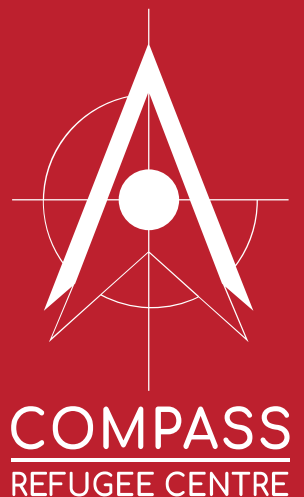




Growing Hope Abounds

2022–2023 Annual Report





*COMPASS was
present when
clients needed
it the most*

Daniel

COMPASS Caseworker

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Mission, Vision, Meditation

Mission

To assist, accompany, and advocate for refugee claimants in our community. We also work with Protected Persons and Convention Refugees who have a successful refugee claim.

Vision

That every person coming to Canada seeking refuge has unhindered access to justice and the opportunity to thrive in welcoming communities.

Meditation

Growing Hope Abounds

The sun rises
Stretching out its voice
Along the reach of its rays
Saying, it is a new day!
Growing Hope Abounds
Perhaps today will be the day..
Perhaps today will be the day of
hope fulfilled.
Growing Hope Abounds
The sun sets
Leaving the blanket of the night
Peaceful and expansive
Saying, you are safe at last!

2022–2023 In Review



The story of the past year is one of Growing Hope Abounds. The road travelled was anything but smooth and easy. In fact, there were times in the year when we wondered how to go on. The number of people seeking our help started as a steady stream. By summer, that stream had become rivers and waves that seemed to have no end. This created breaking-point pressures all around, especially in the shelter system. Additionally, the processes people had to navigate became ever more complex and inaccessible to the average person. All of this forced us to find new approaches for program delivery. We wanted to ensure no one would be turned away or hindered in their refugee claim or in getting settled. We also wanted to protect our team from being stretched beyond capacity.

Behind the scenes, we started the year with reserves drained, thus little room to not make ends meet. We had the best first quarter in the history of the organization, giving us hope that the hard financial times were behind us. Then, unexpectedly, the drought of resources began. There were no rivers and waves of funding. For many months, there were only trickles. As with many charities, we found ourselves amid post-pandemic economic realities, with significant reductions in giving from traditional sources like churches and family foundations.

“We had met the need for our help with the same relational strength and best practices we have long been known for”

Yet, we also saw that people believed in COMPASS and they rallied in so many ways! The number of monthly donors grew by 38%, and individual giving rose by 8.5%. Matching donations from employers doubled several peoples’ impact. New partners sought us out, wanting to be part of this amazing work.

Some major donors invested deeply and became the catalyst to new thinking about resilience and sustainability. We wrapped up the year with our annual RIDE FOR REFUGE campaign, the COMPASS community coming together energized and celebrating the many lives that had been impacted over the year. This included over 200 people having their refugee claim accepted, and many families being reunited for the first time in years. We had met the need for our help with the same relational strength and best practices we have long been known for.

When our staff team met to review the year, they agreed that for all the struggle and challenge, the key theme was one of growing hope abounds. Over the next pages, you will read about what they and others saw every day that grew hope. At any point along the way, we invite you to think about how you will support this amazing COMPASS community in 2024 and beyond. Together, we change lives forever!

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Shelley Campagnola

Executive Director

Our Impact

625



new people
arrived

206



successful
refugee claims

2,203



people
served

20



families
reunited

37



different
languages

44



towns & cities
across Ontario

Top 10 countries our clients are coming from

(in order of number of people):



The View From Here

Amrita

ASSIST Team Lead, Caseworker

I had a remarkable year working with high number of individuals and families who came to Canada with a hope of safety and peace. It is always my pleasure to share the information, expertise and experience with individuals and families who were professionals in their countries. The hope and resilience they carry in their hearts despite the obstacles they face in a new country going through refugee claim and settlement process always inspire me.

Daniel

Interpretation and Translation Coordinator, Caseworker

Last year was a year of celebration and possibilities for many clients of COMPASS. People from all over the world who fled persecution and threats in their home countries sought protection in our region. Through the generous response from the whole network of COMPASS, they found hope and an opportunity not only to be safe and protected but also to connect, grow, and thrive in our welcoming community.

Tony

Operations and Program Manager

It has been a challenging year at COMPASS for our team and the people we serve. We have seen a significant increase in claimants, and it has been hard to imagine how we could help them all. Local shelters were overwhelmed and at times finding legal counsel was nearly impossible.

Yet through it all COMPASS has remained present, consistent, and welcoming to the individuals coming through our doors. Every day we offered what we could and although it was difficult, claimants did find lawyers, housing, justice, and reunification with their families.

I have always been proud to work at COMPASS and I am increasingly proud to be a member of a larger community that comes together and works towards a brighter future.



COMPASS staff at CCR consultation



Client

Over the past year COMPASS has played a pivotal role in transforming our lives, offering not only legal assistance but also fostering a sense of belonging, hope, and community. Our journey with COMPASS has been with resilience, collaboration, and discovery. The unwavering presence of compassionate staff members creates an atmosphere of warmth and inclusivity, making us feel genuinely welcomed and valued. The innovative and generous spirit of COMPASS volunteers and donors make every challenge feel surmountable.

We discovered newfound opportunities and experienced personal growth; all while being surrounded by a supportive and empowering environment. The collaborative efforts of everyone involved and the recognition of every individual's story have made our time at COMPASS truly transformative.

Jenni

Caseworker, Intern Supervisor

As one of the caseworkers at COMPASS Refugee Centre, I get to meet with refugee claimants every day in our office. As I interact with these individuals and families, I see the ways that our organization is filling gaps in their lives. As I meet with these individuals, I hear about their worries and doubts. I also hear about their successes and see the growth in their lives. Our presence makes a difference.

Marcela

Interpretation Volunteer

My experience at COMPASS last year was quite unique. As an interpreter, you are committed to 2 to 3 hours a week. However, as I got to know all the different types of help that are being offered, I had the opportunity to be involved in a few of them. The staff at COMPASS is always welcoming, friendly, and knowledgeable, with a desire to always go the extra mile for their clients. COMPASS at present is fulfilling many needs beyond what the objectives are. This is due to the generosity of the staff and the donors.

When clients come to the first appointment, they are worried and scared, and they don't know what to do. When they leave, they have received responses, knowledge, and a sense of hope because the staff listens and is empathetic with their situation.

“Several clients have mentioned that the staff at COMPASS feel like their family members and that our office feels like home to them”

Jenni

Josi

Program Assistant

COMPASS is a place where growing hope abounds. Amid the uncertainty, frustrations, and what has felt like a failure of the system, COMPASS continually provides hope to those who seek safety. The support that we received from the community this past year has been such a great encouragement. I am grateful for the outstanding community support we received from donors, politicians, community service providers, churches, individuals, and businesses alike. It is because of our partners that we can continue to provide client service with excellence.

Program Highlights



Top: WRPS backpacks for COMPASS



Top Left: Summer picnic with MCC



Middle Left: Tony representing COMPASS in MP meetings

Bottom Left: Perimeter Development Winter Kits



Right: Creekside serves COMPASS





Top Left: Josi and Daisy at United Way Golf



Bottom Left: Daniel becomes Canadian citizen

Top Right: Caring Connection Quilters

Middle Right: Ride for Refugee



Middle Right: Hosting Coalition

Bottom Right: Nicole in the office



Gratitude

“COMPASS is all of us”—It takes all of us to change lives forever! Thank you to everyone who worked hard, gave generously, created connections, provided hospitality, and gave an overall unreservedly warm welcome to people seeking refuge and protection.

17 Businesses

With special thanks to The Walper Hotel for hosting our Refugee Rights Day event, and Perimeter Development for providing winter kits through their Engage and Change partnership.

21 Churches and Other Charities

Blenheim Ecumenical House Church
Breslau Mennonite Church
Creskide Church
Elevation Church
Elmira Mennonite Church
Emmanuel United Church
Floradale Mennonite Church
Hanover Mennonite Church
Pioneer Park Christian Fellowship Mennonite Church
Shantz Mennonite Church
The Journey Christian Reformed Church
Trinity United KW Church
Waterloo North Mennonite Church

Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly
Wellesley Mennonite Church
Wilmot Mennonite Church
W-K United Mennonite Church
WMB Church
Zion Mennonite Fellowship
Mennonite Central Committee Ontario
Muslim Social Services Kitchener Waterloo

255 Individual Donors

16 Foundations and Granting Agencies

Bauman Family Foundation
Blue Sea Foundation Inc.
Charities Aid Foundation of Canada
King Baudouin Foundation United States (KBFUS)
Nowak Family Foundation
PayPal Giving Fund Canada

Redekop Family Endowment
Ross-Shire Foundation
The Bill and Margaret Fast Family Foundation
The Jim and Lorna Blair Charitable Foundation
The Lyle Shantz Hallman Foundation
The Mark and Jenny Guibert Foundation
The Preis Family Foundation
United Way Waterloo Region Communities (UWWRC)
Veitch Family Foundation
Waterloo Region Community Foundation

10 Community Partners and Businesses

Providing quilts, backpacks, winter kits, soccer balls, tutoring, housing, and so much more:
1st Elmira Beavers
Cambridge Hotel and Conference Centre
Caring Connection Quilters
Comforting the Cold

Just Working Inc.
Mary Johnston Public School junior groups
Perimeter Development
Silver Lake Mennonite Camp
The Goodness Project
The Working Centre
The Homework Hub
Waterloo Region Police Service

4100+ Volunteer Hours Including:

1000 hours of interpretation
945 hours of translation
834 hours of reception and admin
910 hours of event support
14 Interns



Board of Directors

I became aware of COMPASS Refugee Centre several years ago when I was hosting refugees in my home as part of my church's Open Homes program. I had a great desire to support COMPASS as they were doing work that is so needed by refugees coming to Canada, many of whom I got to know personally.

Being an asylum seeker is so frightening for most people. They have left their homes and their families and come somewhere that they have only read about. They don't have the language skills, the resources, or the knowledge to get on firm footing to initiate their claim and manage general survival. That's why COMPASS exists—to Assist, Accompany and Advocate in this mine-field that refugees enter.

The number of people served is not decreasing! We support refugees from all across the province, but especially from London to Peel. Nobody else in this

geographic works with the asylum seekers in the same capacity and with same focus that COMPASS does.

COMPASS is blessed with strong leadership, dedicated staff, and board members who really care about the situation that refugees find themselves in.

We are looking this coming year to expanding our 'membership'. Currently only board members are members of COMPASS and can vote at the AGM. We had a great discussion about this at our last AGM and we are working on changing our by-laws to make this happen. We really hope and pray that many of you will become voting and active members of COMPASS by either volunteering or donating to this wonderful organization.

Cathy Abbott

Chair, Board of Directors



Board Members at Fiscal Year End

Cathy Abbott, Chair
James Pankratz, Secretary
Thomas Dixon, Treasurer
Rafael Vallejo
Fabienne Prior
Karen Martin Schiedel
Lisa Jarvis
Geoffrey Bellew

Thank you to others who served and finished their term during the year

Margaret (Peggy) Snyder
Wondwossen Tadesse

Opportunities to Serve in 2024

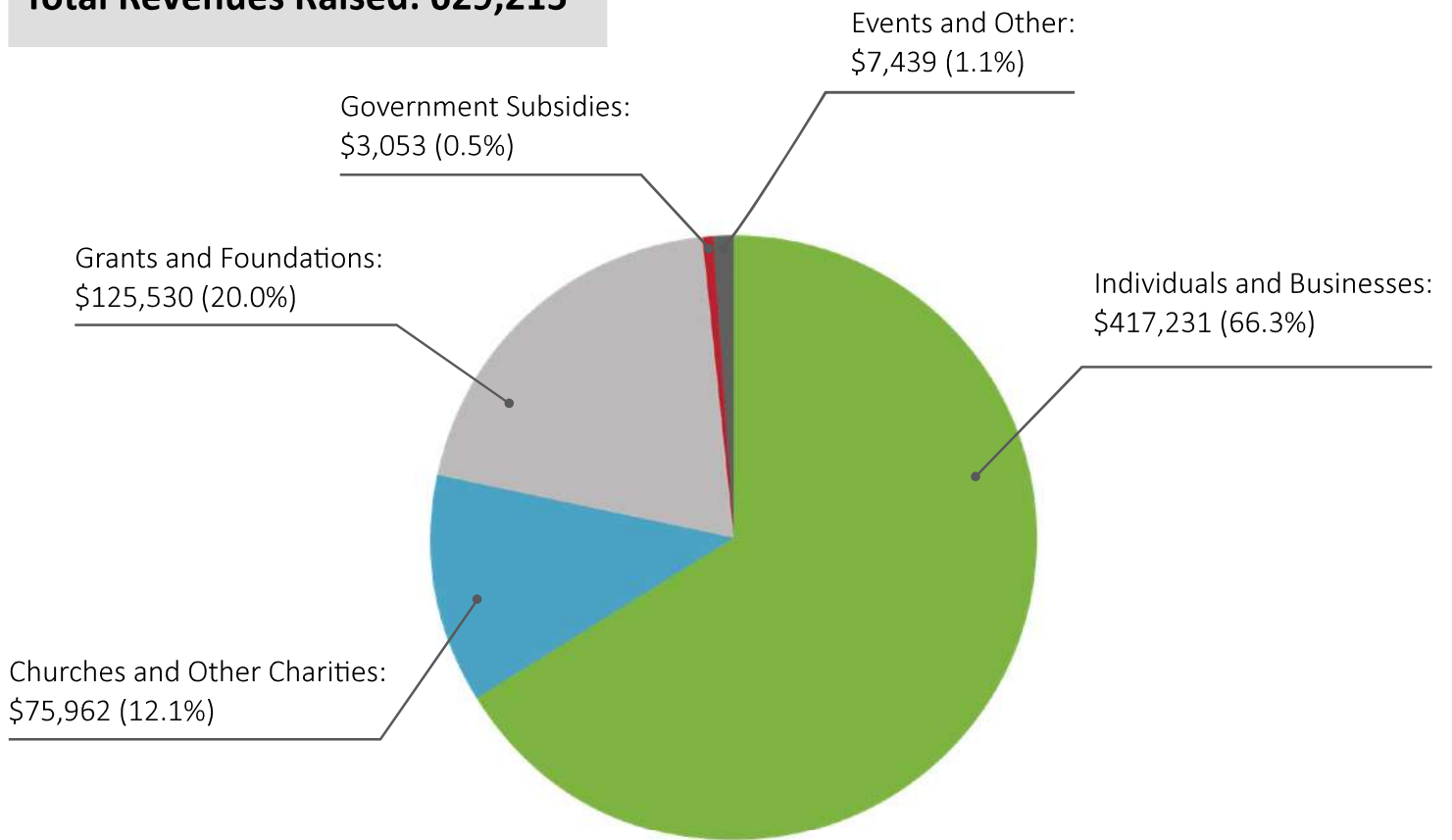
COMPASS Refugee Centre is dedicated to recruiting the board members it needs to ensure meaningful engagement and maximum impact. We strive to support and promote excellence in board service. We work to be on the cutting-edge of thinking and resources related to not-for-profit board recruitment and governance.

In addition to the standard roles and responsibilities of a board member, our board members are active advocates and ambassadors for the organization and are fully engaged in identifying and securing the financial resources and partnerships necessary for COMPASS to advance its mission.

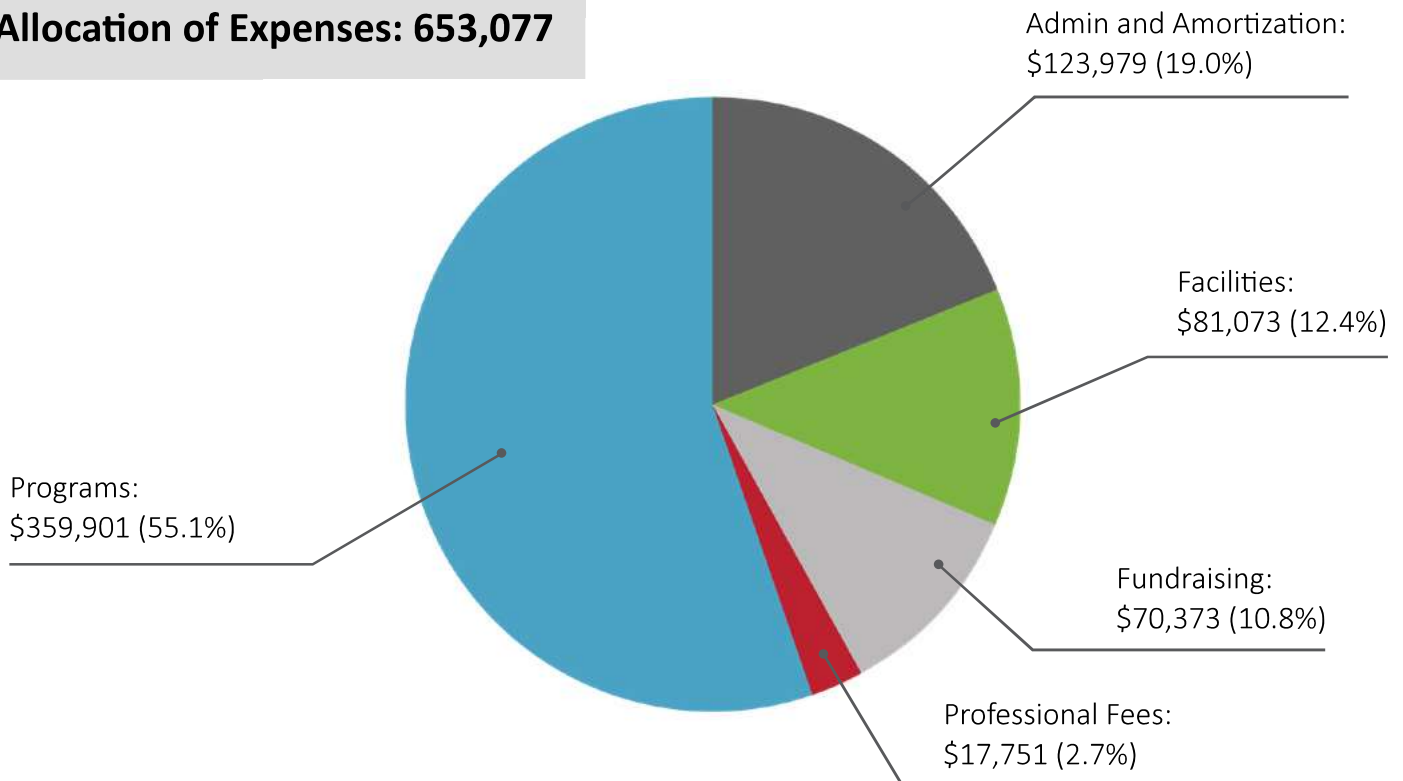
Go to compassrefugee.ca/about-us/governance to learn more about how you can bring value to COMPASS as a member of our Board of Directors.

Financials

Total Revenues Raised: 629,215



Allocation of Expenses: 653,077



Treasurer's Report:

This year our auditors delivered another clean report: a statement of confidence in COMPASS policies, practices, and controls. Income went up, exceeding budget by 1%. Due to an influx of refugees, expenses also increased, exceeding our projected expenditures by 5%. COMPASS finished 2023 fiscal year in a deficit position.

The coming year brings uncertainties at the global, community, and local levels. Conflict and climate change contribute to an ever-growing inflow of refugees seeking a new life in Canada. COMPASS is more relevant than ever. While we attempt to operate ever more efficiently, we will continue to depend on support from old friends as well as new sources. We move forward in faith, and in gratitude for the teamwork between our dedicated staff and you, our generous donors. On behalf of the refugees who flow through our doors, we thank you for your solidarity.

We are always happy to do our “very small” part of helping support the impact and growth of COMPASS. It is always exciting to see the mission in action. Thank you again for all the great work you do!

Donor



The Next Chapter

Looking Ahead to 2024



Launch of the Canada-U.S. Border Clinic

The Canada-US Border Clinic will be launched early 2024 through a grant from the Law Foundation of Ontario and with the support and collaboration of many partners across Canada and the US. The clinic will provide virtual access to lawyers to address the lack of information and expert legal advice needed by people seeking refugee protection and navigating the complexities of the Canada-US border.

Social Venture Partners (SVP)

COMPASS has been chosen as one of three organizations that Social Venture Partners Waterloo Region will invest in for 2024. From their website: *“We strengthen the capacity of innovative charities by investing time, money, and talent to help them scale their impact and become sustainable, high-performing organizations.”* The need for COMPASS has never been greater, and yet also keeps growing. We look forward to the mentoring and support of SVP to help us reach our potential and meet the challenge.

Exploring Social Enterprise

We are excited to be working with The Community Company in 2024 to engage community-based research and identify a social enterprise initiative that works for COMPASS to diversify our revenue streams and sustain our social impact. From their website: *“We have a tested and proven three phase process to develop an enterprise from ideation to launch day and we’ll work alongside your team to make it all happen.”*

COMPASS Give A Gift

Give—COMPASS (compassrefugee.ca)

We have launched our online giving guide that provides donors with the opportunity to support specific services and needs, aligned with each pillar of our mission. Gifts can support a particular service we provide, or help to cover a tangible immediate need, or can support a person as we work with them through every stage of their refugee claim and family reunification.

All gifts are eligible for a tax receipt and will be used as designated until the need is met, and then will be used where most needed. Gift values are based on the time it takes to provide the service or bring the support needed.



The View From Here

Kristy

Caseworker

It was just over one year ago when I joined the COMPASS team as a caseworker. Looking back on this year has been incredibly rewarding as I have reflected on my own personal growth, the progress of the team, and the successes and celebrations of the clients I have met. The most remarkable things that I have taken away from the past year are the determination that clients have exhibited, and the hope for a better future that they embrace. I am honored to be able to benefit from this spirit of hope, courage, determination, possibility, and generosity.

Ana

Interpretation and Translation Volunteer

In this past year that I have been volunteering at COMPASS as an Interpreter. As COMPASS is a catalyst for the wellbeing of people seeking refuge in the Waterloo Region, it is not surprising to point out that it is one of the most welcoming places I have had the pleasure to be in. The opportunity that COMPASS brings to build a sense of belonging within the community is an invaluable ray of hope for people like me, trying to find their way through giving back what once was given to them as newcomers.

Jeanette

Executive Assistant

When I think of COMPASS Refugee Centre the word that jumps to the front of my mind is “Welcoming.”

From the moment I walked through the door at COMPASS, the staff and volunteers made me feel like I had been part of their team forever. From my office window I look out into our dynamic THRIVE Hive space. I see children hugging stuffed animals and playing with cars. I see teens picking out a backpack and a book to read. I see young adults choosing a quilt or sleeping bag to keep them warm. I see lentil soup, homemade pie and bags of treats being enjoyed by anyone who is hungry. I see clients using donated computers to access online portals to complete their paperwork. I see caseworkers supporting and encouraging clients each step of the way. I see downcast faces light up with hope. These joyous moments are because of donors who cared enough to give of their time, talents and treasures.

“COMPASS is all of us” and we need ALL of us to bring a COMPASS of hope.



Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the hope, courage, and generosity you have given us

Client



COMPASS

REFUGEE CENTRE

Assist • Accompany • Advocate

Donate Now

compassrefugee.ca/donate

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Kitchener, Ontario N2M 1A1

Telephone

519-571-1912

Email

compass@compassrefugee.ca



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