

## Global Refugee Forum 2019 Template for Good Practices

Please send this template and any attachments to the Global Refugee Forum Coordination Team at [hqgrf@unhcr.org](mailto:hqgrf@unhcr.org) **as early as possible** to facilitate the consolidation and presentation of good practices in time for the Global Refugee Forum.

Good practices can be shared on the Global Refugee Forum website and then included in the digital portal, which is currently under development.

Please complete a separate template for each good practice.

**Name of entity sharing good practice**

UK Home Office

**Name and position of contact person**

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for->

**Twitter handle**

**Partners**

UNHCR / IOM

Sponsors - Communities/ individuals/ local authorities/ charities in the UK

“Reset” organization providing support to sponsors

**Name of good practice**

UK Community Sponsorship Scheme.

**Country/ Region:**

UK

**Year(s) of implementation and duration:**

Since July 2016

**Document related to the good practice model/approach:**

Attached     Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship>  
<https://www.resetuk.org/>

## General description of the good practice:

The UK Community sponsorship scheme enables community groups to become directly involved in supporting refugee families resettled in the UK through the UK's Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and/or the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme.

Community sponsorship in the UK encourages innovation in resettlement that has the potential to promote positive resettlement and integration outcomes, both for the resettled families and local communities.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) identifies vulnerable refugees in need of resettlement, who are referred to the UK for resettlement consideration. Those who are accepted for resettlement by the UK Home Office can potentially be matched with a sponsor group approved by the Home Office.

The Home Office has funded a capacity-building organisation, Reset, £1 million over two years (from 2018) to provide support and training on how to deliver high-quality integration support to resettled refugees.

## Main activities of the good practice:

Through the UK Community Sponsorship scheme, a resettled family is allocated to community sponsors who are responsible from proving one year of integration support to the resettled family upon arrival in the UK, and two years' of housing provision. The community sponsors welcome the family at the airport; provide a warm welcome and cultural orientation; provide housing; support access to medical and social services; English language tuition; assist refugees to navigate social welfare provision and support them towards employment and self-sufficiency.

Community groups must apply to the Home Office for approval to become a sponsor group. As part of their application, sponsors must have sufficient resources to support a resettled family, a credible resettlement plan backed by relevant experience and be registered as a charity or community interest company. They must demonstrate that they have suitable and sustainable accommodation for the resettled family for two years. In order for the application to be considered by the Home Office, prospective sponsor groups must obtain the consent of the relevant local authority. Groups must also have a safeguarding policy and complaints policy in place.

All groups in the UK are required to complete the relevant training on sponsorship delivered by Reset. Reset provides training for all sponsor groups in the UK, focused on preparing for the arrival of a resettled family and empowering resettled families after their arrival. . They share good practice and help groups to work in partnership with relevant organisations.

## Results of the good practice:

As of March 2019, **280 refugee men, women and children had been resettled to the UK** through the Community Sponsorship Scheme

Welcoming societies are essential for resettlement to grow, but also refugee resettlement can contribute to welcoming societies, and community sponsorship is one way to do this. While the UK's community sponsorship is currently small scale, it is growing and has the potential to build a positive narrative around refugees.

Community sponsorship has changed the way that resettlement is perceived by communities, rather than the national government bringing newcomers, it involves individuals in bringing, newcomers, connects different parts of communities, and brings them together around a common aim. In this respect, it engages more partners in solutions for refugees, and fosters a whole of society approach.

Community sponsorship represents a positive example of Government working collaboratively with civil society. It was developed in response to a call from civil society to play a greater role in the resettlement of refugees in the UK. The scheme allows community groups to complement the important work carried out by local authorities. In the UK sponsorship has helped to build support for resettlement, to offer positive integration outcomes for refugees, and as a means of engaging communities directly in resettlement sponsorships has had a big part to play in creating and promoting welcoming and inclusive societies.

## Challenges in implementing the good practice and how they are being addressed:

Community sponsorship is small in scale but is growing. There is considerable interest in the scheme from groups across the UK, and more are welcoming refugees each year. It was recognized, however, that greater awareness of what is a relatively new scheme was needed. This need forms a significant part of Reset's role, alongside a responsibility for identifying potential barriers and solutions to the scheme's growth, e.g. considering innovative options to securing affordable housing, etc.

The community sponsorship application process had faced criticism from sponsor groups for being too lengthy and bureaucratic. The Home Office listened to these concerns and responded by relaunching a streamlined process, designed to increase the accessibility of the scheme and reduce the bureaucracy of the application process for community groups. These improvements have been very well received.

On 17 June, the Government announced its intention to continue resettling refugees in need of protection, and its commitment to enable community sponsors to continue welcoming and supporting refugees. A significant development of the announcement is that refugees resettled through Community Sponsorship will be in addition to the Government's resettlement commitment in 2020. This development was made in response to calls from key partners to move towards additionality, and in recognition of the positive work communities have contributed towards resettlement.