

# IRCC DETAILED MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

## OAG Audit of Processing Applications for Permanent Residence

Available Report: [Report 9—Processing Applications for Permanent Residence—Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(oag-bvg.gc.ca\)](https://oag-bvg.gc.ca/Report%209-Processing%20Applications%20for%20Permanent%20Residence-Immigration,%20Refugees%20and%20Citizenship%20Canada)

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Para. 26	To provide applicants with clear expectations of the likely timelines for a decision, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada should establish achievable and reliable service standards for the processing of permanent resident applications, including for its refugee programs. In addition, online information on expected processing times should be provided for all permanent resident applications and consider the volume and age of applications already in its inventories.	<p><b>IRCC Management Response</b> Agreed. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has plans for a comprehensive multi-year service standard review, in accordance with the requirements of the Government of Canada’s Policy on Service and Digital. This review will prioritize establishing service standards for services that currently have none. This includes permanent residence streams, such as the federal and regional economic class, family class, and resettled refugee immigration programs. Completion of this first phase is expected by the end of the 2024–25 fiscal year.</p> <p>The department will evaluate existing service standards to ensure they are comprehensive, meaningful, and relevant.</p> <p>Published processing times are historical, meaning they are measured based on how long it took to process 80% of applications in the past 6 months. While the department is currently publishing those backward-looking processing times, new methodologies have been developed in order to</p>	1. Service Standards reviewed and in place for all existing PR Programs: IRCC is undertaking a comprehensive and client-centric service standard review, in accordance with the Government of Canada’s Policy on Service and Digital.	December 2024	<p>i. Establish new service standards for permanent residence streams that currently have none, and resettled refugee immigration programs;</p> <p>a. PR Economic and Family class milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December 31, 2023: Data collection and engagement with internal stakeholders.</li> <li>• February 29, 2024: Analysis and consultation with Program owners, the Service Delivery Sector, and stakeholders.</li> <li>• March 31, 2024: Recommendations on PR Economic and Family Class presented to Senior Management.</li> </ul> <p>b. Resettled Refugees milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 31, 2024: Data collection and engagement with internal stakeholders.</li> <li>• May 31, 2024: Analysis and consultation with Program owners, the Service Delivery Sector, and stakeholders.</li> <li>• June 30, 2024: Recommendations on Resettled Refugees presented to Senior Management.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Leading Sector:</b> Client Service, Innovation &amp; Chief Digital Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Policy and Design (Claude Arbez)</li> </ul> <p>Service Delivery Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With input from OPPB (Tyler Toso)</li> </ul>	

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		calculate forward-looking estimates of processing times. This will allow the department to provide clients with more accurate expected wait times, accounting for volume and inventory after clients have submitted their applications.			ii. All existing service standards are reviewed to ensure they remain comprehensive, meaningful, and relevant. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review of existing service standards                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 30, 2024: data collection, engagement, and consultation on existing service standards.</li> <li>• December 31, 2024: Advice and recommendations to senior management on whether to keep as is or update if required.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
			2. Improvements to processing times methodology: Establish and implement a new approach to publishing and communicating processing times to clients to ensure information is meaningful, relevant, and easy to understand by clients and stakeholders, and provides estimated wait times for applications in normal circumstances.	December 31, 2024	i. The department is examining other options of reporting processing times that will better inform clients of when can they expect their application to be processed through consultation with program owners, Communications and OPPB by Sept 30, 2024.  ii. Implement a new methodology, including regular updates, where it is meaningful, relevant and easy to understand by clients and stakeholders by December 31, 2024.		

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Para 36	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada should take immediate steps to identify and address differential wait times to support timely processing for all applicants across permanent resident programs, as it works within the annual admission targets set by the Immigration Levels Plan. Furthermore, it should develop and implement a plan to collect race-based and ethnocultural information from applicants directly in order to address any racial disparities in wait times.	<p><b>IRCC Management Response</b> Agreed. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada endeavours to process all applications in a timely manner. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis. As a result, differences in wait times are unavoidable. In addition, new commitments to specific populations may displace the processing of applications submitted and awaiting processing. However, the department will monitor wait times and include an examination and analysis of any differential findings observed.</p> <p>The department will develop and implement a pilot to begin testing ways of collecting race-based and ethnocultural information from its applicants, on a voluntary and self-reported basis. The pilot will allow the department to test methodologies and gather insights about the best ways to collect, analyze, and use race-based and ethnocultural data in line with the department's Anti-Racism Strategy. The pilot will inform critical aspects of the approach in terms of data integrity,</p>	1. IRCC has established internal tools to regularly monitor forward-looking wait times by country of residence, and results are considered in resource and target allocation within the processing networks.	December 31, 2024	<p>i. The Department will establish a more comprehensive inventory and processing time monitoring regime, which will provide insights and analysis on processing times by country of residence by April 1, 2024.</p> <p>ii. Findings are considered in resource and target allocation within the processing networks by December 31, 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With respect to Government-Assisted Refugees, the Department would continue to develop multi-year resettlement commitments to enable forward-planning internally and with resettlement partners to support resource-allocation planning, with the view to aligning wait times to the extent possible within the GAR program, while continuing to take into account the relative vulnerability of applicants. Multi-year resettlement commitments are established and considered in resource-allocation strategies within Global Network by February 29, 2024.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Leading Sector</b> Part 1 (<i>identify and address differential wait times</i>)</p> <p>Service Delivery Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPPB</li> <li>• With input from all networks.</li> </ul>	

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		<p>standards, ethics, analysis, and privacy safeguards. As this data would be voluntary and on a self-reported basis, the department will assess its sample size and determine whether any bias exists in the sample size. This will be crucial to determine how to use the information collected and is directly related to the need for the department to establish and find a robust methodology that allows for both representativeness and the ability to isolate specific factors that may influence processing. Only then can the department analyze the data and identify findings. Such findings will then be integrated into the department's broader work on examining racism in its policies and programs.</p> <p>The estimated timeline for launching the collection of the data on a voluntary and self-reported basis will align with broader department efforts on standardizing how it collects disaggregated data.</p>					

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			2. Elements will be put in place that will take into account shifting of priority processing.	June 30, 2024	i. Establishing a framework for priority processing that would ensure a clear assessment of the humanitarian or public policy needs, as well as the potential impacts on wait times to other applicants on inventory. (March 31, 2024). ii. This framework will encompass a regular review/re-assessment in order to help mitigate the potential impacts on differential outcomes. (First quarterly review June 30, 2024)		
			3. Develop and implement a plan to collect race-based and ethnocultural information to further support the Department in its continued monitoring of processing times.	April 1, 2025	i. Develop a pilot plan to test methodology and gain insights about the best ways to collect, analyze and use race-based and ethnocultural data. a. Consult with stakeholders on data already available by February 29, 2024. b. Consult/determine best methodology to collect data including data integrity, standards, ethics, analysis, and privacy safeguards. Additionally, assessing the sample size of the test group and whether any biases exist by April 1, 2024.	Part 2 ( <i>collection of race-based and ethno-cultural info from applicants</i> )  Strategic Policy Sector • Chief Data Officer & Research (Sarah Trotter)  Service Policy and Design • SPD/SIX (Kathryn Burke) to provide input as lead of client	

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Determine how the collected data will be used by June 1, 2024.</li> <li>d. Publish a plan with a methodology for the pilot, with roles, responsibilities, activities (e.g., adjustments to forms) and critical path identified by September 1, 2024.</li> <li>e. Launch the pilot by October 1, 2024.</li> <li>f. Analyze data and identify findings of the pilot by February 1, 2025.</li> <li>g. Determine how the pilot findings will be incorporated in examination of overall differential wait times by April 1, 2025.</li> </ul>	experience research.	
<b>Para 43</b>	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada should examine backlogged applications to identify and action processing delays within its control, including waiting for officer actions or follow-up. The department should also prioritize the finalization of older backlogged applications while working to achieve the annual admission targets set by the Immigration Levels Plan.	<b>IRCC Management Response</b> Agreed. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada determines the number of admissions for the year within each immigration category and establishes priorities among economic, social, and humanitarian objectives with the annual Immigration Levels Plan. The department receives more applications within many categories than can be processed based on the Immigration Levels Plan. Intake controls exist for permanent resident lines of business where	1. Reduced backlogs of older applications at the program level (while working to achieve the annual admission targets set by the Immigration Levels Plan)	July 1, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Examining backlogged applications to identify and action processing delays.</li> <li>b. IRCC has developed and utilizes an internal reporting system that tracks applications processing delays at their final stage and identifies applications without known impediments to processing. The system enables processing networks and offices to quickly select and action applications. Implemented December 5, 2021. The report is distributed to managers in processing centres to</li> </ul>	<p><b>Leading Sector:</b> Service Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPPB (Tyler Toso)</li> </ul> <p>Specific Refugee Piece (<i>new authorities received to control intake within the SPR Program</i>)</p> <p>Asylum &amp; Refugee Resettlement RPB (Karen Welch)</p>	

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		<p>applications are submitted via the Express Entry system. However, intake controls do not exist in most other permanent resident programs, which led to the formation of backlogs.</p> <p>The department will continue to process applications (while respecting the annual Immigration Levels Plan) to address the backlogs where they exist in permanent resident programs. The department will also work on an implementation plan for the new authorities received to control intake within the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. A department-wide approach across permanent resident programs will better enable the department to prevent and reduce backlogs at the program level. Where regional backlogs exist, the department will continue to improve on its existing workload monitoring and workload sharing tools to identify files that can be shifted to other offices and/or ensure that supplementary resources are allocated.</p>			<p>consult when needed and helping them to find out the list of cases ready for finalization.</p> <p>c. Develop a comprehensive monitoring system specifically designed to pinpoint activities required on applications within different stages of processing. A prototype will be developed by April 1, 2024.</p> <p>d. Finalization of older backlogged applications.</p> <p>e. IRCC has set internal targets to address backlogged applications for key lines of business. This was implemented as of January 31, 2023.</p> <p>Following the audit period significant progress has been made to reduce backlogged inventories in Key lines of business:</p> <p>-Between January 2023 and October 2023 IRCC has reduced the Federal High Skilled backlog from 20% to 12% of applications on inventory.</p> <p>-Between January 2023 and October 2023 IRCC has reduced the Provincial</p>		

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					<p>Nominee Program (Express Entry) backlog from 38% to 27% of applications on inventory.</p> <p>-Between January 2023 and October 2023 IRCC has reduced the spouses, partners and children (except for Quebec) backlog from 24% to 16% of applications on inventory.</p> <p>f. IRCC will continue to expand this approach of setting internal targets to each program with Service Standards, targets and reporting to be in place by July 1, 2024.</p> <p>Please note that regional disparities that are going to be address with the new system are detailed in recommendation #4, paragraph 53.</p> <p>In Budget 2023, IRPA was amended to clarify that the Minister may give instructions regarding the processing of sponsorship applications.</p>		



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			2. The department will develop an implementation plan to establish Ministerial Instructions in order to manage the intake of applications in the PSR program.	December 31, 2025 [TBC]	i. Analyze and explore options to develop an implementation plan – May 31, 2024  ii. Consult with stakeholders to develop an implementation plan – October 31, 2024  Seek final approvals of the implementation plan – January 31, 2025		
<b>Para 53</b>	To improve consistency of application processing times across its offices, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada should match assigned workloads with available resources, and it should support these decisions with reliable information on the available capacity within its offices. It should act immediately to address application backlogs that have accumulated in certain offices with limited capacity.	<p><b>IRCC Management Response</b> Agreed. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada will review and work to improve its workload monitoring and workload sharing tools to permit the department to better identify where capacity challenges exist and continue to manage workloads and reduce backlogs where possible (where space allows according to the Immigration Levels Plan).</p> <p>The department began shifting from paper-based processing and accelerated digital processing during the COVID-19 pandemic. This</p>	1. Improve the workload monitoring of application processing times and workload sharing tool across its offices.	July 1, 2024	i. Develop a tool to monitor output in relation to inventory and identify gaps in wait times. Based on recent processing trends, this tool will help with planning future output to ensure consistency of application processing times. This tool includes all Lines of Business and all offices, with distinctions between Quebec and Rest of Canada-destined clients (which have different targets) by April 1, 2024  ii. Expand internal monitoring and reporting on differences in months of inventory across offices and/or regions. The	Service Delivery Sector  Part 1 ( <i>To improve consistency of application processing times across its offices</i> )  OPPB (Tyler Toso)	

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		<p>approach enabled the department to reallocate certain economic class and temporary resident workloads to align with available capacity. Shifting capacity around the processing network is possible in many areas and allows offices to focus on caseloads whereby place-based expertise is required. Most refugee and many family class applications require in-person interviews and an advanced understanding of the local conditions, customs, and regulations, and therefore, require additional resources to be in place.</p> <p>The department augments in office capacity with temporary duty assignments and work-sharing with other offices. Additionally, the department implemented a new team with resettlement expertise to provide surge capacity and supplementary processing support to missions with aging inventories, allowing for a responsive approach to shifting inventories in 2022.</p> <p>While these efforts were insufficient in 2022, the above solutions have been</p>			<p>expanded use of this tool will support OPPB and the processing networks as they continue to work together on target setting and workload distribution, by July 1, 2024.</p>		

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		<p>successfully leveraged at a higher rate in 2023 and will be expanded in 2024 to further reduce regional backlogs and disparity in regional processing times for refugees by the end of 2024.</p> <p>Due to regional complexities (client mobility rights, security conditions, exit permissions, and so on) and/or the prioritization of cohorts in response to emerging crises, there will always be some level of variance in application processing times in a resettlement context despite these efforts.</p>					
			2. Assign workloads with available resources.	Annually, starting December 31, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Networks to assign workloads as needed to their respective resources, by:</li> <li>ii. Examining the levels targets for each line of business annually, by November 1, 2024.</li> <li>iii. Examining resource allocation based on the established targets annually, by December 31, 2024.</li> <li>iv. Continuing to staff and allocate resources, based on yearly assumption exercises, which allow a projection of the upcoming level of work to be</li> </ul>	Part 2 (Assign workloads with available resources) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centralized Network (Elise Pineau)</li> <li>• Global Network (Marcel Bak)</li> <li>• Domestic Network (Ravi Sall)</li> <li>• Support by OPPB (Tyler Toso)</li> </ul>	

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					<p>performed annually, by December 31, 2024.</p> <p>v. Cross-training of resources and subsequent workload distribution to help maintain relevant processing knowledge, skills and expertise will continue to take place, ensuring optimally flexibility in the workforce (i.e. Global Network provides virtual, region specific, training to in-Canada employees, including Centralized and Domestic Networks) annually, by December 31, 2024.</p>		
			<p>3. Support these decisions with reliable information on the available capacity within its offices.</p>	<p>Annually, starting December 31, 2024</p>	<p>i. Utilize internal tools to help with production tracking and workload management, wherein Networks would support the Operations Planning and Performance Branch by being proactive in flagging any concerns relative to misalignment between resources and the expected processing output.</p> <p>a. Identify the tools to be utilized (e.g. the “early warning flag” approach).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October 31, 2023: IRCC deployed a mid year cost management exercise across networks which piloted inclusion of new</li> </ul>	<p>Part 3 (<i>Support these decisions with reliable information on the available capacity within its offices</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centralized Network (Elise Pineau)</li> <li>• Global Network (Marcel Bak)</li> <li>• Domestic Network (Ravi Sall)</li> <li>• OPP (Esthefanie Vasquez)</li> </ul>	

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>categories to better identify processing resources.</li> <li>b. Implement the tools in the approach.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 30, 2024: Cost management exercise for 23/24 implements lessons learned from Fall pilot.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Review the use and efficacy of the tools.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 30, 2024: Review of approach with OPPB and across networks.</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. Implement a systematic approach to productivity measures for all lines of business that will also inform available capacity by July 2024.</li> </ul>		

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			4. Act immediately to address application backlogs and disparity in regional processing times for refugees within the confines of the admission targets, more specifically the applicants from Sub-Saharan Africa, that have accumulated in certain offices with limited capacity.	December 31, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. October 31, 2023: 19 of 26 planned decision-maker positions have been staffed through 2022 and 2023.</li> <li>ii. February 29, 2024: Refugee processing surge team and inter-regional work sharing plan established for 2024.</li> <li>iii. February 29, 2024: Stabilize and review for further expansion of the Temporary Resident worksharing resources within the Integrated Network.</li> <li>iv. June 30, 2024: Review of position creation and staffing in Sub-Saharan Africa.</li> <li>v. December 31, 2024: Prioritize and allocate Temporary Duty resources as needed to support refugee processing.</li> </ul>	Part 4 ( <i>Act immediately to address application backlogs that have accumulated in certain offices with limited capacity</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Network (Marcel Bak)</li> </ul> with inputs from CN (Elise Pineau) and DN (Ravi Sall)	

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Para 64	To support timely processing for all applicants, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada should examine differential outcomes in processing times related to the implementation of automated decision-making tools and reduce these disparities to the extent possible, including by reallocating sufficient resources to applications directed to manual processing.	<p><b>IRCC Management Response</b> Agreed. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada commits to monitoring and evaluating the effects of automated decision making on overall processing times for clients selected for automated and manual processing. However, full alignment is not expected or possible given that non-automated cases tend to be more complex and require additional efforts to process for various reasons (for example, additional documents from applicants, checks with partners, and so on).</p> <p>The implementation of automated decision-making tools for application triage and eligibility assessment has led to efficiencies in both of these processing steps, regardless of the country of origin. Based on these efficiencies, the department will reallocate resources to areas where additional capacity is required once further analysis has been conducted, as the efficiency gains are still relatively new.</p> <p>It is also important to note that country-specific conditions and</p>	1. Differential outcomes in PR processing times related to the implementation of automated decision making tools are monitored, evaluated and addressed (if needed).	April 1, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. OPPB will create a recurrent report to monitor the PR processing times of applications currently benefiting from the use of automated decision-making tools and manual processing by January 1, 2024.</li> <li>ii. OPPB will monitor PR processing times and evaluate whether differential outcomes are outside established Service Standards and merit further action. Networks to monitor and assign workloads as needed to their respective resources, examining the levels targets for each line of business annually, by November 1, 2024, examining resource allocation based on the established targets annually, by December 31, 2024, continuing to staff and allocate resources, based on yearly assumption exercises, which allow a projection of the upcoming level of work to be performed annually, by December 31, 2024.</li> <li>iii. If differential processing times can be mitigated with additional resources, then OPPB and the Centralized and Domestic Networks will formulate a plan to lessen the disparity, where possible, between processing time outcomes by April 1, 2024.</li> <li>iv. If further actions are determined to be required, they will be fully implemented by April 1, 2025.</li> </ul>	<p>Part 1 (<i>monitoring tools in place</i>)</p> <p>Service Delivery Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPPB (Tyler Toso &amp; Wassim El-Kass)</li> </ul> <p>Part 2 (<i>follow-up assessment for e.g. 3 months following to ensure resource allocation required</i>)</p> <p>Service Delivery Sector Centralized Network (Elise Pineau)</p>	

# IRCC DETAILED MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

## OAG Audit of Processing Applications for Permanent Residence

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		external factors beyond the department's control will continue to have an impact at the eligibility and admissibility stages of applications. (Note: Automated decision-making tools are not being applied at the admissibility stage.) As the department's automated decision-making capacity matures, new measures will be established to support normalization within lines of business through new capacity allocation models, the aim being to ensure that processing times align with established service standards for each line of business regardless of how an application was triaged and processed by an automated decision-making tool.			Prioritization of certain actions may also be required, to ensure the shortest possible delays in rectifying the differential processing times.		
Para 67	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada should implement without further delay online application portals for its refugee programs, while also working to complete its Digital Platform Modernization initiative.	<b>IRCC Management Response</b> Agreed. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada is on track to add the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program and the Government-Assisted Refugees Program (non-United Nations High Commission for Refugees referrals) to its permanent resident online portal in October and November 2023	1. Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) sponsors are now able to apply via the online portal.	November 1, 2023	2023-01-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval by Architecture Review Committee.</li> </ul> 2023-05-01 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IT development begins.</li> </ul> 2023-10-15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User testing.</li> </ul> 2023-11-01 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched of PSR stream in the PR portal.</li> </ul>	<b>Leading Sector:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asylum &amp; Refugee Resettlement Sector POC: Jean-Hugues Laurin</li> </ul> with inputs from IPG (Promiti Wahab; Trevor Jones), Global Network	



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		respectively. In 2022, UNHCR-referred applications under the Government-Assisted Refugees Program started being submitted electronically to the department through encrypted submission to protect the personal information of clients.	2. Non-UNHCR Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR) referral partners are able to apply via the online portal.	December 20, 2023.	2023-10-25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IT portal development for GAR begins.</li> </ul> 2023-12-06 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement and training with referral partners.</li> </ul> 2023-12-20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch of GAR stream in PR portal.</li> </ul>	(Marcel Bak), Client Support & Engagement Branch, Planning, Results and Evaluation (Katrina Mahoney)	
	3. UNHCR GAR referrals are able to be submitted through an online application mechanism. Ultimately, allowing for UNHCR GAR online referrals to be built directly into the DPM future system(s)		December 31, 2023	2021-12-02 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established sustainable and secure method for receiving UNHCR GAR referrals through the SharePoint interface.</li> <li>2023-11-01</li> <li>Approximately 95% of UNHCR GAR referrals are submitted via Sharepoint. A small number of UNHCR offices continue to submit referrals via regular email due to problems with functionality.</li> </ul> 2023-12-31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deadline to achieve 100% Sharepoint use for all UNHCR GAR referrals.</li> </ul>			
	4. Digital Platform Modernization (DPM) will include refugee resettlement lines of business.		2024/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program prioritization is currently being developed with expected front-end client applications to be released in 2024/2025.</li> </ul>			