

Private sponsorship of refugees and the integration process in Québec

Clothilde Parent-Chartier, PhD Candidate
International Development and Global Studies
University of Ottawa

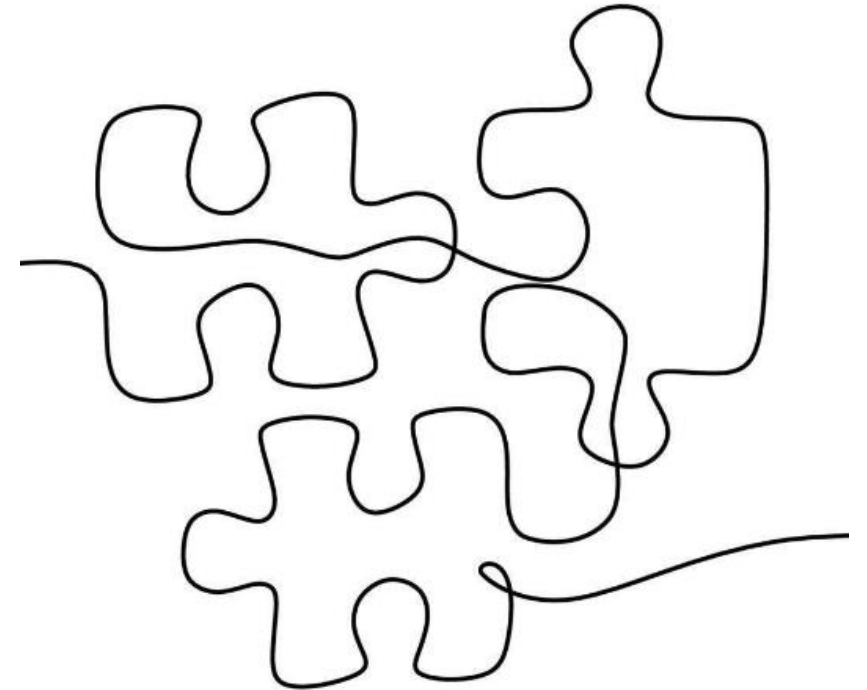


Private sponsorship in Québec vs the rest of Canada

Key differences	Québec - Collective Sponsorship of Refugees	ROC - Private Sponsorship of Refugees
Selection process	Provincial (MIFI)	Federal
Who can sponsor?	Groups of 2 to 5 citizens Regular organizations Experienced organizations	Groups of 5 citizens SAHs Other organizations
Financial Evaluation	Income-based No fundraising	Total funds pledged
Sponsors' Training	No training mandatory No equivalent of RSTP Some trainings given by TCRI	RSTP – some trainings are mandatory

Research Statement

What are the impacts of relationships between sponsors and sponsored individuals on the integration process?



Methodology and study sample

Individual interviews (N35)

Sponsored individuals (n11)

Sponsors (n14)

Practitioners working for organizations involved in sponsorship (n10)

Key info

- ✓ All official sponsorship agreements of participants are over
- ✓ No interview with sponsored individuals and their sponsors
- ✓ No interview with sponsors who sponsored family members

Key findings

Equal relations ?

The program structure creates power imbalances (Lim, 2019; McNally 2020) that are mostly left unchallenged by actors involved - impeding the integration process.

No clear definition of roles and responsibilities can create tensions/conflicts and reinforce power imbalances.

The power of “gratitude” complexifies relations and can harm sponsored individuals in particular. (Marshall-Denton, 2017; Haugen, Lenard and Regan Wills, 2020)

Going beyond simple “awareness” to challenge power relations

*“There were certain receipts that we had to give to certain people to justify...in any case. **And the student found that very invasive. Very ... with good reason. I remember after this discussion between the three of us: well, I understand that it's invasive, but at the same time we have donors, we have to show them proof. So we were kind of stuck...but I can understand that it's super invasive to ask for (...) receipts and blablabla. It's like: you don't know how to manage your money, we'll manage it for you!**” (Romy, Sponsor 5 - translation)*

Ethical relations?

Good intentions are not enough : helping can be infantilizing and impede the integration process.
(Kyriakides, Bajjali, McLuhan and Anderson, 2018)

Competences and knowledge of sponsors are crucial to navigate complex relations and understand needs of all parties involved. (Lim, 2019)

Perceived differences can play a role in how support is given and received.

Going beyond “basic needs” to restore agency

*“So for me (...) they did what was satisfactory, what they were supposed to do, they did. It was just on the surface. Now I am able to say this based on my experience. **They left out the part that was outside the official support which was crucial.** Because for me, I thought that was very rare that they checked on me. It was very rare that I would receive a text from the guys on the local committee saying : “How are you? What are your plans this weekend?” And it happened only in the first 2 weeks, but after, **I was just on my own.**” (Michael, Sponsored individual 4)*

*“I think that's one of the things that over the years, or that I realize now that as a sponsoring committee, **that we clearly could have done a better job, in doing it with the person instead of doing it for them.** You know from...I think, I feel like a lot of times the sponsored people were consulted in the decision making, but **I don't think it was a real consultation.**” (Catherine, Sponsor 11 - translation)*



Conclusion

- Unequal and unethical dimensions of relations are hindering the integration process.
- Support of professionals and trainings are crucial to rebalance relations, ensure ethical practices, and transform overall sponsorship experiences.
- Next step: collaborative analysis sessions with sponsors and sponsored individuals.

Merci!

Thank you!



: cpare101@uottawa.ca

