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Ascentria
CARE ALLIANCE

Formerly Lutheran Social Services of New England

Defining Success for the Refugee Client

Zachary Charland

Haley Dyer

Rebecca Seymour

Brent Young

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DEFINING SUCCESS FOR THE REFUGEE CLIENT

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Ms. Stacie LaBossiere,
Ascentria Care Alliance

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Submitted to:
Project Advisor: Corey Denenberg-Dehner
Project Co-Advisor: Anne Ogilvie

Submitted by:
Zachary Charland
Haley Dyer
Rebecca Seymour
Brent Young

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ABSTRACT

The U.S. government provides funding for refugee resettlement on a programmatic basis, compelling social service organizations to provide services in the same way. This approach places limitations on which of the client's true needs can be met and hinders the client's integration into society. Ascentria Care Alliance recognizes this problem and wants to find a better way to serve their clients. Consequently, Ascentria asked us to create a tool to track a refugee client's level of success in integration. We discovered four indicators of success for refugee clients, which directly influenced the tool that we developed for Ascentria. We recommend that Ascentria utilize this tool to collect information and statistics regarding refugee needs and improve Ascentria's ability to serve its clients.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Throughout the world, war, persecution and natural disasters often force people to flee their country to find safety elsewhere. In fact, last year, 70,000 people sought refuge in the United States alone. Refugees often encounter significant challenges in their efforts to become integrated into the United States. After a long, arduous process to receive official refugee status, when these individuals come to the United States, they are guided through integration into the country with the assistance of the services and benefits of Refugee Resettlement Programs.

Finding meaningful employment, becoming fluent in English, and acclimating to American culture are considerable hurdles refugees face as they strive to adjust and transition into their new community. Ascentria Care Alliance is a non-profit organization based in Worcester, Massachusetts, that provides Refugee Resettlement Programs to assist refugees in their integration process. From 2006-2010, more than 10,900 refugees were resettled in Massachusetts. Ascentria Care Alliance has resettled more than 1,700 of these refugees in the Worcester area alone (*Refugee Arrivals to Massachusetts by Country of Origin, 2006-2010*).

Ascentria follows resettlement guidelines provided by the Cultural Orientation Resource Center (COR) and governed by Lutheran Integration and Refugee Service (LIRS).

Unfortunately, the current infrastructure of these programs is centered around the federal funding provided and can force organizations to be more concerned with deadlines and time frames than achievement and understanding. The programmatic focus of federal funding greatly affects the delivery of care and services and can have a negative impact on the refugees as they try to adapt to their new lives in the United States.

Ascentria Care Alliance has recognized the deficiencies this programmatic focus causes in the delivery of refugee services and is working to solve these issues. Ascentria created Project ACE (Achieving Client-centered Engagement) to address these issues by focusing on the client's individual needs throughout service delivery and client experience. Ascentria believes that a better understanding of each individual's progress through the integration process will help them to better serve the needs of all their clients. Ascentria requested that students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute's Worcester Community Project Center collaborate with their Services for New Americans program to develop a system of measurable indicators to track the progress of their clients through resettlement programs.

Goal, Objectives and Methods

The goal of our project was to find indicators to measure the success of Ascentria Care Alliance's refugee clients. For our project, indicators of success are defined as specific milestones that contribute to successful integration into the United States. To achieve our project goal, we completed four objectives.

1. Develop an understanding of Ascentria's refugee clients' experiences.
2. Identify the appropriate definition of success for Ascentria Refugee Clients.
3. Identify the key indicators of successful integration.
4. Develop a basic assessment tool to evaluate a refugee client's progress.

Objective 1: Develop Understanding of Ascentria's Refugee Clients' Experiences

Our first objective was to gain an understanding of the resettlement experience for Ascentria Care Alliance's refugee clients. We conducted interviews with Ascentria executives and caseworkers; as well as Faith Tendo, Outreach Coordinator from the African Community Education (ACE) program; Meredith Walsh, the Executive Director of the Worcester Refugee Assistance Program (WRAP); Adnan Zubcevic, the Executive Director of the Bosnian

Community Center for Resource Development (BCCRD); Mette Brogden, the Director for Program Evaluation, Michael Mitchell, Vice President for Programs and Protection and William Swanson, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS); and Worcester City Councilor, Sarai Rivera.

These interviews, along with content analysis of government reports from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, materials provided by the Cultural Orientation Resource Center, and research published by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and research about the resettlement process and the programs offered by Ascentria, increased our understanding of the integration process, milestones, and challenges refugees face.

Objective 2: Define Success for a Refugee Client

Our second objective was to learn how caseworkers, executives and refugees defined the success of an individual. Over seven weeks, we gathered this information through focus groups and interviews with the personnel listed in Objective 1. The information received was compiled into a list comprised of every single factor that our interviewees felt contributed to success. We found commonalities throughout different interviews and published reports regarding refugee integration. We were able to condense our data into one, generalized definition of success. We validated our results by consulting Ascentria employees and other interviewees.

Objective 3: Identify Indicators

We used the definition of success we developed in Objective 2 to analyze our data and find the specific indicators that contribute to this success. We were able to break down the list of factors that contributed to a refugee's success and divide them into categories. The categories were based on general ideas that multiple factors involved or encompassed. Finally, the categories were simplified in order to clearly produce four categories in which a client's

progression indicated a potentially successful integration. We called these four categories the “Indicators”.

Objective 4: Develop System to Assess Client Success Levels

We utilized the Full Frame Initiative’s “Five Domains of Wellbeing” alongside the list of factors that contribute to success to create a system of assessment from the indicators developed in Objective 3. We evaluated each indicator against the following five Domains, Safety, Stability, Mastery, Meaningful Access to Relevant Resources, and Social Connectedness. We created questions from the list of specific factors, as well as each of the five domains, for each indicator in order to ensure that we measured success in an applicable and impactful manner. To ensure that the questions would be accurately interpreted, we sent the questions to employees of Ascentria for approval.

We completed our final objective to create a system for Ascentria to implement in their refugee resettlement programs using the questions we developed. We compiled the questions into an excel program and created a survey-like evaluation that caseworkers can use with their refugee clients. We revised the format after receiving feedback from caseworkers, management and executives at Ascentria in order to ensure that the product is easily implementable, sustainable, and beneficial to their organization.

Findings and Recommendations

Our research regarding the refugee resettlement process and the best ways to ensure success for the individuals involved led to five findings and recommendations.

Our first finding is that **the Full Frame Initiative’s Five Domains of Wellbeing is a useful tool for analyzing Ascentria Care Alliance’s refugee client’s success.** Angela Bovill, Chief Executive Officer of Ascentria, recommended that we research the Five Domains and consider using it as a framework for the assessment tool we were developing. The Full Frame Initiative

(FFI) is a national nonprofit organization aimed at promoting change in the way systems respond to people and communities living at the intersection of poverty, violence and trauma. The FFI developed the “Five Domains of Wellbeing” as aspects of life that every person needs to thrive. The Five Domains of Wellbeing framework is utilized by many different programs and systems including the State of Missouri’s Juvenile Justice System, Massachusetts state agencies integrating domestic and sexual violence programs with housing programs, and the Greater Boston Full Frame Network which addresses poverty, violence, trauma, and other obstacles (Full Frame Initiative, 2014).

After researching the Five Domains of Wellbeing using published factsheets and definitions, we found that the information and reasoning was very flexible. This flexibility is vital to the utility of the FFI since its widespread use depends on its ability to adapt to different needs, circumstances and populations. The Full Frame Initiative strives to make systematic changes to the delivery of social services by helping agencies, organizations and programs to impact the lives of clients. We found that we could use the information in the Five Domains of Wellbeing to build cohesive and expansive questions to assess each of the four indicators.

For our second finding, **we discovered four indicators of success for Ascentria’s Refugee Clients. These indicators are Employment, Housing, English Literacy and Integration.** Through the participants in the focus group and others that we interviewed we discovered salient factors that contribute specifically to a client’s success. We compiled, brainstormed, and organized these factors into four general categories or indicators. We then confirmed these indicators in follow up interviews. The factors affecting **Employment** include: attainment of any form of employment; progressing to stable, non-seasonal employment; earning a livable wage; job satisfaction; and familial support of a client’s employment.

Success within the **Housing** indicator is determined by comfortable communication with landlords, understanding rent and utilities and the client's overall satisfaction with where they are living. **English Literacy** is directly affected by the level of English required for employment and prior exposure to the English language. **Integration** success is the client's ability to self-advocate and utilize the services available to them and is determined by the rate of the client's integration into society. We created an assessment tool for Ascentria Care Alliance to use to assess their refugee client's progress through the resettlement programs. The assessment consists of questions pertaining to each of the four indicators of refugee success. We recommend that Ascentria expand on the basic assessment that we created to develop a more in-depth evaluation procedure.

Our third finding is that **the 48 hour orientation for Ascentria's refugee clients upon arrival is problematic.** Upon arrival in the United States, Ascentria's refugee clients begin a funder mandated cultural orientation program that must be completed within 48 hours. This orientation is part of the Reception and Placement services organized by the Cultural Orientation Resources Center and overseen by LIRS. Resettlement agencies are provided materials to present and teach necessary information, such as laws pertaining to their refugee status, the necessity of learning English and how to apply for a job. However, resettlement agencies do not have the time or the funding to investigate and discover if refugees have comprehended the large sum of required topics in such a short period of time. **We recommend additional research measuring comprehension and implementation of orientation principles.**

Fourth, **the time frame in which Refugees can receive support from resettlement programs is not long enough to become successfully integrated into the community.**

Currently, government funding allows refugees access to assistance from refugee resettlement

programs for up to six months. After speaking with caseworkers and Ascentria executives, we found that most believe that this limited time frame is not long enough. There is too much for the refugee client to accomplish and learn. There are too many variables involved for such a specific and strict time frame to meet every client's needs. We recommend further research into a more realistic and responsive time frame for the client to be able to make progress. All refugee clients are different. Some clients will need a lot of time to transition into their new life in America due to severe trauma, lack of prior education, and cultural differences while others may need significantly less time. If caseworkers feel that the client requires more assistance, they can suggest the client continue the program for several more months after which they will re-evaluate the client's progress. **We also recommend caseworkers be given the flexibility to provide Ascentria Care Alliance clients with a monthly check-in after completion of the program that continues until the client feels comfortable on their own.**

Finally, **Worcester, Massachusetts needs city level advocacy.** There are many different organizations and agencies that impact a refugee's life. Our interviews showed that city and community organizations can provide additional services that refugees may require, such as summer programs for English, transportation for the elderly and disabled, and before and after school programs for youth. These services are often not provided until a need has been shown. Ascentria is fortunate enough to have the ability to know the needs of the refugee community and should therefore take the responsibility to communicate them to these potential community partners. Sarai Rivera, a Worcester City Councilor, informed us that the Worcester City Council is currently bringing together many community partners as part of the Refugee Roundtable. We believe that this is the perfect opportunity for Ascentria to use their valuable and extensive knowledge of the refugee community. To do this, **we recommend that Ascentria create a**

position with the responsibility to advocate for refugee needs and services on a city level.

This new position should be able to interact with government agencies such as the school board, housing inspections, and city council, as well as advocate for refugees and their care.

About the Assessment Tool

The assessment tool that we developed is a five tab excel file questionnaire. The first four tabs consist of questions that we developed based on input from our interviewees and focus group to analyze education, employment, housing and integration. The fifth tab is a “Results Dashboard” where all the indicator graphs are shown at the same time. The questions are weighted equally and there is a pie chart at the end of each section comparing the number of questions answered “yes” and “no”. A detailed example and explanation of the assessment tool is available in Chapter 5.

This questionnaire should be used as a snapshot diagnostic tool for the caseworkers. It is meant to guide the family through the programs and will reveal potential challenges of integration. Initially, the questions should be answered on the spreadsheet by the caseworker as they collect information directly from the client, followed by the client filling out the spreadsheet themselves. The assessment tool can be administered to establish a baseline of a client’s needs. The family’s integration progress can be tracked by following their ability to achieve the markers of successful integration throughout their time in Ascentria. Ideally, the client will be able to take the test entirely on their own at the end of the program. With the client’s permission, the test should be re-administered after a year. The intent of this second evaluation is to track progress after the federally funded programs are finished. The questions should be answered as accurately as they can at the time the test is given.

Conclusion

This project is the first step in Ascentria's Project ACE program aimed to provide better care to each of their clients. In order to offer improved, personalized care, Ascentria requested research on how refugee clients are progressing toward successful integration. Our project's findings and the assessment tool can be utilized not only in the refugee resettlement programs but throughout the entire organization as the baseline for determining client success.

AUTHORSHIP

Section	Author
Title Page	Rebecca Seymour
Abstract	All
Acknowledgements	Haley Dyer
Executive Summary	Haley Dyer, Rebecca Seymour, Brent Young
Authorship	Haley Dyer
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Video Filming	Zachary Charland, Brent Young
Video Editing	Zachary Charland, Brent Young
Editing	Rebecca Seymour
Formatting	Haley Dyer
Data Analysis	Haley Dyer
Outreach	Zachary Charland, Brent Young

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1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world, war, persecution and natural disasters often force people to flee their country to find safety elsewhere. After a long, arduous process to receive official refugee status, when these individuals come to the United States, they gain access to the services and benefits of Refugee Resettlement Programs.

Refugees come from a variety of backgrounds and prior life experiences, each with a different idea of what to expect from their new life in America. Most refugees that come to United States go through a government designed orientation program overseas before entering the Country. This orientation varies depending on the refugee's country of origin. In some locations, refugees are shown videos meant to depict life in the United States. These videos show scenes of a stereotypical life in America that are meant to provide a glimpse into the life that is waiting for them, but are not always an accurate portrayal of what they will find upon arrival.

Upon arrival in the United States, the refugees officially begin the integration process that they have been preparing for.

“Integration in the refugee context is the end product of a multi-faceted and on-going process, of which self-reliance is but one part. Integration requires a preparedness on the part of the refugees to adapt to the host society without having to forego their own cultural identity.” (daCosta, 2006)

Refugees arriving in Worcester, Massachusetts are greeted at the airport by an Ascentria Care Alliance caseworker. This caseworker will guide them through a mandatory, rigorous forty-eight hour orientation to America, developed and mandated by the Cultural Orientation Resource Center (COR). The following two days are filled with appointments, meetings and a long list of requirements to be fulfilled, yet the refugee is tired, jetlagged, overwhelmed and possibly

disappointed by their new reality. Caseworkers move the refugees into livable but low income apartments that do not always meet the expectations that the refugees often develop from the overseas orientation. Caseworkers then teach their clients about housing, transportation, employment, learning English, education, health, finances, U.S. laws and more. They fit all of this vital information from the COR curriculum into the next forty eight hours, hoping that most of it will be absorbed and their client will be on the way to becoming successful in the United States. This hectic and stressful time is not conducive to learning and refugees often forget a lot of the important information that was provided. After the first forty-eight hours, refugees receive assistance from refugee resettlement programs which offer services to help their transition into the community.

The United States government finances these programs for individuals with official refugee status. Unfortunately, this government funding and support only lasts for six months during which the caseworkers must do their best to lead refugees through all of the government requirements and onto a successful path of integration into their new life in America.

Ascentria Care Alliance, based in Worcester, Massachusetts, is one of the social service organizations providing refugee resettlement programs. Their programs include The Language Bank and Services for New Americans. The Services for New Americans program includes housing, language training, employment assistance and access to transportation. Refugee assistance service providers, like Ascentria, aim to guide refugees through a successful integration process, however, problems frequently arise. Some issues are more common than others and our sponsor at Ascentria explained that refugees typically encounter obstacles with the language, employment, housing and transportation.

Many of the problems that develop can be linked to the policies regarding the process of refugee integration. Systematic programs are provided in the context of federal and state requirements, without much attention to the specific needs and challenges of the individual. Refugees are eligible for financial and medical assistance for up to eight months and employment assistance for five years but case management with Ascentria or similar resettlement programs can only last six months (ORR, 2014). The regulations do not take into account country of origin, past life experiences or other unique characteristics specific to the individual refugee that may affect their rate of integration. These regulations can create a confusing and stressful environment for many refugees. It is nearly impossible for the refugee to organize, plan, and meet all the requirements of each program. For example, refugees are required to take English classes and find employment. Unfortunately, when scheduling conflicts between employment and English classes arise, a paycheck often takes priority. Scheduling issues continue when trying to coordinate other aspects of a refugee's life as well. Refugee clients give priority to requirements with stricter time constraints.

Along with scheduling issues, refugee clients often face problems regarding employment. Many refugees had careers in specific professions prior to coming to the United States. When offered jobs that require little or no training, they feel disrespected or discredited in their abilities. They do not want to hold a menial job that does not make proper use of their skills. This leads to feelings of unhappiness and overall lack of motivation.

When refugees are unable to acclimate to the United States, they are not the only ones affected. Society also incurs costs in both the short and long term. Social tension arises from refugees misunderstanding their new cultural environment. Refugees may encounter difficulties interacting with the host culture due to language, social, and cultural barriers. As a result,

refugees experience more than double the national unemployment rate in the United States (*Report to the Congress FY 2012, 2012*). Refugees from the Middle East encounter an especially high rate of unemployment. More than thirty percent of people from the Middle East who came to the United States as refugees are unemployed (*Report to the Congress FY 2012, 2012*). Forty-two percent of Worcester's refugee population comes from Iraq, making the thirty percent unemployment statistic a pressing issue in Worcester.

Ascentria Care Alliance has recognized the deficiencies in the refugee integration process and is working to solve these issues. Ascentria hopes that a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the refugee resettlement process will help them to better serve their clients. In an effort to gain this insight, they have requested that we, working in collaboration with Ascentria, develop a system of indicators to gauge the progress of individuals through their programs.

This report contains six chapters. In Chapter 2, we explore the social factors that can impact refugees in Worcester. Also in this chapter, we discuss efforts to assist refugees in a national context, and finally the efforts of Ascentria Care Alliance in Worcester. In Chapter 3, we introduce our goals, objectives, and methods for achieving them. We discuss our findings and recommendations in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 is an in-depth description of the Assessment Tool that we created. We conclude and summarize our project in Chapter 6.

2 BACKGROUND

As the traditional African Proverbs says, ‘it takes a village to raise a child’. A sense of family is crucial to the development and success of a village, community, and city. Worcester, Massachusetts is a city of approximately 181,000 (*Worcester County QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau*, 2014). Worcester is a community that struggles with social issues such as primary care and wellness shortcomings, violence, and discrimination. Ascentria Care Alliance is a nonprofit community based organization working to improve the Worcester community through their Services for New Americans.

In Section 2.1 we discuss the immigrant population in Worcester and issues that may impact refugees. We explore the social issues of Worcester in Section 2.2 to generate a better understanding of our project. In section 2.3 we discuss the myriad of challenges experienced by the refugee community and efforts to assist in their transition to Worcester. Our project’s main focus was to propose indicators of successful integration for Ascentria Care Alliance’s refugee clients. To do this, they asked us to identify indicators for successful integration into the United States.

2.1 Social Issues That Affect Refugees

Refugees in Worcester

According to the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants, Massachusetts has accepted more than 12,000 refugees since 2006 (*Regional Statistics FY2006-FY2010*, 2010; *Statewide Statistics 2011-2015*, 2014). The central Massachusetts region has received more than 1700 refugees from 2006 to 2010. More than 700 of these refugees are from Iraq, and almost 500 are from Bhutan (*Regional Statistics FY2006-FY2010*). Other countries contribute to the local refugee population as well, such as Liberia, Burma, and other countries in Africa, the Middle

East, Southeast Asia, and Central and South America (*Regional Statistics FY2006-FY2010*). In the three years reportable since 2010, more than 2300 refugees have come to Massachusetts from just the near and middle east, with the majority of refugees, again, coming from Iraq and Bhutan (*Statewide Statistics 2011-2015*, 2014). Regardless of their country of origin, refugees face a variety of challenges as they transition and integrate to their new home. A few of these challenges are language barriers, economic struggles, and cultural integration.

Language Barriers

Refugees come to the United States with a wide variety of educational backgrounds and experience with the English language. The Office of Refugee Resettlement reported that of the United States' incoming refugees, 47.8% spoke no English, 31.7% do not speak English well, and only 13.8% spoke English well or fluently (*Report to the Congress FY 2012*, 2012). The ability to speak English proficiently is critical to integration in American society; low English speaking ability is linked to reduced access to "health care, schools, and government agencies" and strongly correlated with early school dropout (Fennelly & Palasz, 2003). The same Annual Report showed a strong correlation between the ability to speak English and a high employment rate (*Report to the Congress FY 2012*, 2012).

Economic Struggles

Without an in-depth knowledge of the language refugees are forced to take menial jobs with low pay ("Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries," 1997). Refugees in Massachusetts report one of the highest hourly wages (\$10.17) in the country, however, this is still less than half of the national average wage of \$24.15 (*Average hourly and weekly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls by industry sector*,

seasonally adjusted, 2014; Debelnogich, 2014). In addition to lower wages, refugees also experience more than double the national unemployment rate (*Report to the Congress FY 2012*, 2012). Massachusetts is ranked best in the nation when comparing entered employment, number of terminations, reductions, health benefits offered, average wages, job retention, case load size and cost per entered employment (Debelnogich, 2014). Even though Massachusetts is outperforming the rest of the nation, refugees still experience difficulty fully participating in the workforce and this impacts long term integration.

Cultural Integration

The struggles encountered by refugees are not just economic but are also social. As refugees are surrounded by a new culture and lifestyle, they may experience a loss of cultural identity. For example, Mandaean, an religious group indigenous to Iraq, who have fled from the war in their country, enjoy safety and peace in the United States but fear a cultural and religious “extinction” (Contreas, 2014). Refugees also experience difficulties attaining driver’s licenses, bilingual education, translation and interpretation services in schools and health centers, affordable housing, and the cost of naturalization (*New American's Agenda Report 3*, 2009). Refugees require assistance navigating the new organizations, bureaucracies, and requirements in order to participate fully in their new community.

While it is unreasonable to assume that all of society will welcome refugees without any conflict, refugees also encounter resistance from local policymakers. For example, recently the mayor of Springfield sent a letter to the United States Department of State requesting that any applications for refugees to be placed in his city be rejected ("Springfield mayor: Stop sending my city refugees," 2014). The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi

Pillay, stated that refugees are “frequently discriminated against by landlords, employers and state-run authorities, and stereotyped and vilified by some political parties, media organizations and members of the public” (Pillay, 2009). Refugees continue to experience difficulties in the cultural transition of their new homes, impeding their integration.

Language barriers, economic struggles, and cultural transitions are just a few of the challenges that refugees face as they seek to adapt to their new host country. However, refugees are not left alone in their efforts to transition. Refugee Assistance Organizations like Ascentria offer programs and services to aid refugees as they work to successfully integrate into society.

2.2 Efforts to Assist Refugees in Transition to Life in the United States

In the mid-20th century, the concept of a refugee was codified into international law ("USCRI in History," 2014). Drifters were common, but not enough people could travel across national borders for it to be a national concern until people avoiding plagues, war, and famine created large-scale migration periods using the automobile and train ("Root Causes of Migration - Fact Sheet," 2014). Governments have set up federal and international programs to attend to the needs of these populations.

In the following sections we explore the history of government responses to refugees. Next, we analyze how programs have grown and developed into a modern system that incorporates many facets of government and non-governmental organizations. Finally, we look at the two models of providing assistance to refugees. Programs are constantly improving to adapt to the needs of the refugee population. Government agencies and non-government organizations that are involved in refugee care currently follow one of two methods; either focus on a single issue in the community, or focus on the individual. These methods are referred to as program and client centric approaches, respectively.

History of Refugee Programs

People have always been displaced by war, religious persecution, famine and drought, but the response to these displaced people or refugees has been irregular. People were often left to the mercy of their homeland and whatever government was in place. This status quo continued until after World War I when the League of Nations recognized that the unique environment created by the Armenian Genocide of 1915 along with the Russian Revolution of 1917 required an international response (Shelton & Gale Virtual Reference, 2004). François Crépeau and Delphine Nakache wrote in the Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity that the first formal response by the League of Nations was the “Nansen Passport”, named after the first High Commissioner for Refugees, Fridtjof Nansen (Shelton & Gale Virtual Reference, 2004). This new passport for refugees provided numerous advantages, such as an “official identity and recognizable status”, which gave these newly labeled “refugees” a chance to begin a new life (Shelton & Gale Virtual Reference, 2004).

This first effort was well received, helping more than 1.5 million refugees from Russia gain an official status ("USCRI in History," 2014). Due to the success, Nansen’s office was granted additional mandates to other groups such as Armenians in 1924, and Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean, and Turkish refugees in 1928 (Shelton & Gale Virtual Reference, 2004). Even with these advancements, the international community failed to provide a cohesive response and therefore disregarded many refugee issues.

After World War II, an additional 30 million people were displaced and a new coordinated response was required. The international environment was different. In 1947, the United Nations created the International Refugee Organization to coordinate efforts to resettle “displaced persons in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe” (Kanstroom,

2003). This was the first time that an international response was generated to specifically resettle a large number of refugees. The United States continued its previous policies of accepting refugees without any formal statutory provision to fulfill its international obligations domestically. Efforts by the United States regarding refugees was irregular defining refugees as “those who had fled ‘from any Communist or Communist dominated country or area,’ from ‘any country within the general area of the Middle East,’ or those who were ‘uprooted by catastrophic natural calamity’” (Kanstroom, 2003).

It was not until the passage of the 1980 amendments to the federal immigration laws, the Refugee Act, which the United States brought its domestic policy in line with the requirements of international law and created a systematic method for addressing current “real world” humanitarian crises. The United States has continuously amended its definition and policies regarding refugees but as of 2014, an individual may be granted refugee or asylum status if they

“have been persecuted or fear they will be persecuted on account of race, religion, nationality, and/or membership in a particular social group or political opinion” (“Refugees and Asylum,” 2011).

In 1975, the United States began to coordinate responses to care for refugees by beginning to work with organizations that had previously assisted traditional immigrants. Organizations such as the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, and others began to help newly resettled refugees begin their transition to life in the United States (“History of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program,”).

Modern Government Programs

Current efforts to assist refugees and help with the transition to a new culture are led by a complex combination of different departments and agencies throughout the federal, state, and

local governments in addition to non-profit agencies, both private and public. The State Department accepts applications for refugee status, along with the Department of Health and Human Services, and input from the Department of Homeland Security ("History of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program,"). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) assist these federal organizations with resettlement efforts, and are specifically called Resettlement Agencies (RAs). There are currently nine RAs in partnership with US Federal Government ("Refugee Admissions Reception and Placement Program," 2011; *Report to the Congress FY 2012*, 2012).

- Church World Service
- Episcopal Migration Ministries
- Ethiopian Community Development Council
- Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
- International Rescue Committee
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
- World Relief

These RAs contribute information and recommendations that influence refugee and immigration policy, such as how many refugees to accept, where to accept refugees from, and many more policies set by the Department of State, and the Department of Homeland Security ("History of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program,"). More importantly, these RAs sponsor new refugees as part of the Reception & Placement Program ("Refugee Admissions Reception and Placement Program," 2011) and are responsible for recommending their clients to affiliated offices.

Ascentria Care Alliance (Ascentria) is affiliated with the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service Resettlement Agency. Initial services that Ascentria provides to help refugees integrate into society include “housing, essential furnishings, food, clothing, community

orientation, and assistance with access to other social, medical and employment services” (“Refugee Admissions Reception and Placement Program,” 2011).

While the United States Government provides funding for RAs, the arrangement is a “public-private partnership” and the agencies are expected to contribute substantial financial and in-kind resources to augment government support (“Refugee Admissions Reception and Placement Program,” 2011). Initial services provided by RAs are available for the first 30-90 days a refugee is in the United States. After this time frame has passed, the Office of Refugee Resettlement works with “states and other nongovernmental organizations to provide longer-term cash and medical assistance, as well as language, employment, and social services” (“Refugee Admissions Reception and Placement Program,” 2011).

The Office of Refugee Resettlement works with a multitude of different organizations, both voluntary agencies as well as resettlement agencies, in order to provide “new populations with the opportunity to maximize their potential in the United States” (*What We Do*, 2014) In 2010, the Office of Refugee Resettlement implemented a new vision to expand its response and improve current methods. Figure 1 illustrates this new vision (*What We Do*, 2014).



Figure 1 Office of Refugee Resettlement

As figure 1 shows, the Office of Refugee Resettlement feels that there are many factors impacting refugee life. These factors, such as health and mental health services, the ability to make informed decisions, and case management, all affect the ability of the individual to access mainstream opportunities and resources. While the Office of Refugee Resettlement coordinates and organizes efforts, the direct work is done by the affiliates of the RAs. These affiliates meet refugee clients at the airport, move them into their first apartment, and begin to guide them through the bureaucracy of federal, state, and local requirements ("Refugee Admissions Reception and Placement Program," 2011). They also facilitate the provision of critical services if the agency does not provide these services themselves. This tiered responsibility and oversight creates a specialized service delivery model. This means that as social service providers receive funding for executing specific programs and services, the program becomes the focus instead of the client.

2.3 Ascentria Care Alliance

Ascentria Care Alliance is a non-profit organization providing social services to those in need. They are based out of Worcester, Massachusetts, with branches throughout New England.

Ascentria was founded in 1872 and is one of the oldest social service agencies in New England. They are also one of the largest, with over 1,400 employees serving over 20,000 people per year (Saia, 2014).

Ascentria Care Alliance, which formerly known as the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of New England, is a member of the nationwide network of faith-based non-profits. While the other independently operated network members have kept their names, the LSS felt that their name was limiting their interaction with different groups of people. Ascentria leadership believed that many large corporations were not looking to provide funding to organizations that were linked to particular religions. They felt that this hesitation also extended to their potential clients. “Changing the LSS name was a vital component of our new corporate strategy. The Ascentria name will help us open doors for new partnerships and expand our funding opportunities with foundations, corporate sponsors and donors, in support of our new client-centered model of care,” (“Ascentria Care Alliance,” 2014). Still, Ascentria made an effort to keep their innovative, new name relevant. The term “Ascentria” is meant to represent both “rising together” and the Holy Trinity. “[The name] connects with our mission and honors our Christian heritage,” (“Ascentria Care Alliance,” 2014)

Ascentria also believed that the name change was a crucial step in ensuring the best chance of success for their new Integrated Service Center. The idea of an Integrated Service Center is to have multiple offered services in one location combined with a new philosophy of holistic case management.

Programs Offered

Ascentria currently offers a large selection of services to their clients. The services we describe below focus on their services for refugee clients.

The Language Bank

The Language Bank provides interpretation and language services to clients. They provide face-to-face language interpretations to professionals and their clients with limited knowledge of the English language. Many of the interpretations involve medical, legal, and other professional issues that require a strong understanding of the language ("Ascentria Care Alliance," 2014).

Services for New Americans

Ascentria provides many vital services to new Americans with the goal of assisting refugees and new Americans as they try to adapt into their new communities.

“Ascentria Care Alliance is committed to providing the highest quality services throughout the resettlement period, foster the self-sufficiency of refugee and immigrant families, inform and educate the community about the refugee and immigrant experience, and partner with volunteers and the community to support our new neighbors.”("Ascentria Care Alliance," 2014)

These services include refugee resettlement programs, legal assistance for immigrants, and micro-enterprise development programs for entrepreneurial refugees and immigrants. New Americans also utilize the Language Bank and the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Foster Care Program. These services all aim to make the transition to their new life as smooth as possible.

2.4 Methods to Evaluate Success of Ascentria’s Refugee Programs

Social work is an inherently political process. Funding can be substantially increased or drastically cut depending on the policies of government at the time. Nonprofit social programs supported in part by government money are given metrics and timelines to follow, with the loss of funding as a threat for non-compliance. To evaluate which programs are successful and which are not, the Office of Refugee Resettlement has established requirements. The Office of Refugee

Resettlement has stated a refugee must be taking English classes and be employed after 90 days in the country, and case management should end after 180 days in the country.

Ascentria Care Alliance's main goal is create a client centered model of care that focuses on the needs of the individual and works toward the client's goal of becoming successfully integrated into a community. Consequently, the goal of our project was to provide Ascentria Care Alliance with indicators that measures a refugee's successful integration as a whole, as opposed to only focusing on the time tables provided. We discuss our objectives, as well as the requisite tasks we completed to achieve them, in the next chapter.

3 METHODOLOGY

The goal of our project was to identify indicators to measure the success of the refugee clients of Ascentria Care Alliance. As Ascentria's refugee clients progress through refugee resettlement programs, certain factors and indicators emerge that suggest greater success in societal integration. For our project, indicators of success are defined as specific milestones that contribute to a refugee client's successful integration into the United States. To achieve our project goal, we needed to complete four objectives.

For Objective 1, we needed to develop an understanding of Ascentria's refugee clients' experiences. Next, in Objective 2, in order to find the required indicators, we needed to know exactly how caseworkers, executives and refugees defined success. Once we were able to define success properly, in Objective 3, we categorized four indicators to identify successful refugee client practices. Finally, in the fourth objective, we developed a basic assessment to evaluate a refugee client's progress within each of these categories in order to determine and measure their success. We describe each of these objectives and the accompanying tasks in the sections below.

3.1 Objective 1: Develop Full Understanding of Ascentria's Refugee Client's Experiences

Our first objective was to gain an understanding of the resettlement experience for Ascentria Care Alliance's refugee clients. In order to do so, we needed to fully understand the refugee integration and resettlement processes. For the purposes of this project, we defined Ascentria's Refugee Programs as the programs and services that Ascentria offers to its refugee clients. We interpreted "full understanding" of refugee integration and resettlement to mean comprehending various goals of the refugees and Ascentria caseworkers, the individual steps involved in the integration and resettlement processes, common experiences and frequent problems that arise. We also felt that we needed to become familiar with the Refugee Programs

offered by Ascentria. For detailed background on Ascentria Care Alliance's Refugee programs please refer to section 2.3.in the Background Chapter.

Tasks

In order to understand the refugee integration and resettlement process, we conducted interviews with Ascentria executives and caseworkers; as well as Faith Tendo, Outreach Coordinator from the African Community Education (ACE) program; Meredith Walsh, the Executive Director of the Worcester Refugee Assistance Program (WRAP); Adnan Zubcevic, the Executive Director of the Bosnian Community Center for Resource Development (BCCRD); Mette Brogden, the Director for Program Evaluation, Michael Mitchell, Vice President for Programs and Protection and William Swanson, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS); and Worcester City Councilor, Sarai Rivera. These interviews, along with extensive research about the resettlement process and the programs offered by Ascentria, were meant to reveal the specifics of the integration process, milestones, and challenges refugees face.

Interviews

We selected interviewees to represent all levels of involvement with Refugee Assistance Programs, from former refugees working as caseworkers to top management personnel. We utilized the "snowball sampling" technique, in which we asked each interviewee from Ascentria if they knew of anyone involved with the refugee community or similar refugee resettlement programs that could provide further information for our project. This resulted in referrals to representatives of companies with refugee programs similar to those of Ascentria, such as ACE, WRAP, BCCRD and LIRS. This process enabled us to access individuals with varied types of interactions with the refugee population, from personal, day-to-day interactions of caseworkers

and project managers that were experts on the specifics of resettlement programs, to executives and board members of entire social services organizations that provided a more broad, system-level perspective.

In the interviews we conducted, we sought in-depth information about how refugees utilize services, problems that refugees encounter at home and work, and when refugees start to feel successful. Our interviews with program managers and caseworkers, such as Lisa Brennan and Mohan Sunuwar, Program Manager and Department Coordinator for Ascentria's Services for New Americans, respectively, aimed to obtain more in-depth information regarding the particulars of Ascentria's program execution, effectiveness and impact for refugees. See Appendix A for a list of interview questions.

The interviews with Ascentria employees were conducted in person at Ascentria headquarters. Interviews with ACE and WRAP were also held in person. LIRS and BCCRD interviews were conducted via telephone.

3.2 Objective 2: Define Success of a Refugee Client

Our second objective was to learn how caseworkers, executives and refugees defined a successfully integrated individual. We then needed to take all of their opinions of success and blend them into one cohesive definition.

Tasks

Over seven weeks, we gathered this information through focus groups and interviews with the personnel listed in Objective 1. The data collected was compiled into a list comprised of every single factor that our interviewees felt contributed to success. We found commonalities throughout the various interviews and published reports regarding refugee integration. We condensed the data into one, generalized definition of success. We then validated the results with Ascentria staff, executives, and other interviewees.

Focus Group

Our focus group discussion was held in Ascentria Care Alliance's Shattuck Street location to accommodate busy schedules. With the help of Lisa Brennan, the program manager for Services for New Americans, we held a focus group of program administrators that would provide diverse perspectives. Six caseworkers from Ascentria's Refugee Assistance department participated in the focus group. Of these caseworkers, five out of the six were once themselves refugees, originating from four different countries, and later employed by Ascentria. They are each responsible for different aspects of the Program for New Americans, such as housing, employment, developing small businesses, and education.

We asked each caseworker questions pertaining to their designated programs and the clients they had worked with. We also asked how each caseworker judged a client's progress in their program and what factors contributed to refugee client's successful integration. Instead of asking for a specific definition for success, we asked the focus group participants to give specific achievements, goals, or milestones that must be met in order for the refugee client to be considered successful. The additional purpose of this focus group was to identify specific aspects of Ascentria's programs that have helped refugees transition and gather data on the steps that each refugee must take to progress. We have included the focus group questions in Appendix B.

Generating a Definition

We gathered the information from our interviews and focus group into a large list consisting of every individual factor mentioned by the interviewees. These factors, which included a refugee client mastering basic tasks, acquiring employment within 90 days and meeting other mandatory requirements, accomplishing large scale goals, etc., varied widely in

size and significance yet were all crucial to the overall success of an individual. In order to organize the broad spectrum of data, we grouped the individual factors into larger categories. We found many commonalities throughout our different interviews and consequently ranked the factors' importance according to how many times they were mentioned by different interviewees. Once we organized factors and ranked them, we were able to condense the data into one, generalized definition of success.

3.3 Objective 3: Identify Indicators

As we stated previously, the goal of our project was to find indicators to measure the success of Ascentria's refugee clients' integration process. After determining the definition of success for a refugee client in Objective 2, we were able to begin the main goal of our project.

Tasks

We used the definition of a successful integration we developed in Objective 2, as well as the complete list of factors that contribute to this success gathered in the interviews and focus group, to analyze the data and find the specific indicators of a successfully integrated refugee client. In our process to determine the definition of a successful integration, we broke down the list of factors that contributed to a refugee's successful integration and divided them into categories. To find the indicators that we were looking for in Objective 3, those categories were simplified in order to clearly produce four categories in which a client's progression indicated a potentially successful integration. We refer to these four categories as "Indicators".

3.4 Objective 4: Develop a Tool to Assess Client Success Levels

For the final objective of our project, we designed an Assessment Tool to evaluate and track a refugee client's progress through Ascentria's Resettlement Program. Assessment criteria are numeric measurement tools used to measure the progress of a refugee as they integrate into the community.

Tasks

We utilized the Full Frame Initiative's "Five Domains of Wellbeing" alongside the list of factors that contribute to the successful integration of a refugee to create an assessment tool from the indicators developed in Objective 3. We evaluated each indicator against the following five Domains: Safety, Stability, Mastery, Meaningful Access to Relevant Resources, and Social Connectedness. We created questions for each indicator from each of the five domains and the list of specific factors in order to ensure that we measured success in an applicable and impactful manner. To pretest the clarity of the questions, we sent them to Ascentria employees for approval.

We completed our final objective to create an assessment tool for Ascentria to implement in their refugee resettlement programs to gauge the success of their clients through the integration process using the questions we developed. We compiled the questions into an excel program and created a survey-like evaluation that caseworkers can use with their refugee clients. We revised the format after receiving feedback from caseworkers, management and executives at Ascentria in order to ensure that the product is an easily implemented tool that will serve as an asset to both their employees and their clients.

4 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goal of our project was to find indicators to measure the successful integration of the refugee clients of Ascentria Care Alliance. For our project, indicators of success are defined as specific milestones that contribute to successful integration into the United States. In order to identify these indicators, we first needed to know exactly how caseworkers, executives and refugees defined success. We gathered this information through focus groups and interviews over the past seven weeks. We determined that the definition of success in Ascentria's program was when a client became self-sufficient in each aspect of daily life. To determine and measure the success of a client, we developed a basic assessment tool to evaluate client progress within each of these categories.

In this chapter we discuss our five findings. First, we describe the Full Frame Initiative. Then, we explain our four indicators of success: employment, housing, literacy and integration. In our third and fourth findings, we introduce the problems within the 48 hour cultural orientation program and the six month time limit on refugee resettlement programs, respectively. Finally, we explore a suggestion from a Worcester City councilor on the need for city level advocacy within Worcester, Massachusetts. Each finding is accompanied by at least one recommendation.

4.1 Finding 1

The Full Frame Initiative's Five Domains of Wellbeing framework is a flexible tool that could be useful for analyzing Ascentria's refugee clients' success.

The Full Frame Initiative (FFI) is a national nonprofit program aimed at promoting positive change in the way systems respond to people and communities living at the intersection of poverty, violence and trauma. The Full Frame Initiative developed the "Five Domains of Wellbeing", as aspects of life in which every person needs to thrive. Angela Bovill, the Chief

Executive Officer of Ascentria, referred us to the Five Domains of Wellbeing to use as a springboard for establishment of the recommended assessment tool. The Full Frame Initiative seeks to change and improve systems that provide services to marginalized members of society. The Five Domains of Wellbeing framework is utilized by many different programs and systems including the State of Missouri’s Juvenile Justice System, Massachusetts state agencies integrating domestic and sexual violence programs with housing programs and the Greater Boston Full Frame Network which addresses poverty, violence, trauma, and other obstacles (Full Frame Initiative, 2014). Two years ago, Ascentria invited the Full Frame Initiative to work with the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program (URM), to explore ways that Ascentria, along with its partners, could incorporate the Five Domains of Wellbeing in the URM’s work with youth (Stravino, Laura, personal communication, December 8, 2014). The Full Frame Initiative has been very successful in employing the Five Domains of Wellbeing to affect systems change at all levels – practice, policy and funding.

The Five Domains of Wellbeing are "universal, interdependent, and non-hierarchical needs" that everyone has (Full Frame Initiative, 2014). These five domains provided a flexible and expansive tool for us to improve and finalize the indicators we had developed. We analyzed the indicators that surfaced in our research and found that there were multiple levels of client “success” that could be measured. By utilizing different parts of the FFI Five Domains of Wellbeing, we moved beyond simple checkpoints that may not deliver meaningful results, into a more detailed analysis that illustrates areas of growth and areas where refugee clients could use additional assistance. Please refer to Chapter 5 and the assessment tool in Appendix C for additional explanation on its utility.

4.2 Finding 2

We discovered four indicators of success for Ascentria’s Refugee Clients. These indicators are Employment, Housing, English Literacy and Integration.

Indicator 1: Employment

Within the employment category, there are several factors that assist in ensuring success for the individual. These factors can be sequential but it is not a requirement. We have listed them in order of importance. The factors include attaining i) any form of employment, ii) non-seasonal, stable employment, iii) a livable wage, iv) job satisfaction and v) familial support.

Attaining any Form of Employment

Through interviews with Ascentria executives and caseworkers, as well as the Outreach Coordinator from African Community Education (ACE), the Executive Director of Worcester Refugee Assistance Program (WRAP), the Executive Director of Bosnian Community Center for Resource Development (BCCRD) and the Director for Program Evaluation, Vice President for Programs and Protection and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), we discovered that employment is a strong indicator of an Ascentria refugee client’s success. The interviews provided valuable insight as to what a refugee client must accomplish upon arrival in the United States.

We held a focus group with six caseworkers at Ascentria Care Alliance’s Shattuck Street location. The individuals selected for the focus group worked directly with refugee clients and five were former refugees themselves. Every participant from the focus group agreed that the first and most important step to success is for a refugee client to take any job offered. As one focus group participant noted, “Shoveling snow off a roof for four hours and receiving pay is considered a job.” All of the other interviewees supported this statement.

Non-seasonal, Stable Employment

Although the caseworkers did feel that seasonal, temporary and part-time work was perfectly acceptable for a client's very first job, they believe that stable, full time, non-seasonal employment is necessary for a client's progress. Lisa Brennan, Program Manager for Ascentria Care Alliance's Services for New Americans explained that the refugee client must be employed within ninety days in order to comply with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' requirements (Brennan, Lisa, personal communication, November 10, 2014). Although they must have a job within ninety days, there are few specific requirements that must be met (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Ascentria caseworkers from our focus group felt that the leniency of this requirement led to many refugees feeling that they could be more selective in their search for a job. Though the Code of Massachusetts Regulations prohibits a refugee from refusing employment or quitting a job (121 CMR section 2.440, 2002) the caseworkers mentioned situations where clients become unhappy with their job or a potential job for a variety of reasons and attempt to refuse or quit the job. Instead of moving towards success, this is detrimental to the client's progress. In order to continue advancing towards a successful integration, the refugee client must take the next step to full time, stable, non-seasonal work.

A Livable Wage is Necessary

Having a job is a crucial step towards being able to function in a community. This leads to the next finding that a livable wage is also considered an essential component of success for an individual and their family. A livable wage is defined as "an approximate income needed to meet a family's basic needs" (Glasmeier, 2014). Income from at least one stable, non-seasonal

job, either part or full time, is considered a success (Walsh, Meredith, personal communication, November 3, 2014). A steady income allows a family to live in their home, pay bills, buy food, and purchase all the essentials for surviving in a community. Earning a livable wage leads to financial security. This finding was supported by LIRS executives: Bill Swanson, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Mike Mitchell, Vice President of Program and Protection (2014).

Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction is a refugee client's contentment with their wage, hours, duties and job position held. Increased job satisfaction leads to higher participation within the community and therefore is an indicator of success. Caseworkers who participated in the focus group indicated that refugee clients are more satisfied with jobs that are comparable to those they held before they came to the U.S. Accordingly, when possible, Ascentria offers programs that provide refugee clients with work that is similar to their former job in their home country. An example of this is New Lands Farm which provides work for refugee clients that have a background in farming (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Though they receive minimal compensation, the caseworkers from our focus group have found that these clients were very satisfied with their farming responsibilities as their skill set was used and valued and they were able to see the product of their hard work.

Most refugee clients' first job in the United States is not a part of a set career path and, unfortunately, Ascentria cannot offer programs for every type of career that each client may have held (Ascentria, 2014). However, after acquiring more work experience in the United States, clients have the chance for recertification of an old job with a U.S. license.

Familial Support

We also found that familial support is an important factor in the success of an individual's employment. It is difficult for clients to hold a job without the aid of their family. According to the Ascentria caseworkers in our focus group, many families only have one car per household (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This puts limitations on transportation options and flexibility with scheduling. Clients with limited transportation can only take jobs that are in close proximity to their home and their hours are restricted to times when transportation is available to them. These circumstances dramatically reduce the number of jobs available to refugee clients. In order to reduce the impact of a one-car household on the functioning of the family, family members must compromise and support the individuals with jobs (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Ascentria Caseworkers explained that scheduling is also difficult without organized childcare and the ability to manage other responsibilities at home (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Even basic daily tasks such as cooking, cleaning and grocery shopping can be difficult to accomplish when maintaining a full time job. Support from the family lessens the weight of these issues and allows the individuals to focus on their employment responsibilities (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Indicator 2: Housing

Success within the category of housing depends on three main factors, comfortable communication with landlords, understanding rent and utilities, and the client's satisfaction with where they are living.

Comfortable Communication with Landlords

Through our focus group with Ascentria's caseworkers, we found that comfortable communication with their landlord is a contributor to success for refugee clients (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Comfortable communication means that the client is able to discuss any issues or needs without feeling that the landlord is ignoring or misunderstanding them. A caseworker told us of a woman that would not call her landlord because she feared he would not be able to understand her thick accent (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). The ability to communicate is important because the client must be able to speak to their landlord if there is a problem with their home. When speaking with their landlord, language barriers and heavy accents often cause anxiety for clients (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). If refugee clients can overcome this obstacle, caseworkers feel that they are well on their way towards successfully integrating (2014).

Understanding Rent and Utilities

Caseworkers also explained that refugees that understand the importance of paying their rent and utilities are on the path to successful integration (2014). Many refugees have trouble understanding that they must use the money they work so hard for, to pay for their home. They do not see why they must give "their" money to someone else. In some cases, refugee clients refuse to pay rent or utilities for this reason (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

In addition to payment of utilities, refugees do not always understand the concept of utilities. Some refugee clients may not realize that they must pay for the use of water, electricity,

heat, etc. An Ascentria case worker shared a situation where a refugee family left the water in their sink running all day even though they were not using it (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This practice was caused by their belief that the water was free. With scenarios like this being such a common occurrence, understanding the rent and utilities process is viewed as progress toward successful integration.

Satisfaction With Where They Are Living

A refugee's contentment with where they are living is also vital. Bill Swanson, a former member of Ascentria Care Alliance's board of directors and current Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), is a strong advocate for the refugee's satisfaction with where their family lives. He believes that most important question to ask a client is, "Are you living where you want to live?" (Swanson, William, personal communication, November 10, 2014). Of the 15 people interviewed, as well as all six members of the focus group, 100% agreed that the happiness of a family is greatly affected by where they live (2014). Some families prefer to live in neighborhoods filled with people of the same culture. Others want to live in close proximity to schools or work. Satisfaction with their current living situation as well as future plans for housing are all important factors in the family's contentment (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Indicator 3: English Literacy

Refugee clients come to the United States with varying levels of comfort with the English language. However, in order to be considered successful, non-English speakers must become as literate as possible. Based on the data we compiled during our research process, one hundred percent of the 21 individuals that we interviewed said literacy was a primary contributor to a client's success. The focus group informed us that a family's overall comfort with the English

language is affected by the educational background of the family and the initial level of exposure to the language (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Understanding English is necessary for even the most basic tasks such as reading street signs, completing rental and employment applications, filling out medical paperwork and taking the exam to obtain a driver's permit. Faith Tendo, the Outreach Coordinator at the African Community Education organization (ACE), felt that in order to ensure a refugee client's comfort with English and overall success, access to English language classes is crucial (2014).

Level of English Required for Employment

When a family arrives in Worcester, Ascentria caseworkers make it a priority for the client to take English classes. According to the caseworkers that participated in the focus group, many initial employment opportunities, such as working for FedEx, often require very little English, but long-term employment goals require a higher level of education and English language mastery (2014). Ascentria tests their clients' English proficiency once per year, but this evaluation is only intended to determine if the client is able to advance to the next level class. In our interview with ACE, a Worcester based not for profit program focused on assisting African immigrant children, we learned that children are sent to grade school where they are surrounded by their English speaking peers (Tendo Faith, personal communication, November 11, 2014). This immersion usually prompts children to learn the English language quickly. This can make it easier for younger refugee clients to successfully integrate into society (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Children acquire English language skills faster than adults and an accurate measurement must take this into account.

Prior Exposure to the English Language

Through our focus group and interviews with Ascentria employees, we discovered the education of the family is directly related to a family's literacy in their native language, their familiarity with English, and their past experience in educational environments (2014). Ascentria personnel illustrated the significance of educational background by describing typical cases of refugee families from two countries: Burma and Iraq.

According to an employee that was a former Burmese refugee, prior to coming to the United States, Burmese refugee families usually live in refugee camps for many years with no access to reading materials (2014). They are frequently unfamiliar with English and most are without formal education. The employee explained that the refugee camps in Burma and Thailand are in very rural regions where there is little interaction with English speakers or exposure to American culture. The majority of Burmese grow up as farmers. Another former Burmese refugee, also now working at Ascentria, agreed and noted that the lifestyle of these families is not accompanied by access to any form of formal education (2014). The extreme contrast of their homeland compared to Worcester makes it difficult for Burmese families to immediately be comfortable living on their own in the city.

In contrast, an Ascentria employee and former refugee from Iraq stated that refugee families from Iraq are often literate, familiar with the English language and frequently have members that hold college degrees or are trained for skilled employment (2014). These families generally progress through the programs offered at Ascentria at a faster pace and are able to live without resettlement assistance within a year or two after entering the program.

Indicator 4: Integration

For the purpose of our project, integration is defined as the client's ability to self-advocate and utilize services and community supports available to them.

Utilizing Services

In order to achieve success, refugees must have access to resources and assistance programs (Swanson, William, personal communication, November 10, 2014). There are many amenities, systems and public services available within the Worcester community that assists refugees with their day to day lives. These amenities include public libraries, hospitals, grocery stores, laundromats, etc. There are services available to qualifying members of the general public such as food stamps, gas assistance and employment assistance ("Worcester Resources.org," 2001 - 2014). Refugees must also learn to understand and navigate systems such as the health care system and public transportation. Often clients are unaware of all the opportunities available to them or do not understand how to utilize them. Even after they are made aware of these services and amenities, adults may be unable to request assistance due to language or cultural barriers (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Knowledge and use of the services, systems and amenities listed above are important to a client's progress. Many have not had similar opportunities available in their home country. An example provided in our focus group was public transportation (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). According to an Ascentria caseworker, a refugee family that lived in a refugee camp before coming to America would not have had access to a public transportation system, while in the United States, the ability to use public transportation is critical for moving around the city and finding employment.

Self-Advocacy

Case managers measure their client's integration through small milestones of success. For example, the ability to arrive on time for appointments demonstrates the knowledge of and confidence in using the public transportation system (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). For self-advocacy, the major marker is when clients come to Ascentria and request services. The focus group told us of a woman who walked into Ascentria and said "I need a job." The case managers felt this request was a major accomplishment. She recognized her need, took a bus to Ascentria, advocated for herself and communicated her needs to the case manager (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This seemingly "everyday task" demonstrated her competency in several success indicating skills.

Besides having the ability to self-advocate, refugee clients must understand that they still have to actually communicate their needs to people to receive help. In one of our interviews, we learned of a family who gave away their winter jackets at the end of winter (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This family did not understand that they would need the jackets again when winter returned. Since they did not communicate their need for winter coats, Ascentria assumed they were prepared when the next winter season arrived. Case managers only heard of the issue after several members of the community expressed concern. It is important to note that the family had been in the United States well beyond the federally funded period of active case management and is a reflection of the level and duration of resettlement assistance some clients may need.

The Worcester Refugee Assistance Project reiterated this concern when they told us that some clients sit in a doctor's office waiting rooms for hours without checking in at the front desk (Walsh, Meredith, personal communication, November 3, 2014). This was due to a combination of cultural differences and the client's lack of confidence in their ability to communicate their needs. Until refugee clients understand how and when to advocate for themselves; they cannot make progress towards success.

Rate of Integration

The rate of a client's integration is the speed in which they meet certain milestones of success. These milestones are what our project set out to find. The various levels of integration come faster to some groups and slower to others. Our focus group participants indicated that age directly impacts the ease of integration more than any other factor (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Youths tend to have the highest rates of integration until roughly age eleven. Elementary school aged children are surrounded by peers at similar levels of education and are constantly required to communicate in the dominant language (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Teenagers generally adapt well to speaking English (Tendo, Faith, personal communication, November 11, 2014). As age increases, the difficulties in integration also increase. These young adults typically fare well because they are still adaptable and are able to take the same jobs as the average teenager that was raised in the United States. In contrast, the age group of fifty-five to sixty-five has the worst rate of integration (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). In some countries, this is past the age of retirement (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014) yet the

American lifestyle forces them to return to the work force. They also tend to be the least adaptable to the drastic changes required through their transition. After age sixty-five, the most common problems are registration for Supplemental Security Income and their inability to adapt to new surroundings (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Our focus group and our interview with African Community Education confirmed that these varying levels of integration can create shifts in power in family dynamics (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014; Tendo, Faith, personal communication, November 11, 2014). Typically, adults facilitate appointments and communication for children. In the case of refugee families, the adults may need the children to act as interpreters to doctors, case managers, and other service providers. This can cause issues with a child's attendance at school and role in the family. Parents that need their children to serve as interpreters often pull their children out of class to attend appointments with them. Adults also cannot receive proper care if they are speaking through their children as there are many things that they feel they cannot say to children or must be kept private (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Although this option is better than not receiving assistance, it is not without challenges. Filling the role of interpreter empowers the child, but with this power, there is a risk that children may lose respect for their parent's role (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). The change is also difficult for the adults because their children are not growing up with the same cultural identity and the parents feel something is lost.

This power shift also impacts the elderly. They frequently feel isolated from the family and believe that they are no longer useful to their families (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Also, due to cultural differences, this age demographic

typically does not personally seek the assistance required for integration. Instead, they tend to rely on their family members for any and all assistance they may need. Our focus group revealed these isolated elders typically do best when they have a job in the family, such as childcare, even if they do not have an official form of employment (2014).

Recommendation 1:

We recommend that Ascentria Care Alliance implement the assessment tool we created to evaluate a refugee client’s progress through the resettlement programs.

Based on the four indicators of success that we identified and all of the individual components that contribute to a client’s successful integration, we developed an Assessment Tool to determine a client’s progress towards integration. The Assessment Tool is a five tab excel file questionnaire, Figure 2. The first four tabs consist of questions that we developed to analyze education, employment, housing and integration. The fifth tab is a “Results Dashboard” where all the indicator graphs are shown simultaneously. Figure 2 depicts an example of the housing tab which contains a series of questions pertaining to milestones of success within this indicator. Each of the indicator tabs includes a comment column so extra information can be recorded after each question.

The questions are weighted equally and the program creates a pie chart at the end of each section comparing the number of questions answered “yes” and “no”. A detailed example and explanation of the assessment tool is available in Chapter 5. To access this assessment tool please see Appendix C.

Questions				Comments
Do you pay your rent on time?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A	
Do you earn enough money to pay for your rent in full?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A	
Can you afford heat?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A	
Can you afford water?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A	
Can you afford electricity?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A	
Can you afford extras such as television, telephone, and internet service?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A	
If there is a problem with your apartment, does your landlord fix the problem within a week?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A	
Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A	
Housing Satisfaction				
Are you living where you want to live?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A	
If you want to move, are you able to?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A	Please select N/A if you do not want to move.
If you want to buy a house, do you know where to go to get financial assistance?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A	
Do you feel like you can speak with your landlord about repairs/improvements/etc.?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A	
Social Connectedness				
Do you know your neighbors?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A	
Do you have someone to talk to about your apartment/housing goals in the future?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A	
Total Yes Total No Total N/A				
6 1 7				

Results from Housing

■ Total Yes ■ Total No

Category	Percentage
Total Yes	66%
Total No	14%

Figure 2 Housing Indicator Assessments

This Assessment Tool should be used as a snapshot diagnostic tool for the caseworkers. It is meant to guide the family through the programs and will reveal potential red flags. The questions should initially be answered by the caseworker, followed by individuals being assessed once they feel comfortable completing the assessment on their own. The test can be administered as a baseline and the caseworker can track the family’s progress by documenting their advancement through specific milestones that contribute to their success. Ideally, the client will be able to take the test entirely on their own once they reach the end of the program. With the client’s permission, the test should be re-administered after a year. The intent of this second evaluation is to track progress after the refugee client has completed the federally funded

programs. The questions should be answered as accurately as they can at the time the test is given.

Recommendation 2:

Expand the basic assessment to develop a more in-depth evaluation procedure.

We recommend that Ascentria pretest the Assessment Tool that we developed. Based on the results of the pretest, Ascentria should further investigate factors of client success to extend the scope of evaluation the Assessment Tool offers. The Assessment Tool is not personalized to each individual client but we feel that caseworkers should have the ability to tailor the evaluation to better suit their clients' specific situations. The Assessment Tool should also be customized for the other programs that Ascentria offers and not just limited to their refugee programs.

4.3 Finding 3

The 48 hour orientation for refugee clients upon arrival is problematic.

Throughout our interviews, we were repeatedly told by caseworkers and case managers that the cultural orientation program is problematic. Upon arrival in the United States, refugees begin a funder mandated cultural orientation program that must be completed within 48 hours. This orientation is part of the Reception and Placement services organized by the Cultural Orientation Resources Center. It is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, as well as the Office of Resettlement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The orientation program offered overseas is targeted to be "experiential and learner based" as the teachers "adjust to the needs and interests" of the class ("COR Center - Cultural Orientation Resource (COR) Center," 2014). However, the cultural orientation program offered stateside is the opposite. Under pressure to complete the program within the Cultural Orientation Resource Center's 48 hour requirement, resettlement agencies are forced to present and teach information, such as laws pertaining to their refugee

status, the necessity of learning English and how to apply for a job, to the refugees without regard to individual needs, experiences or English ability (Ascentria Employee, personal communication, December 2, 2014). The Cultural Orientation Resource Center recommends “service providers...gauge whether the orientation is meeting their needs and helping them attain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes [necessary for integration]” (“COR Center - Cultural Orientation Resource (COR) Center," 2014).

Resettlement agencies do not have the time or the funding to investigate and discover if refugees have comprehended the large sum of required topics. While resettlement agencies are provided with extensive materials to teach these cultural programs, they are not provided with tools to measure how effectively refugees are able to absorb the information presented. A complete Cultural Orientation Checklist is presented in Appendix D.

Recommendation 3:

We recommend additional research into the cultural orientation program. While the list of requirements, found in Appendix D, still requires completion within 48 hours, the program can be improved by measuring comprehension and implementation of orientation principles. This can be achieved by evaluating what the refugee has learned at the conclusion of the orientation through some form of exit-examination. If the caseworkers know exactly what the refugees had trouble understanding, they can spend more time clarifying and working on that specific topic. Ascentria should conduct further research regarding a plan to teach these principles at a time when refugees need the information and at a pace that they can internalize and employ what they are learning.

4.4 Finding 4

The time frame in which Refugees can receive support from resettlement programs is not long enough to become successfully integrated into the community.

Currently, government funding allows refugees access to assistance from refugee resettlement programs for up to six months. Case managers work with their refugee clients to make sure that they achieve the most successes possible within this time. However, after speaking with caseworkers and Ascentria executives, 100% of the people interviewed mentioned that this limited time frame is not long enough (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). The focus group of Ascentria's caseworkers discussed how it is impossible for any person to become successfully integrated into a society in six months. There is too much for the refugee client to accomplish and learn. This is especially true if they do not speak the community's language or know the customs. There are too many variables involved for such a specific and strict time frame to meet every client's needs. An Ascentria executive believes the financial aspect of this to be the largest problem. Although the federal government provides funding for the program, if a client receives services for the allotted time frame, there is not enough money available for them to continue the program (Ascentria Executive, personal communication, November 17, 2014).

Recommendation 4:

We recommend further research into the actual time frame needed to make progress. We also suggest a monthly check after completion of the program that continues until the client feels comfortable on their own.

4.5 Finding 5

Worcester, Massachusetts needs City Level Advocacy

In our efforts to understand the whole scope of challenges faced by refugees, we learned that there are many different organizations and agencies that impact a refugee's life. Sarai

Rivera, a Worcester city councilwoman in her second term, has spent over a decade working with refugee populations. She expressed concern that while city organizations can provide many of the special needs that refugee youth require, such as summer programs for English, there is no designated advocate for the disadvantaged youth of the community (Rivera, Sarai, personal communication, November 20, 2014).

Recommendation 5:

We recommend that Ascentria create a position with the responsibility of advocating for refugee needs and services on a city level. The person who fills this new position should be able to interact with government agencies such as the school board, housing department, and city council, as well as advocate for refugees and their care. This participation would encourage continual development in refugee care and services. It would help to provide an impact beyond the abilities and mandate of Ascentria.

5 ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT TOOL

In this chapter we explain the specifics behind the assessment tool that we created to determine a refugee client's progress towards integration. The four indicators of success that we discovered serve as categories to easily break down the factors that contribute to a successful integration. This assessment tool consists of questions that serve as markers or building blocks toward success within each category, or indicator. We discuss the format, method of breaking down sections and the overall purpose of the tool in the following sections. We clarify the purpose of each question, why it was asked and what the answer will reveal about a client's level of integration.

5.1 Format of the Ascentria Assessment Tool

The assessment system is a five tab excel file questionnaire. The first four tabs consist of questions that we carefully selected to analyze the indicators of success. The questions were developed in a manner such that each answer would reveal a client's progression through the steps of the integration process. Each of the four tabs reveals one of the four success indicators: Employment, Housing, Education or Integration (Figure 3). The fifth tab is a "Results Dashboard" where all the indicator graphs are displayed in one place (Figure 4).

Do you feel like you can advance in your current job?	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/a	2	
Social Connectedness					
Do you have someone to talk to about work? New employment, rights, wages, etc.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/a	1	
				Total Yes	Total No
				9	5
				Total N/a	0
How much is your hourly wage?	10				
How many hours/week do you work	4				
Monthly Income	160				
Yearly Income	1920				
Please compare to published poverty levels					

Results from

Total Yes




Figure 3 Indicator Tabs

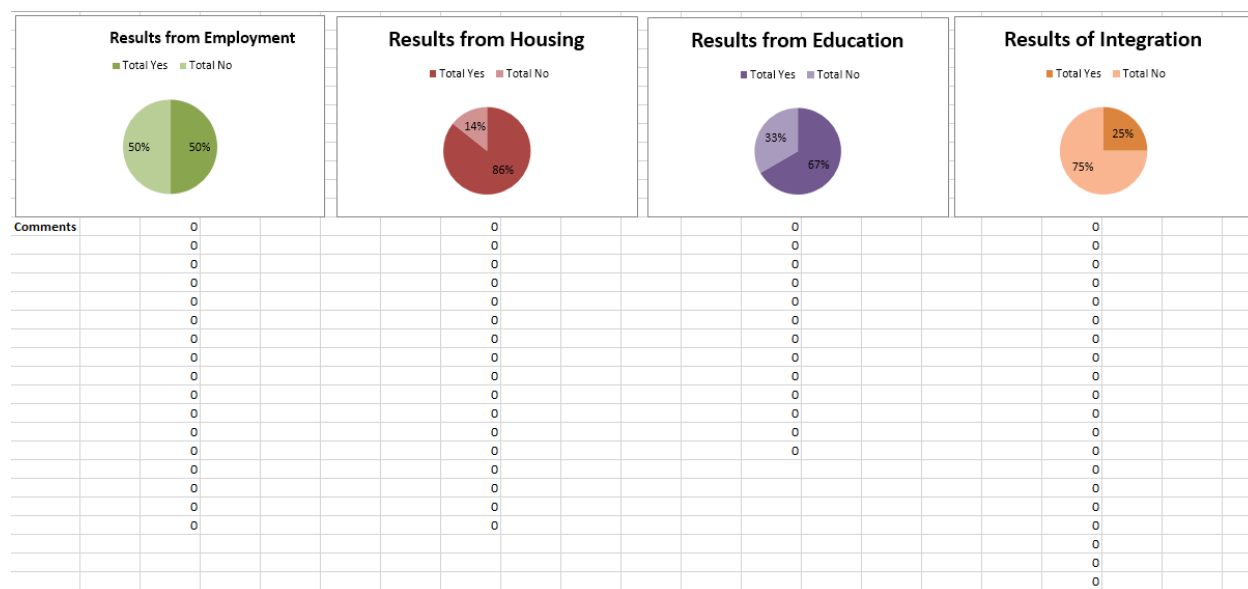


Figure 4 Results Dashboard

For each indicator category, the questionnaire begins with basic queries and progresses to in-depth, specific, goal oriented questions. The questions are weighted equally and following the completion of the assessment, the answers are tallied and calculated to find a percentage representation of the client’s progress toward successful integration. Once the questions in one indicator category is completed, the spreadsheet creates is a pie chart comparing the number of

questions answered “yes” and “no”. There is a “N/A” option to select if the question does not apply to the individual being evaluated. Choosing this option removes the question from the final percentage evaluation. There is a comment column on every page where extra information or clarification can be written after each question. This is also the place where the user can further explain other possible influences that we did not consider during question development.

5.2 Indicator Tab Breakdown

Employment:

Overall Employment

This section’s questions begin with simply having a job, the federal requirement. Unfortunately, any job, even a single shift, satisfies this requirement. Other questions must be asked to determine the stability of the employment.

The questions progress as follows:

- Do you have a job? (i.e. paid employment)

It is a federal requirement that a refugee find employment within ninety days after arriving in the United States. It is also considered one of a client’s very first steps towards success. If this question is answered “No”, the following questions must all be answered with “N/A”, with the exception of “Are you certified or licensed in a professional field?”, “Do you want to obtain this certification in the United States?” and “Do you have someone to talk to about work? New employment, rights, wages, etc.”

- Do you have a stable employer?

This question determines if a client has taken the next step towards success and acquired permanent employment. This is an important aspect of the second sub-factor within Employment, Progressing to a Stable, Non-Seasonal, Permanent Employment (Chapter 4.2)

Acquiring stable, permanent employment means that the client has progressed past the legal requirement and is putting in significant efforts to achieve their goals.

- Do you earn enough money to cover your monthly expenses?

A crucial factor in success within the Employment indicator is earning a livable wage (Chapter 4.2). We learned from our interviews and focus group that a steady income with a livable wage allows a family to live in their home, pay bills, buy food, and purchase all the essentials for surviving in a community. Earning a livable wage also leads to financial security and is therefore an indicator of a client's future financial stability.

- Do you feel safe in your work environment?

A client's safety is always a priority. Ascentria's Senior Vice President of Massachusetts Operations, Bill Ames, said that it is important to ask clients, "Have you ever felt unsafe?" This applies to every aspect of an individual's life, including their work environment (Ames, William, personal communication, November 12, 2014). This question is meant to ensure that clients were safe in their work environment, not being taken advantage of and under no threat.

Job Satisfaction

The second portion of the employment tab asks questions regarding a refugee client's satisfaction with their employment. Job Satisfaction refers to a refugee client's contentment with their wage, hours, duties and job position held. Increased job satisfaction leads to higher participation within the community and therefore is an indicator of success. Since there are many factors that determine job satisfaction, the assessment requires several follow up questions.

The most important question in this category is:

- Are you happy with the job that you hold?

Is the client satisfied with the type of job that they hold (i.e. food service, retail, etc.)? Many refugee clients are not able to find or are not eligible for the same jobs that they held in their country of origin. The change in career fields can cause some clients to dislike or resent their jobs. In order to fulfill the job satisfaction factor of the Employment indicator, a client must be content with the job that they have.

We created these questions using information from our interviews about the difficulties that refugees face in employment. Our interviews revealed that the work schedule and having sufficient hours impacted the whole family, while compensation and job duties were the main reasons for an individual's personal satisfaction with a job.

It is important to note that the subsequent questions in the Job Satisfaction section are asking for less concrete information. While they all are contributors to a client's overall job satisfaction, the reasoning behind each client's answer is relative to the client being evaluated and will differ for each individual.

The questions are as follows:

- Are you happy with your work schedule? (i.e. shift, coordination with family schedules)
- Are you happy with your hours? (i.e. amount and consistency)
- Do you feel that you are appropriately compensated?
- Are you happy with your duties?

The next section of Job Satisfaction focuses on the career path of the client. By targeting anticipated career trajectories, case managers will be able to compare the overall skill level of the client by measuring their current job and in comparison to their skill set. As indicated in our

explanation of our first Job Satisfaction question, these questions were meant to determine how a client's current job compared to their former career.

The questions are as follows:

- Do you feel your skills are being used at your job?

The client's ability to use their knowledge and prior training in their current job can affect the job experience and overall enjoyment. This question was developed based on feedback from our focus group. We learned that many former farmers enjoy working at Ascentria's New Land Farms because they are able to use their skills and training (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

- Are you certified or licensed in a professional field?

To be certified or licensed in a professional field in their country of origin is a definite advantage for a refugee client. It may not be immediately after arriving but eventually the client may be able to obtain a job similar to the field that they are licensed. Still, certification and practices are not universal and clients often have to be re-certified because their credentials are different from the United States license requirements (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

- Do you want to obtain this certification in the United States?
- Do you have the ability to obtain re-certification?

If the client wants to be re-certified in a career they used to have, they are more likely to enjoy their work (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

Unfortunately, sometimes a client's former career does not exist in the United States or they do not have the ability to go back to school to earn an American degree in their field (Rivera,

personal communication, November 20, 2014). Since there are scenarios where individuals do not have the ability obtain re-certification, it is important to ask the follow-up question.

- Do you feel like you can advance in your current job?

The purpose of this question is to see if the client has thought about future goals in his or her current career path. While a full-time, stable, non-seasonal job is a significant step towards a successful integration, many of these jobs are still not a client's ideal career. This question can help to determine if a client wants to continue working in their current job's field or if they wish to find a new career path to follow.

Social Connectedness

In the employment measurement tab, the final section gauges the social connections of the client that can influence employment.

The question is as follows:

- Do you have someone to talk to about work? New employment, rights, wages, etc.

Without someone to talk to about these issues, they may be taken advantage of or miss potential opportunities for better employment.

Housing:

Overall Housing

Based on information we received from our focus group and interviews, we learned that if the refugee clients are able to remain in a stable home environment, they are more likely to have fewer problems adjusting to the community. For the Housing tab, the first sets of questions were designed to measure a client's stability in their current housing situation.

The questions are as follows:

- Do you pay your rent on time?

Refugees receive their government assistance checks in two parts, spread across a month (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Besides saving the money that they earn from their job, a refugee client also has to make sure to set aside their first assistance check in order to have enough money to pay their rent on time. It is also important for refugee to understand the need to pay their rent at all (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Ascentria caseworkers told us about clients that did not want to pay their rent because they did not want to give their money to someone else after they had worked so hard to earn it. This question measures the client's knowledge of the need to pay rent, pay in a timely manner and their ability to budget their finances.

- Do you earn enough money to pay for your rent in full?

The question is an extension of the previous question, as well as "*Do you earn enough money to cover your monthly expenses*" from the Employment tab, to receive a more in-depth understanding of the client's financial stability and their ability to budget.

- Can you afford heat?
- Can you afford water?
- Can you afford electricity?
- Can you afford extras such as television, telephone and internet service?

These questions measure the knowledge of the combination of budgeting and utility use. Understanding how utilities work and that they must be paid for is an important step towards successful integration. We learned of a refugee client that left their water running all day because they did not understand that it needed to be turned off. They were not aware that they paid for the

water even when they were not using it (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). The ability to afford extras such as television, telephone and internet displays excellent financial stability and budgeting skills.

- If there is a problem with your apartment, does your landlord fix the problem within a week?

If the landlord is responsible and responsive to the needs of their tenant, it can provide a better indication of the quality of the living conditions. In our focus group we learned that many landlords try to take advantage of refugee tenants and often do not fix problems that Ascentria's clients ask them to address (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This question can help caseworkers determine if a client's landlord is treating them with respect.

- Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?

As we explained in the Employment tab, a client's safety is always a priority (Ames, William, personal communication, November 12, 2014). A client's idea of a safe neighborhood and an acceptable standard of living will differ from client to client based on their experience and where they have come from. This question measures the client's overall feeling towards their housing security.

Housing Satisfaction

Bill Swanson, a former Ascentria board member and current Vice-Chairman for the LIRS board of directors, told us that the most important question to ask a refugee client is, "Are you living where you want to live?" The next set of questions on the Housing tab, starting with Swanson's question, is designed to determine the client's satisfaction with their housing conditions and their future plans involving housing.

The housing satisfaction questions are as follows:

- Are you living where you want to live?

As we mentioned before, this question is one of the most important questions to measure satisfaction. In our Findings Chapter 4.2 we explained that of the fifteen people that we interviewed, as well as all six members of the focus group, one hundred percent of the interviewees agreed that the happiness of a family is greatly affected by where they live. Some families prefer to live in neighborhoods filled with people of the same culture. Others want to live in close proximity to schools or work. Satisfaction with their current living situation as well as future plans for housing are all important factors in the family's contentment (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This question reveals if the client is content with their living conditions, answers will vary based on the client's past, present and future living conditions.

- If you want to move, are you able to?

This question is an extension of the preceding question and is meant to help accurately determine a client's level of satisfaction where they are living. If the client is not content with their living situation, they may want to move. This question can show caseworkers that their client understands the importance of legally binding documents such as leases. It can also provide an opportunity for the caseworker to teach their client about the moving process and all that it entails. This question can also measure the client's financial stability and ability to manage their finances.

- If you want to buy a house, do you know where to go to get financial assistance?

This is a measure of a client's progress through the integration process and their overall comfort accessing resources in the United States. This question can give caseworkers an

opportunity to teach their client information about the process of moving, finding a new apartment or purchasing a home in more depth than it may have been previously taught. They can also help their client's get in touch with the appropriate people if the client wishes to start the process. If the client does not want to buy a house the caseworker should mark this as N/A.

- Do you feel like you can speak with your landlord about repairs/improvements/etc.?

It is important that clients feel comfortable interacting with their landlord. We learned from an Ascentria Caseworker that refugee clients are often hesitant to speak with their landlord. They fear that their landlord will not be able to understand them because of their accent or limited English skills (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This question can measure the client's ability to communicate comfortably with their landlord to better their living conditions. It also is a demonstration of proficiency in English (Indicator 3, English Literacy, Chapter 4.2 and self-advocacy (Indicator 4, Integration, Chapter 4.2).

Social Connectedness

Social connection is a factor in the client's living conditions. The importance of the following two questions is to measure a client's interaction in his or her neighborhood.

The questions are as follows:

- Do you know your neighbors?

A client's familiarity with their neighbors affects their comfort level within their neighborhood. Our interview with Lisa Brennan revealed that this can measure the client's integration into their community. The goal of this question is to understand if the client is communicating and developing relationships with the people in their surrounding area.

- Do you have someone to talk to about your apartment/housing goals in the future?

Refugee clients need guidance when it comes to housing situations. They need someone that can explain the process of moving, finding property, signing a lease, etc. It is also important that clients have someone that they can ask about issues that they may encounter with their home and whether or not their landlord is required to fix it.

Education:

Overall Education

In Education, we focused on the stability of the education levels of the client and their family. A stable learning environment is critical for continued and the most effective learning. The first layer also provides potential goals for the case manager to be aware of such as higher education and possible recertification. This is also useful as a diagnostic tool to pick up potential areas of concern. An example of an area of concern is the stagnation of skills.

The questions are as follows:

- Are you able to attend English classes at Ascentria as frequently as your caseworker recommends?

Faith Tendo, the Outreach Coordinator at the African Community Education organization (ACE), felt that in order to ensure a refugee client's comfort with English and overall success, access to English language classes was crucial (2014). If a client can attend classes consistently then the client is more likely to learn and succeed in the classes.

- Do you feel comfortable in your classes?

Refugees come from a variety of backgrounds and varied levels of experience with traditional classroom environments (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This question can measure the comfort level of the client in the classroom.

Clients that do not feel comfortable in their classes are less likely to attend and take advantage of this resource.

- Do you feel like you are making progress in English?

Refugee clients come to the United States with varying levels of comfort with the English language. However, in order to be considered successful, non-English speakers must become as literate as possible. Based on the data we compiled during our research process, one hundred percent of the twenty individuals that we interviewed said literacy was a primary contributor to a client's success (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). This question, based off of Indicator 3, English Literacy (Chapter 4.2), was designed to understand how the client feels he or she is progressing towards the goal of speaking, reading, and writing in English comfortably.

- Are you learning skills to get a better job?

According to the caseworkers that participated in the focus group, many initial employment opportunities, such as working for FedEx, often require very little English, but long-term employment goals require a higher level of education and English language mastery (2014). This question is meant to determine if the client is aware of level of English proficiency that they need to progress with their employment.

- Do you feel like you have options to advance your education?

If the client wants to earn a degree or further their education, as mentioned in the Employment tab, this question measures how realistic that the client feels that this goal is. If the client answers "No" to this question, the caseworker should ask why they feel that they cannot advance and assist them accordingly.

- Do you know how to receive assistance? Scholarships, grants, aid, etc.

It is important that a client is aware of the services and assistance that is available to them but more importantly, they need to know how to access this assistance. While many refugees know about higher education, our interview with Sarai Rivera revealed that refugees often experience difficulty receiving assistance to pay for more education (Rivera, personal communication, November 20, 2014). This question measures self-advocacy to acquire assistance for educational goals.

Family Education

The next set of questions involves the family aspect of the Education. This section should not be filled out if the client does not have children or does not have children in this country.

The questions are as follows:

- Are your minor children attending school consistently?

The caseworker should inquire the client's child is arriving late, leaving early or completely missing school more than once a week. The child's attendance to school is important. Unfortunately, since children are more likely to understand social cues and learn English faster, children can often be a parent's main contact to services (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). When parents are unable to communicate well enough; their children act as interpreters. This is not an ideal arrangement. In order to act as interpreters for their parents, children are often pulled out of school to attend appointments. Children also can miss school due to a lack of transportation, issues at home or problems that may develop with other children at school. If a client answers "No" to this question, it is crucial that the

caseworker ask what is keeping the child from attending school. The variety of problems will require different assistance.

- Do you participate in your child's or children's education?

Family support (Chapter 4.2) and positive family dynamics are vital to every refugee client's success (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Faith Tendo, the Outreach Coordinator at the African Community Education organization (ACE), explained that refugee parents are often discouraged to attend school open houses, parent teacher conferences and other school events (2014). Ms. Tendo also explained ACE's efforts to aid parents become more involved in their children's education. This question can measure the cohesiveness of the family based on the parental involvement.

- Does your child or children feel safe at school?

It is important that children feel safe and respected. The Safety Domain of Wellbeing was used to create this question. In order for children to thrive in their educational environment, it is crucial that children feel safe (Full Frame Initiative, 2014).As we previously mentioned, client safety is a top priority for Ascentria. The safety of a client's family is just as important and caseworkers need to make sure that a client feels their children are not in any form of danger.

Social Connectedness

The following social connectedness question seeks to measure the level of communication about educational goals of the family.

- Do you have someone to talk to about education, schooling, funding, planning, etc.?

This question is relevant because the client might aspire to further their education by attending college or another form of career training. Caseworkers need to make sure that their clients have someone to provide them with information on this process so that no client is unable to continue their education due to a lack of assistance or knowledge about the process.

Integration:

The Integration tab reveals the client's ability to self-advocate and utilize services and community supports available to them. We broke the questions down into sub groups of overall integration, transportation, accessing services, and social connectedness.

Overall Integration

In the first set of questions of the Integration tab, we found that it necessary to ask basic questions that are potential areas of concern. The beginning questions in this first section are asking for basic information. Each answer is relative to the client's wellbeing and reasoning will differ for each individual.

The questions are as follows:

- Do you know how to pay each bill individually?

It is important to know how to pay each bill individually because it shows that the client can manage various accounts and payment deadlines (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Caseworkers also see this as a step in the direction of a successful integration because it means that their clients understand the postal system. Many refugee clients do not understand mail and will accidently throw away bills, checks and other important documents (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

- Are you keeping appointments?

Caseworkers in our focus group explained that they are always impressed when clients demonstrate their ability to keep appointments. It shows a client's responsibility and ability to follow a schedule but also proves that they have sufficient access to some form of transportation. It does not matter to the caseworkers what kind of transportation the client used. If the client took a bus, they demonstrate their ability to navigate the public transportation system. If they drove themselves, they must have a license, access to a car and know how to get to where they need. Clients that share a car with their family, borrowed a car from someone else or even those that had someone drive them to their appointment still had to manage their time appropriately in order to maintain scheduled commitments (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014).

- If you have ever contacted the police, did you feel they were responsive/ helpful?

This question was designed to determine if the client feels safe and protected. Since many refugees originate in countries where they were not comfortable, or sometimes, unable to contact the police (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014), the client's ability to be comfortable with contacting the police is a great sign of integration. This question should be answered N/A if the client has not contacted the police.

- Is your family adjusting well to life in America?
- Do you feel like you are able to attain your goals?

These questions will be answered differently by every client. They are both relative to how a client views "adjusting well" and their ability to attain their goals.

Transportation

The next section of questions focuses on the client's ability to access transportation. Transportation is vital for moving around the city. The following questions were designed to follow a progression of basic knowledge of public transportation to eventually obtaining a car.

The questions are as follows:

- Can you get to work? Grocery store? Hospital? Etc.?

Every client needs to be able to get where they need to go. This question measures the client's ability to do this. If a client answers "No", it is very important that their caseworker help them find a way to get from place to place.

- Do you know how to take public transportation?

Due to the wide variety of refugee backgrounds, depending on the client's country of origin, they may not have had similar opportunities available in their home country. According to an Ascentria caseworker, a refugee family that lived in a refugee camp before coming to America would not have had access to a public transportation system, while in the United States, the ability to use public transportation is critical for moving around the city and finding employment. It is important that every refugee client is able to get to where they need to go. For most, the only option is to utilize public transportation until they can afford their own car. This question is meant to verify that the client is able to get around the area comfortably.

- Do you have a drivers permit/ license?

This question was designed as a benchmark to determine the level of integration. Having a permit or license requires the knowledge of the area, laws, the English language, and budgeting

(Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). According to caseworkers in our focus group, it is usually very difficult for their refugee clients to get their driver's license. They view a client's ability to do so as a major success.

- Do you own a car?

This question measures the client's financial security, their ability to know how to maintain a car, and insurance. It also means that they have achieved everything that it would require to acquire a driver's license. The focus group and interviews revealed that a client buying a car is one of the greatest indications of a successful integration.

Accessing Services

A client's ability to access the services available to them measures their level of self-advocacy and ability to communicate their needs. There are many amenities, systems and public services available within the Worcester community that assists refugees with their day to day lives. These amenities include public libraries, hospitals, grocery stores, laundromats, etc. There are services available to qualifying members of the general public such as food stamps, gas assistance and employment assistance ("Worcester Resources.org," 2001 - 2014). Refugees must also learn to understand and navigate systems such as the health care system and public transportation. Often clients are unaware of all the opportunities available to them or do not understand how to utilize them. Even after they are made aware of these services and amenities, adults may be unable to advocate for themselves and request assistance due to language or cultural barriers (Ascentria Caseworkers, personal communication, November 14, 2014). Self-advocacy and ability to utilize services are two of the sub-factors within the fourth indicator, Integration. The questions in this section of the Integration tab are all meant to determine if a client is aware of the services available to them and if they are able to advocate for themselves.

The questions are as follows:

- Do you have knowledge about service providers other than Ascentria?
- Are you able to ask for services outside of Ascentria?
- Are you able to advocate for what you need?

Social Connectedness

The final section of questions involves social connectedness. Social connectedness is a major factor in the client's integration in the community. All of the questions were designed to measure if the client has a support network and is able to talk to someone in their community.

The following questions pertain to this topic.

- Do you have anyone to speak with about your goals in America?
- Do you have someone to turn to when things are difficult?
- Do you have friendships/relationships with people that are outside of your nationality/ ethnicity?
- Do you feel you have friends?
- Do you attend church/mosque or other religious services?

Results Dashboard:

We included a Results Dashboard tab for comparative analysis across all four indicators.

The Results Dashboard can be used to track clients and provide a simple analysis of the client for the caseworker. The data input in the assessment tool is visually represented in this tab. Strengths and weaknesses of the client are shown through pie charts. The main goal of this assessment tool is to allow the caseworker to prioritize services to the areas of greatest need.

5.3 Administration of the Assessment

Until a client is comfortable completing the assessment on their own, a caseworker must administer the assessment. Caseworkers should sit with their clients and go over each question.

The caseworker should answer any questions that the client may have and clarify the meaning of

each question if the client is confused. This method will allow for easy translation and interpretation for clients that are not completely comfortable with the English language. The caseworker should also ask their client to elaborate on any answers that require more of an explanation. The caseworker can input their client's answers into the system as they progress through the assessment or they can record the client's answers and enter the information later. The client will never be forced to complete the assessment on their own but as soon as they are confident in their ability to complete it themselves, they should be given the chance to do so.

6 CONCLUSION

Refugees naturally face difficulties as they integrate into their new culture, and the programmatic services that Ascentria's refugee clients currently receive are often unresponsive to their needs. Refugees generally have lower English level ability, work lower paying jobs, and experience discrimination in their new communities. Ascentria Care Alliance is seeking to address these challenges through an organizational change that will shift its services from a programmatic delivery model to a client-centered one. Ascentria asked us to identify how to measure success of their clients as they transition to life in the United States, and to develop a tool for them to use to measure this success.

By interviewing refugee program personnel and leadership and conducting a focus group of caseworkers, we discovered four indicators of success. Indicators of success are specific milestones that contribute to a client's successful integration into their new community. We developed measures to assess the progress of an individual related to these four indicators. These measures were converted into questions and compiled into an assessment tool for Ascentria to implement with their refugee clients. We were able to confirm our findings with caseworkers, management and other outside refugee resettlement organizations. This tool will be used by Ascentria to assess the success of their refugee clients through the integration process.

It is our hope that the identification of these indicators of success and the development of the assessment tool will provide a springboard for Ascentria to begin further research into the needs of their clients throughout all of the services they offer. By changing the way that clients experience care, Ascentria will be able to continue to positively impact the lives of these clients.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

We are WPI students who are helping Ascentria Care Alliance develop metrics for their refugee program. We would be grateful if you would take some time and answer our questions on the refugee program. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may stop answering at any time. All your answers will remain anonymous.

Other Refugee Assistance Agencies:

1. How do you define success for your refugee clients?
2. How do you measure the success of your refugee clients?
3. How long do you keep in contact with your clients?
4. What distinguishes successful refugee clients from others?
5. What types of services do you provide?
6. How do you view client needs? How do you obtain services for clients to match their needs?
7. What is the most important factor for success?
8. In your opinion, what are key milestones or landmarks for successful integration?

Executives:

1. What are problems that refugees face in Worcester?
2. What assistance does the City of Worcester offer to their refugee residents?
3. What are traits that you have seen in successful refugees?
4. What are meaningful ways to measure integration?
5. As an executive, what are your long and short term visions of the Integrated Service Center?
6. In what way do you see our project contributing to Ascentria?
7. In your opinion, what are important indicators of a refugee's success? How can we measure that?
8. Do you feel that we are missing anything important with our indicators of success?
 - a. Employment
 - b. Housing
 - c. Education
 - d. Independence
9. How would you like us to portray our data? In a checklist, scale, percentage, excel template?
10. What are effective ways to increase refugee participation in the community?
11. What problems remain/surface after six months involved in Ascentria's Services for New Americans?
12. What are current challenges in delivering refugee services?

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Questions

We are WPI students who are helping Ascentria Care Alliance develop metrics for their refugee program. We would be grateful if you would take some time and answer our questions on the refugee program. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may stop answering at any time. All your answers will remain anonymous.

1. What are traits that you have seen in successful refugees? What significant milestones do you try to help your clients?

2. How can we measure the following categories of success:
 - a. Employment
 - b. Housing
 - c. Education*
 - d. Healthy Lifestyle**
 - e. Social Capital**

*Later changed to English Literacy

**Later changed to Integration

APPENDIX C

Success Assessment Tool

Please see the attached excel file provided.

APPENDIX D

LIRS R&P Cultural Orientation Checklist



LIRS R&P CULTURAL ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

PA Name:		Case #:	Case Size:	DOA:
Were orientation topics provided in a native language? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Were written materials distributed in a native language? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Orientation Topics				
1. Role of the Resettlement Agency		Date(s)	Initial(s)	
The local resettlement agency is not a government agency.				
Assistance provided by the local resettlement agency and public assistance is limited and benefits vary across agencies, locations, and cases.				
There are a number of organizations that will work alongside local resettlement agencies to assist with access to locally-available programs and provision of services.				
The local resettlement agency provides assistance to refugees through the provision of items and/or money to meet initial needs, a limited scope of services, and advocacy on refugees' behalf to receive service for which they are eligible.				
The quality and quantity of items provided will vary.				
Refugees and the local resettlement agency are responsible in partnership for successful resettlement.				
2. Refugee Status				
There are rights related to refugee status.				
There are responsibilities related to refugee status.				
Applying for permanent residency and naturalization are important steps in the adjustment process.				
There may be immigration consequences to breaking U.S. laws.				
Refugees may be eligible to file for family reunification, which would allow family members overseas to come to the U.S.				
3. English				
For both adults and children, learning English is critical to successful adjustment in the U.S.				
Learning English will take time and the process may vary from person to person.				
There are a variety of ways to learn English.				
4. Public Assistance				
Public assistance is available to help refugees pay for their needs, but is limited in amount and scope.				
There are a variety of types of government assistance.				
The local resettlement agency will provide help in accessing public assistance services.				
There are responsibilities associated with some types of assistance.				
5. U.S. Laws				
The U.S. is governed by the rule of law.				
The U.S. has many laws governing behavior in public.				
There are legal rights and restrictions related to family life.				
There are rights and responsibilities related to U.S. residency and citizenship.				
6. Your New Community				
There are community and public services that are available to support residents.				
The local resettlement agency will assist refugees in becoming acquainted with their new community.				
Members of the refugee's ethnic or religious group who live in the area may be a good source of support.				
7. Employment				
Early employment and job retention are essential to survival in the U.S., and must be the primary focus for all employable adults (men and women).				
A person's initial job might not be in their chosen profession.				
The refugee himself or herself plays a central role in finding/obtaining employment in the U.S.				
A crucial way of finding better paying jobs is learning how to speak English.				
There are general characteristics of U.S. professional and work culture to which refugees must adapt in order to be successful in finding and maintaining employment.				
Employees have rights as well as responsibilities in the workplace.				
8. Health				
Only critical and immediate healthcare needs may be met in the initial weeks of resettlement.				
Initial health screenings and immunizations will be scheduled within 30 days of arrival.				
The U.S. has no universal healthcare system and refugee medical assistance (RMA) differs state by state. In many cases, RMA is available for eight months.				

A variety of health care services are available in the U.S.		
Preventative health care plays a large role in maintaining good health.		
There are norms associated with health care services in the U.S		
U.S. health practices may differ from those of other cultures or countries.		
There are local resources available to support refugees' mental health.		
9. Budgeting and Personal Finance		
Refugees are responsible for managing their personal finances.		
In the U.S., financial transactions are mostly conducted through the banking system.		
Paying taxes is a legal obligation in the U.S.		
10. Housing		
There are a variety of types of housing arrangements depending on affordability and the local context (including shared housing, apartment, house, etc.)		
The local resettlement agency provides assistance in home orientation, after which housekeeping and home maintenance are individual and family responsibilities.		
Understanding basic safety considerations and use of appliances/facilities will promote safety in the home.		
There are additional domestic life skills that facilitate independent living.		
11. Hygiene		
There are norms for personal hygiene in the U.S.		
12. Safety		
Attention to personal safety is an important consideration for all people.		
Police and law enforcement agencies exist to help people if they become a victim of crime.		
It is important to be prepared for emergencies.		
It is important to be familiar with safety procedures.		
13. Cultural Adjustment		
There are core characteristics that define the American experience.		
There are cultural norms and expectations that are fairly widespread throughout the U.S.		
The philosophies of self-sufficiency and self-advocacy are central to American culture and to refugees' cultural adjustment.		
There are numerous phases of cultural adjustment.		
Resettlement may have an impact on family roles and dynamics.		
Expectations regarding parenting practices may differ in the U.S. from what refugees are used to.		
There are some basic coping mechanisms to deal with the stress of adjustment.		
There are ways to seek assistance from others in your community.		
14. Education		
There are legal and normative expectations regarding schooling in the U.S.		
The value for adults and teenagers to continue formal education should be weighed against the need to work.		
There are many options for continuing education and training beyond compulsory K-12 schooling.		
15. Transportation		
Public transportation options exist in most communities.		
Owning or having access to a personal vehicle comes with benefits and responsibilities.		
R&P Performance Outcomes Orientation Topics		
Information on how to obtain food and basic necessities	Date(s)	Initial(s)
Information on how to contact emergency services		
Information on how to access interpretation as needed		
Information on where household money will come from when initial assistance is finished		
Orientation on the refugee's own address, how to make a phone call, and how to be contacted		
Information on the effects of moving		
Information on basic US laws and cultural practices		
<i>I have received orientation that includes the above topics. I understand that orientation is ongoing and that I can ask the resettlement agency should I need clarification on these and other topics.</i>		
PA Name:	Signature:	Date:
Caseworker Name:	Signature:	Date:
Interpreter Name:	Signature:	Date: