



Impacts of Casework with The Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts

Since its establishment in October 2021, the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE) has significantly improved the resettlement of Afghan interpreters and allies vetted to serve the U.S. mission through the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program, ensuring that America keeps our promise to the Afghans who stood shoulder to shoulder with us over 20 years of war.

No One Left Behind has worked closely with CARE to relocate Afghan allies in numerous unique and vulnerable situations. While we cannot share details that could identify individuals and endanger their loved ones still in Afghanistan, the stories below help illustrate the crucial work CARE leads:

Relocating Those Who Served with U.S. Troops:

Even while he and his family were being evacuated from Afghanistan in August 2021, an interpreter for the Marine Raiders continued to put himself at risk to save others. While being prepared for relocation at the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) Eagle Base, the interpreter was asked by the base's leadership to take trips out of the base and to meet and collect other high-priority targets for evacuation. He completed this service effectively despite the tremendous dangers of leaving the base to bring targeted allies to safety.

While he was completing this additional service to the U.S. intelligence community and military, he was also faced with the devastating reality that the relocation process was, at that stage, too dangerous for his infant child. The family had to leave the child with relatives and were brought to the United States with their 6-year-old child only.

The family had been separated for an extended period by the time CARE was established. CARE's creation was a key turning point for the interpreter and his family because the CARE team had the mission and authority to work with the relevant U.S. agencies to reopen the father's SIV case to add the infant, who was then nearly two years old. CARE then coordinated the child's transfer out of Afghanistan by traveling with another SIV family working with CARE. CARE reunified the child with their mother, the interpreter's wife, in Qatar while the processing of the child's case was completed. The family is now fully reunified and safe in the United States because of CARE's intervention and abilities.



A second combat interpreter, Shahzada, recalls always being inspired by American troops. In 2010, Shahzada turned his inspiration into action by serving them as an interpreter and security guard. He worked alongside U.S. Special Forces, Army Rangers, and Marines for 11 years ensuring their safety by translating the nuances of the Afghan culture.

Like many who served together with our troops, he became a target of the Taliban as a result of his unwavering commitment to the U.S. military. He knew he had one option: get out of Afghanistan with his wife and daughter as soon as possible. Upon arrival to Pakistan, the family had what was most important, one another, but extended pauses in third countries can be a severe financial burden on families like Shahzada's.

CARE's interagency coordination keeps cases like Shahzada's family moving so that vetting and relocation of eligible allies proceeds without unnecessary bureaucratic delay. On November 5, 2023, Shahzada and his wife and daughter safely arrived in the United States. Shahzada has dreams of soon purchasing a car and opening his own business.

Serving U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents:

A child who, like his immediate family, was a green card holder and attended school in the United States, has a social security number, and had recently moved from California to Virginia was trapped in Afghanistan due to a U.S. government processing error on his green card. Prior to CARE's existence, the U.S. got his family out of Afghanistan during the Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO), but this young boy was forced to stay behind with relatives in Afghanistan.

Despite being a green card holder, he was separated from his family for approximately two years until the CARE team received his case, prioritizing it for urgent action. CARE successfully addressed the undue separation and recently reunified the family in Virginia.

Similarly, an SIV recipient who had recently become a U.S. citizen was separated from his wife when she was trapped while visiting an ailing family member as Kabul fell to the Taliban. She had never traveled alone and was terrified to fly by herself. CARE worked to identify a pathway to bring her safely back to the United States with the support she needed. Even with the tremendous case volume facing CARE, the team brings interagency mechanisms and the coordination needed to adapt to situations on the ground to effectively identify and serve U.S. persons in Afghanistan as the team's top priority.



Women Escaping the Taliban's Gender Apartheid:

CARE is invaluable in moving solo female principal SIV applicants to Pakistan, where they can then be resettled to the United States. In 2018, Amina joined the United States Agency for International Development's Women in Government project as an opportunity to further her mission of empowering Afghan women to step into leadership roles within their government. "What motivated me to work with them [Americans] was their service in Afghanistan, as they were trying to help us recognize the freedom that is our right," Amina reflects. "This inspired me, as an Afghan girl, to play my part and try to involve myself in the processes meant for us."

During her time on the job, the conditions in Afghanistan continued to worsen, forcing her to realize her dreams and safety were at risk. The country she once loved, became a place of violence, especially for women seeking justice like herself. She had a choice: stay while knowing she would be hunted or escape to safety and leave her family behind.

Traveling as a single female presented its own set of difficulties, but she knew it had to be done. Her life was on the line.

From moving her throughout the evacuation process with extreme caution and care to ensuring her safe arrival in the United States in late July 2024, CARE worked closely with No One Left Behind and brought Amina's hard-earned promise to life.

For more information on No One Left Behind's work with CARE, please contact No One Left Behind's Chief Advocacy Officer Andrew Sullivan at andy@nooneleft.org or visit <https://www.nooneleft.org/>.