

Newly Arrived Refugees: The importance of Culturally and Linguistically Competent Services

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Questions

1. Do you know how many people become refugees in the world per year?
2. Do you know how many refugees resettled in the U.S. in 2012?
3. What documents can be used as proofs of the refugee status?
4. Can elderly refugees qualify for public assistance like other elderly Americans?
5. Do you think most elderly refugees are educated in their native language?
6. Do refugees have to wait 5 years to qualify for various public assistance (e.g., Food Stamps, Medicaid, SSI)?
7. Do referrals to an agency help refugees obtain needed services?

I-94

Departure Number
742831632 01

U.S. IMMIGRATION
250 WAS 177

Immigration and
Naturalization Service
I-94
Departure Record

SEP 13 1991

ADMITTED B-2
UNTIL MARCH 12, 1992 CLASS

14 Family Name DOE	
13 First (Given) Name JOHN	16 Birth Date (Day, Mo, Yr) 01.01.91
17 Country of Citizenship ENGLAND	

See Other Side STAPLE HERE

Warning - A nonimmigrant who accepts unauthorized employment is subject to deportation.

Important - Retain this permit in your possession; you must *surrender it when you leave the U.S.* Failure to do so may delay your entry into the U.S. in the future.

You are authorized to stay in the U.S. only until the date written on this form. To remain past this date, without permission from immigration authorities, is a violation of the law.

Surrender this permit when you leave the U.S.:

- By sea or air, to the transportation line;
- Across the Canadian border, to a Canadian Official;
- Across the Mexican border, to a U.S. Official.

Students planning to reenter the U.S. within 30 days to return to the same school, see "Arrival-Departure" on page 2 of Form I-20 prior to *surrendering this permit.*

Record of Changes

Port: Departure Record

Date:

Carrier:

Flight #/Ship Name:

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

Who are refugees?

- A person who is outside his or her country of origin because they have suffered (or fear) persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or because they are a member of a persecuted 'social group' or because they are fleeing a war.
 - In addition, some were forced and left with only a few possessions

Who are asylees?

- An alien in the United States or at a port of entry who is found to be unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality, or to seek the protection of that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution.

U.S. Yearly Refugee Arrival

Country of Origin	2012	2013
1.) Burma	14,020 (24%)	16,300 (23%)
2.) Bhutan	15,021 (26%)	9,100 (13%)
3.) Grand Total	58,238	72,000



Who helps Refugees?



The Resettlement Process

- 1.) Submit an application to the office of UNHCR
- 2.) UNHCR reviews application (3 months+)
 - Several rounds of interviews
 - Interview answers should match family statements
 - Criteria
 - No Criminal History
 - No Political Affiliations
 - No Combat Trainings

The Resettlement Process

3.) The Office of International Migration

- Health Screening, Orientation
- Delay after delay (in case of any slight changes)
- No information on which country will accept them

4.) Approval

- Flight Information
- Move to a different shelter
 - Cannot return to the refugee camp

5.) At the shelter (3 days before Flight)

- Additional Health Screening

Resettlement Process



The two major refugee communities we serve

Bhutanese Refugees

Burmese Refugees



Bhutan



To escape persecution



From Home to Refugee Camps



Bhutanese Refugee Camps



Burma



The 8/8/88 Protest



8/8/88 Protest



၁၉၈၈ ခု စက်တင်ဘာလ ၁၉ ရက်နေ့တွင် ဒဏ်ရာရသောမဝင်းမော်ဦးအ
သယ်ဆောင်လာစဉ်။ သယ်ယူလာပြီး မကြာမီ သေဆုံးသွားခဲ့သည်
© Steve Lehman

Military & Religious/Civic Clash



The Border: Thailand



Reuters

Refugee Camps for Burmese

- Only a few camps were available
- Most refugees live in the jungles



“Registry of birth” at Refugee Camps



How to work with refugee communities?



Barriers for Bhutanese Refugees (esp. elderly)

- **Language:**
 - LEP (Limited English Proficiency) -little or no English
 - Illiteracy – cannot read or write in native language
- **Education:**
 - Elderly Bhutanese have no formal education.
 - Only the younger generation attended school
(Age 30 and younger)
- **Transportation**
- **Health: Chronic Health Conditions**

Barriers for Bhutanese Refugees (esp. elderly)

- Family Size: Inter-generational Families
- Caste System
- Culture and Religion:
 - Traditional practice and beliefs
 - Power of “rumors” in the community
 - Misunderstanding & misinterpretation of information
- Vulnerability: can become victims of fraud
- Open community: willingness to learn & adjust
- Most were farmers

Barriers for the Burmese Community

- A small number of elderly refugees resettlement in the U.S.; many preferred to stay
- Diverse (8) ethnicities & (135) dialects
- Closed Community: not readily accommodating & adjusting to new changes
- Most were farmers

Common Barriers for the Burmese Community

- Language: LEP (Limited English Proficiency)
- Education: Low or no formal educational attainment
- Transportation
- Health care
- Employment (both un-/under-employment)

** Co-ethnic dependency is high due to these barriers

Serving the Refugee Community

Best Practices

- Building trust
- Referral versus Step-by-Step Assistance
- Language (access to translation & interpretation)
- Patience
- Clear and understandable communication

Serving the Refugee Community

Best Practices

- Understanding of culture
- Understanding limited exposure to resources in their own native country
 - Limited access to doctors and other health needs
- Health: need for on-going outreach and education

A real case: Group A

Ms. Gurung and her husband receive SSI. Recently her household expenses has increased. She requested the assistance from neighbors and friends to make a report of the changed expenses to the social security office. She went to the office three times. Each time, a neighbor or friend took her to assist. And each time, she received less money. Somehow the misinterpretation of information that she submitted has led to a letter stating that she owes \$2,500. How can you help Ms. Gurung?

A real case: Group B

An elderly refugee attended a workshop on Diabetes at the Community Center. Free testing was available. Her test result stated that she has a critical high blood sugar level. She was referred to the local Diabetes Association by the workshop presenter. The Diabetes Association does not have the language capacity to assist her. What should the elderly refugee do? How would you assist her/him?

A real case: Group C

An elderly man needed assistance. He was sent to an adult day care center. He refuses to eat the food that the adult day care center provides, which in turn negatively impacted his health. What would you do to help him?

Thank you!!

For further questions and information, please, free to contact us.

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