the education system. To this effect, and to the extent that the Programme has detailed information and school records, it will make appropriate inquiries at schools in different cities.

The programme has established a mechanism for children to be incorporated at the intermediate level. It will work jointly with the National Office for Validation of Degrees to review certificates supplied by refugees in order to obtain their validation by local authorities. In cases where refugees do not have detailed documentation, the Validation Office will provide interested parties with the opportunity to take a level evaluation test, which will place the child at the appropriate academic level.

Similarly, the Programme will provide assistance to families seeking to matriculate children in the early grades of public schools, day-care centers and kindergarten. Depending on the season they arrive, families may have access to recreational activities through municipal or provincial summer camps.

Throughout these proceedings, the professional teams in cities accompany and provide guidance for the refugees to choose facilities meet with school authorities and register their children for school. Similar procedures are followed for young adults who want to continue or begin their higher education.

Adults who have not completed their formal educational training are encouraged to do so through municipal and provincial adult education programs.

The Programme also assists with temporary hiring of tutors to help children reach their appropriate grade levels.

It works with relevant public agencies for the validation of basic, vocational and college degrees.

The Programme helps with the purchase of school supplies and clothing. The programme maintains a contact with the education authorities to monitor and improve these practices.

13.8 Vocational training and employment

In coordination with public and private, domestic and municipal organizations and workers' associations, the programme provides guidance for enrolling in training and occupational retraining courses related to the interests and needs of refugees, men and women, as well as young adults. The courses are usually of short duration and require no further preparation for admission.

For its part, the implementing agency has developed job placement strategies with AMIA (Israeli-Argentine Mutual Association) and MANPOWER (agreement between UNHCR and MANPOWER). Both organizations are national in scope. Additionally, the implementing agency teams work to promote employment opportunities with provincial, municipal and private organizations in the cities where refugees reside. HIAS has a Programme Friends Network that collaborates in job placement for refugees. The efforts of UNHCR's implementing agency are complemented, supplemented and coordinated with the efforts of the governmental team responsible for the Programme in each locality.

The professional staff of the Programme, through its initial orientation sessions, along with others previously identified, is responsible for providing accurate information and guidance about the local labor market and recommendations for job searches and employment contracts.

Training

All adults and young people of working age can apply for Programme financial support to enroll in training courses to optimize their employment potential or obtain certification of their skills. On the basis of interests and needs identified in adults, the professional team will provide information and guidance regarding public or union courses that are available.

In some cases, the training includes the purchase of necessary tools with a view to future income-generating employment.

Business ventures

Interested parties are offered guidance regarding public and private programs on small-scale enterprises. The Programme also allows for each family to request support for starting at least one business to supplement its income.

13.9 Financial assistance

With regard to financial assistance to refugees, the main objective of the Programme is to promote refugees' active collaboration and shared responsibility for integration into their new country, laying a solid foundation to make this possible.

The programme aims to develop a resettlement process in which each individual and each family can manage their own lives and achieve their autonomy in joint cooperation with other refugees and the host society.

Currently, the Resettlement Programme provides support for a pre-established period from the time of arrival of families in the country. This support includes:

- Subsistence for a maximum of 12 months, except in special programs for people with specific needs (such as Women at Risk) that may allow a longer period of assistance;
- Where there are no other possibilities (for example, access to public housing or rent subsidized by funds other than the UNHCR Programme), rental of a dwelling by the Programme during the year of Programme duration, except in special programs for people with specific needs, in which case a longer period may be considered. It is noteworthy that, according to the MOU, the programme staff will seek to facilitate access of refugees to public housing programs;
- Assistance for the purchase of medication that the Argentine government does not distribute free of charge, and in cases where they are prescribed by the professionals concerned;
- Assistance for the purchase of school supplies;
- Assistance for the purchase of school and/or winter clothes in cases where this is deemed necessary;
- Assistance for enrolling in training programs to enhance employability in the cities where refugees are resettled;
- Assist in processing documentation;
- Assistance with transportation for job searches.

The Programme will manage and distribute these funds in different resettlement sites according to established criteria and subject to a needs assessment. An administrative accounting organization carries out these functions so the funds can be received in a timely manner by the local coordinators and through them, the families. Although the process is administrative, professional teams inform and guide families for better utilization of resources.

13.10 Additional support for refugees with special needs

As was previously noted, the Programme provides additional support for refugees with special needs, among them – and only by way of example – it's worth mentioning the Subprogram for Women at Risk, which provides assistance for a period of no less than 24 months.

13.11 Mechanisms for sharing information with service providers

CONARE believes it essential to maintain a stable channel for sharing information among different bodies involved in the Solidarity Resettlement Programme in Argentina in order to optimize resources and provide everything necessary for local integration of resettled refugees. Also, fluid and prompt communication provides better and timelier information for dealing with the various issues relating to the programme.

Immediate contact via email is used to report news and pressing issues, while regular meetings are held between various Programme stakeholders.

14. Refugee Family Reunification

The principle of Family Unity is covered in basic international human rights legislation, which enjoys constitutional status in Argentina, as well as in the General Law for the Recognition and Protection of Refugees and Immigration Law in effect in the country.

In particular, Article 6 of Law 26,165 states that "To determine the extent of the right referred to in the preceding article, recognition of refugee status applies by extension, to the refugee's spouse or person with whom the refugee was bound by reason of affection and cohabitation, ancestors, descendants and economically dependent collateral relatives in the first degree. The competent authorities will resolve applications in each case, taking into account the existing law, the needs cited by applicants and the cultural values of their countries of origin. The rejection of a request based on the principle of family unity cannot rest on a lack of legal recognition for the relationship invoked. In no case will asylum be granted by extension to any person who has incurred any of the grounds for exclusion covered by the present law."

In this context, Argentina has facilitated family reunification in its territory of members of a household, even when for a family member who has not been included a priori in the forms submitted by UNHCR. These cases of family reunification are not part of the annual quota of resettlement.

In this regard, all professionals in the programme are trained to guide and advise refugees in terms of application procedures for family reunification.

Family members who enter the country on a visa can do so as residents, which they can obtain from Argentina's diplomatic missions in the country in which they reside, following authorization requested by the refugee from the National Immigration Directorate in Argentina. They can also enter as tourists. In either case, once in the country they apply for derived refugee status and CONARE analyzes and resolves the application according to the law. If appropriate, the family member is included in the programme with all its benefits.

Requests for support from the UNHCR for the transfer are handled through the implementing agency. UNHCR will review requests based on pre-established criteria.

15. References, Resources

National Refugees Commission (CONARE). <http://www.migraciones.gov.ar/conare>