



[eastbayrefugeeforum.org](http://eastbayrefugeeforum.org)

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### Meeting Notes

Tuesday, October 20, 2015, 10:00-12:00

Catholic Charities of the East Bay, 433 Jefferson Street, Oakland, CA 94607

Present: Elaine Bautista (Alameda County Department of Public Health CAPE Unit), Marisa Ramos (CA Department of Public Health), Sysvanh Kabkeo (CA Department of Social Services Refugee Programs Bureau), Julia Ortiz-Rios (CA Department of Social Services Refugee Programs Bureau), Ballav Poudyel (Lao Family Community Development), Sadaf Siddiq (Alameda County Social Services Agency), Laura Vaudreuil (Refugee Transitions), Chad Lama (IRC), Deborah Son (STAND!), Lila Katz (JFCS/EB), Amy Weiss (JFCS/EB), Nate Dunstan (OUSD RASAP), Cristy Dieterich (San Francisco Department of Public Health), Nai Piangjai (IRC), Madeline Bailey (IRC), Marisela Desormeaux, Jodi de la Pena Vander Pol, Pat Pianko (ACF/ORR/RO9), Bowa G. Tucker (ACF/ORR/RO9), Sean Kirkpatrick (CHAA), Guenet Sebsibe, Naima Jameson (Alameda County Social Services Agency), Jessica Chittaphong (Anew America Community Corp), Hana Toma (CCEB), Sue Pon (OUSD Adult Ed), Zar Ni Maung (BRFN), Jain Thapa (Board of Equalization), Seim Win, Charles Jackson (African Advocacy Network), Johnny Thang (Soccer Without Borders), Yonas Woldeab (BA EDC), Blythe Raphael (EBRF)

**Welcome:** *Sysvanh Kabkeo, Chief, California State Refugee Programs in the CA Department of Social Services.* Brief bio. shared: Sysvanh was born and raised in Laos, fled due to war at age 15, spent three years in a Thai refugee camp and came with Uncle's family which received U.S. sponsorship for resettlement in NY. He recalls the shock of being re-located from tropical climate to the cold winter of NY and difficulty that arriving late in teenage hood as an English Language Learner brings to the acculturation process. He spent two years in NY before running away from home to join a cousin in Utah where he obtained a GED and BA degree. A planned trip to Arkansas ended in CA instead where Sysvanh began 25 years of service in the local welfare department prior to coming to the State in November of 2012. He has broad experience with many social safety net programs to include: AFDC (now CalWORKs), GAIN, Medi-Cal, GA, Refugee Cash Assistance, childcare, CalWORKs Employment, CalFRESH, and Nutrition Education/Outreach Programs. Sysvanh's goal for the first year as the new Chief of RPB includes meeting various partners out in the field and learning about the broader new arrival landscape throughout the state of CA.

### Coordinator Updates

- General Forum meeting attendees received the following handouts: Updated Forum Bylaws, a Chart of Current Steering Committee Seat Positions and Terms, and an Application/nomination Form for Parties Interested in Serving on the Steering Committee. Please contact the Coordinator directly for additional copies of any of these documents. There is a newly created position available for an ECBO/Project/Emerging Leader. Although encouraged, the ECBO/Project/Emerging Leader steering committee position no longer requires two year prior attendance at General Forum meetings.
- The Steering Committee will reinstitute the position of a Chair person from a current committee member.
- There is sufficient funding for the position of Forum Coordinator to cover approximately 35-37/52 weeks this FFY 2015/16. The new Chair (to-be-elected) will likely cover the list serve during the unfunded period of time.

- African Advocacy Network, along with other partners such as the ACLU and EBRF will hold a community wide forum on Thursday evening with state DMV officials to address issues in the implementation of AB 60 which allows undocumented persons to apply for a CA driver's license. Persons from Africa (such as potential asylees) are being disproportionately sent into secondary review as issues remain over consular participation in joining a master list of countries whose documents are deemed acceptable as initial proof of identity. There will be a mechanism for anonymous questions pertaining to the bill and community members are encouraged to attend. Full meeting details will be sent via the list serve.
- The last meeting of the year will be held on December 15, 2015 and will feature an overview of childcare options available to CalWORKs families in the county. The December meeting will also include a celebration in honor of long serving steering committee members who are terming off and not seeking re-election.
- Beginning this December, the forum will institute a mechanism (paper survey type form) to be used at the end of every general forum meeting to garner direct feedback as to unmet needs, gaps in services as well as strengths which deserve replication for new arrival community members. The feedback will help inform the immediate work of the Steering Committee and working groups (for short as well as longer term planning) and better ensure that matters are addressed in a timely, thoughtful way in a loop from the ground up to higher administrative levels.
- Mark your Calendars for an Upcoming Training Opportunity for EBRF Members:  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 17, 2015  
**Time:** 10:00-12:00  
**Location:** Catholic Charities of the East Bay

Presentation: *"The Intersection between Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking"* by Hyun-mi Kim, Client Advocate/Legal Caseworker, Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach (10:00-11:00 am)

Presentation: *"Cultural Domestic Violence Training with focus on Southeast Asian Populations"* by Natasha Munn, SEED Program and Outreach Coordinator, NARIKA (11:00-12:00 am)

#### **Refugee Program Bureau Communications, Sysvanh Kabkeo, Bureau Chief**

RPB's Mission and Strategy: The bureau has 20 staff dedicated to working with local, state, and Federal partners in the planning for, reception, and integration of refugees into the state. They are a main conduit for information regarding statewide programs, data, funding, and updates on current populations being received. Individuals are encouraged to visit the website which is receiving new enhancements

Welcoming America Initiative: This is a relatively new initiative whereby cities/counties can join up as communities which are welcoming to new Americans (Immigrants and refugees). The website contains more information (such as a list of the current 40+ local governments who are early acceptor cities and counties and includes a fact sheet which identifies the benefits and opportunities for cities or counties that sign on. The taskforce on the Newcomer Center Planning (spearheaded by CHAA) is looking into the possibility of adding Oakland or Alameda County as part of the network. Website: <http://www.welcomingamerica.org/>

Printed I-94 Issues: Issue number 1: CCEB resettlement staff have encountered difficulties with the new process to print out the I-94 in that 8/15 cases have not had any record in the computer database to print. All such cases were originally processed through LAX. Assistance has been given by the CPP Division of USCIS in San Francisco to resolve the issue, which requires time intensive, in-person appointments in SF. Issue number 2: CCEB staff have encountered DMV workers who have not been informed/trained to recognize the new computer printout format as a legitimate document (as opposed to the old stamped paper card) and are refusing to give CA identification as a result. Instead, clients are being issued temporary i.d.

**Action Item:** Resettlement agencies request that the State issue a formal letter statewide which explains the changes in the I-94 and shares this letter with DMV administration for dissemination throughout the state. In addition, the letter can be used by case managers to take to the DMV to educate workers who have not had training that a new format is in use.

**Follow Up:** Joseph Pollakoff from the State Refugee Programs Bureau is working with partners on the state level regarding requested action as of 10/22/2015.

ESL/ Citizenship Classes: lack of housing and ESL classes are the two biggest issues raised to the state from various East Bay service providers. Suggestions to address lack of ESL classes include 1) engagement with the local Workforce Investment Board to develop services which are more immigrant/refugee friendly 2) connecting with students who are obtaining credentials in Teaching English as a Second Language to develop curriculum.

**Follow Up:** State will try to determine whether Alameda County receives funding for citizenship.

**Note:** Previous county rule which required CalWORKS W-T-W clients to exit out of ESL classes after one year has now been changed. If a client requires further ESL, it can be noted in the W-T-W individual plan to keep student in place.

New Immigration Branch at CDSS: Handout Number One distributed: The CDSS Immigration Branch Immigration Services Funding Request for Application Frequently Asked Questions. There is currently 15 million in funding available under this RFA for three types of services for DACA , DAPA, and other immigration services. Proposals due Friday, October 30, 2015. Complete details are available on website: <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/default.htm> or contact: Julia Ortiz-Rios: email: [julia.ortiz-rios@dss.ca.gov](mailto:julia.ortiz-rios@dss.ca.gov). Handout number Two distributed: FACT SHEET on Unaccompanied Undocumented Minors Legal Services Funding. Also available on the website under: [www.cdss.ca.gov/refugeeprogram](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/refugeeprogram)

UAC – Asylees – Accessing benefits: Currently, there is no comparable case management system set up by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration for Unaccompanied Minors who obtain status such as that offered to other asylees who come through resettlement agencies. The responsibility to assist these children (over 125 cases since 2013) has fallen locally on the Oakland Unified School District, which does not have the capacity to assist children with public benefit enrollment. Funding is critical for this newly emerged and unmet need that is not being addressed through any formal state or federal funding streams. The school district will continue to do it's best to serve the need but requests higher level assistance to address this pressing issue.

2015-16 Refugee Arrival Ceilings: The President has issue the ceilings for resettlement which are set between 70,000-85,000 (the higher number to account for possible Syrian admissions to the U.S.). Resettlement agencies have not been asked yet to adjust to any higher capacity than last year.

**Annual Overview of New Arrival Health:** *Elaine Bautista, Epidemiologist, Alameda County Department of Public Health CAPE Unit*

- Full power point sent to Forum list serve in tandem with meeting notes. Email Elaine for any additional information: [elaine.bautista@acgov.org](mailto:elaine.bautista@acgov.org)
- Summary: Ten Refugee Health Screening sites in CA. ORR gives the resettlement agencies 30 days to have clients complete the RHS process. The State of CA gives 90 days.
- The refugee population has shifted over the past few years but from 2013-2015 the top arrivers to this county were from Afghanistan, Myanmar, Iraq and Eritrea while arrivals from Bhutan (which used to be 4.9% of the total have now dropped to 0.8% during that time.
- A large number patients screened have no International Classification of Disease (ICD) code listed for any health condition in the data (84.5%). This number increased in 2014-2015 compared to the previous reporting period. (Are populations healthier, less likely to disclose conditions?) State Department of Public Health/Refugee Health Chief notes that this is a two visit screening. Conditions of new arrivals have shifted from those which were contagious to more chronic types of conditions. Hence, the screening physician may not give true diagnoses but rather, when a medical home is established, those findings which pertain to chronic conditions are made by the patient's primary physician.
- Often the overseas panel physician may not give any diagnosis for an illness. Or the patient may not disclose symptoms or conditions for fear of being denied resettlement. Screenings in camps are likely more accurate as the overseas physician is hired by the CDC. If the work of an overseas panel physician is found to be lacking (for example , using the same x-ray film for all members in one family or admitting patients for resettlement who have severe mental illness, the CDC does investigate that panel physician overseas.
- There are no active cases of TB as it must be treated prior to resettlement and in the few instances where it has not been caught overseas by the panel physician, it is found during refugee health screening and followed up by the county with treatment.
- Data does note a large percentage of inactive cases of TB among new arrivers to the county.
- The general refugee health screening contains a tool for mental health screening for those who are 16 years of age and older. For the mental health PTSD Screening, the data reveals that only 18/354 (5.1%) screened responded to having PTSD gauged by the screening questions and markers. Only 3.7% of respondents to having generalized anxiety with depression was found at 10.4 %. Out of 356 respondents, 308 said that they had suffered direct trauma (includes sudden move or loss of home and possessions, physical assault, captivity such has kidnapped, abducted, held hostage, POW, assault with a weapon, etc). Almost 2/3 cited persecution of various types.
- State Chief of Refugee Health notes need for more intensive case management to address immediate survival needs which contribute to stress but may not be true behavioral health need. Attempt is being made (in countries neighboring Syria for example) to screen and treat refugees for mental health while still upstream (before resettlement in a third country).
- Language barriers for foreign born in general are high.
- Additional slides include data on the social and environmental factors that impact health of the foreign born reveal a comprehensive picture. Data is included data for those who face language barriers, household educational levels, poverty status in the last 12 months, poverty rates for families, housing status (renter occupied and overcrowding data) and housing cost burdens in Alameda County for foreign born.
- Looking forward, new arrival populations continue to change and benefits would result from expanded screening and database collection of mental health, trauma and TB data. The high number of no ICD code reported deserves a second look to examine whether cultural barriers or

systematic barriers play a role. Currently, the data collection does not include ways to track refugee arrivers as they age and needs change.

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**STAND**, Deborah Son, Crisis and Emergency Responses Services Manager: email: [deborahs@standffov.org](mailto:deborahs@standffov.org) tel: 925.676.2774.

- Stand for Families Free of Violence (STAND!) is the primary service provider for DV service in Contra Costa County. The agency has 90 staff members who give a large breath of services to all members of a family who may be affected by violence in the household.
- There is access to 150+ languages, 24hour 7 days per week peer counseling support, safety planning, and crisis line support as a gateway to services.
- STAND! Is in partnership with the Family Justice Center with locations throughout the county (home base in Concord) which centralize services and resources all in one location (at the Family Justice Center) for families affected by DV. Community advocates provide case management to assist with connections to legal services (restraining orders), advocacy for court appointments, public benefit issues, securing housing, etc. There are trained mental health professionals in all locations and help is given to access coverage, if need be, for therapy via the Victims of Crime Compensation Fund for those who qualify.
- Need for services does not have to be acute nor physical. Psychological abuse and control are factors that are used in the agency's evidence based model to look at who may be at highest risk for homicide. STAND! Is only one of 4 providers chosen in the U.S. to implement a lethality assessment tool to screen for highest risk factors.
- There is NO TIME Limit to persons who may be in need of services nor to how many times an individual or family may need to access services.
- STAND! Has an emergency shelter with 24 beds in a confidential location that is able to take both male and female teenage children along with the parent as a whole unit.
- In addition, the agency runs a transitional housing program. The transitional housing is impacted. (Can only serve 7 families at a time but is offered for one year time with option to extend lease for one more year. The rent ceiling is set at 1/3 of the income, even if the only resources available are public benefits. Once stability is achieved, families can take all new household furnishings provided in transitional housing with them to the new location.
- If Social Services Agency or the Family Justice Center feels that a client would be better protected in another county, they can request transfer over to Contra Costa County.
- Referral mechanism is easy. **The crisis line is the gateway to all services: 1-888-215-5555**

**Resettlement Agency Arrival Total FFY Data 2014-15**

**Jewish Family Community Services of the East Bay Arrivals October 1, 2014-September 30, 2015**

<i>Ethnic Origin</i>	<i>Arrivals</i>
<b>Afghan</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Congo</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Iranian</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Iraq</b>	<b>3</b>

<b>Syria</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Uganda</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>FSU (former Soviet Union)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>109</b>

- New arrivals from Afghanistan comprise 60.6% of the JFCS-East Bay case load, followed by 30.3% from Iran
- 27 of the 109 total arrivals are children.
- 20 children (74%) under age of 5 years old.
- 7 children ages from 5 years to high School; elementary school: 6, High School 1.
- Seven of the 109 total arrivals are LGBT
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**Arrivals- Catholic Charities of the East Bay  
October 1, 2014- Sept. 30 2015**

<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Arrivals</b>	<b>Language(s)</b>
<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>Farsi, Dari, Pashto, Urdu</b>
<b>Bhutan</b>	<b>6</b>	
<b>Burma</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>Burmese, Karen, Thai, Kachin &amp; Malay</b>
<b>Eritrea</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Iran</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Arabic, English</b>
<b>Iraq</b>	<b>20</b>	
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Hindi/ English</b>
<b>Syria</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Arabic</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>128/ 150 projected</b>	

**ARRIVALS-International Rescue Committee  
October 1, 2014 –September 30, 2015**

<b>Total: Cases FY15 : 351</b>	
<b>Africa : 49</b>	
<b>Somalia</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Eritrea</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Uganda</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Ethiopia</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DRC</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>East Asia : 78</b>	
<b>Burma</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>China</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>N. Korea</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Latin America/Caribbean : 7</b>	
<b>Cuba</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Colombia</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Near East/South Asia: 217</b>	
<b>Iraq</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Iran</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Afghan</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Syria</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Bhutan</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>School Age (5 to 18 yrs)</b>	<b>70/351</b>

**Total CCEB & IRC Combined ARRIVALS: 479  
individuals FFY 2014-2015.**

<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Bhutan</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Burma</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>China</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Columbia</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Cuba</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DRC</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Eritrea</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Ethiopia</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Iraq</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Iran</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>North Korea</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Somalia</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Syria</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Uganda</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL COMBINED</b>	<b>479</b>

*For IRC and CCEB combined data, the top three countries of origin are Afghanistan (45%), Burma (21%), and Iraq (10%) Followed by Eritrea (7%) Iran (3.5%) and Syria (3%). Remaining collective 10.5% of new arrivals hail from all other countries listed in the table above.*

### Resettlement Arrivals from October 1, 2015 to-Date

#### JFCS-East Bay Arrivals October 1, 2015-current time

Origin	
Afghanistan	10
Iraq	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

*Of the eleven total arrivals, six are children. Three children are under age of 5 year and 3 children are middle school age.*

#### CCEB-Arrivals Oct 1, 2015-current time

Origin	
Afghanistan	5
Iran	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>

#### IRC-Arrivals October 1, 2015-current time

<b>Nationality</b>	
Afghanistan	<b>23</b>
Bhutan	<b>1</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>