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THE HUMAN SCALE OF CANADA'S COMMITMENT

Update on the Host Family Program

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The Program Structure and Objectives

The following report on the Host Family Program updates data on the pilot projects in London, Winnipeg and Regina while also synthesizing reports issued since August, 1986, by the Policy and Program Development Branch of Employment and Immigration Canada. Included are data received from organizations in Kitchener, Calgary, Vancouver and Quebec City.

A Host Program, operating from an established community organization, is provided with funding to a maximum of \$50,000 for each community. A program co-ordinator is responsible for recruiting and training host groups, matching them with incoming refugees, and then monitoring and supporting their activities.

The objective of the Host Program is to enhance, through community based human resources, the settlement process of those government-assisted refugees and designated persons who qualify for economic and social support under the Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP). The Adjustment Assistance Program currently provides funds to government-assisted refugees including those in the "control" group program. Funding is set at levels similar to provincial welfare

assistance; allowances are paid to acquire basic clothing and furniture; and assistance is available to refugees for a maximum period of one year following arrival in Canada. Funding ceases if at some time during that period the refugee becomes self-sufficient through employment. However, participation in the Host Program may continue, as will the emotional and social support offered through the community organization, its staff and host families.

The host groups are expected to assist refugees in settling more quickly, in learning English (French), in obtaining employment as soon as possible and generally in providing friendship and emotional support. Program co-ordinators are in daily contact with the groups as well as with the community, thus public awareness of the refugee situation is also enhanced.

History of the Program

Authority was granted to transfer funds from the AAP to the host group program in 1985. Host projects were initiated in London, Winnipeg and Regina in March 1985. Since then, seven pilot projects began in Quebec City, Kitchener, Windsor, Saskatoon, Yorkton, Calgary and Vancouver, and there are more now. The present evaluation treats the program only in the seven cities where formal evaluations were undertaken: Quebec City, Kitchener, London, Windsor, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the host group program is meeting its objectives. Two sample groups, host group refugees and "control" group refugees, were set up in each of the six communities: Kitchener, London, Windsor, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver.

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