MCC Board Meeting
December 10, 2015

MCC REFUGEE SERVICES
30 Years of Welcoming Refugees
Who Are Refugees?

A person who has been forced to flee his/her homeland and is unable to return because she or he has experienced persecution or has a well-founded fear of persecution.
Refugees Are Persecuted

• Race
• Religion
• Nationality
• Membership of a particular social group
• Political opinion
Refugees Are Invited

• “Refugee” is a distinct US Immigration Status.
• Refugee Status Granted Prior to Arrival in US
• Valid Indefinitely
• Work Authorized Upon Arrival
• Path to Citizenship (5 years)
• Eligible for Most Public Benefits
• Protected from being forcibly sent back (except in some instances of criminal activity)
Refugees Are Resilient

- Refugees are SURVIVORS
- Refugees arrive with HOPE
- Refugees are EAGER to work and create a new life
- Refugees CONTRIBUTE to our communities
- Refugee communities organize quickly to support each other formally and informally
The Refugee Journey

Pre-Flight Chaos
- Deteriorating Circumstances
- Harassment, Violence, Persecution
- Deprivation of Basic Needs

Flight
- A Moment’s Notice/ Time to Prepare
- Dangerous Journey
- Family Separation
Refugee Camp Life Realities

- From Flight to Waiting
- Stuck in limbo
- Competition for basic needs: food, water, shelter
- Continuing political/ethnic hostilities
Refugee Camp Life

Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya
Dadaab Camp
Dadaab Camp
Mae La Camp
Karen Camp School
Kenyan Camp School
Refugees often stay in protracted refugee situations for years or even decades.

Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% are permanently resettled anywhere in the world in a given year.
USRAP: Presidential Determination

- Signed into law each October by the US President
- Sets US Refugee Arrival Ceiling
- Lists Priority Populations for resettlement in the coming year
- Determines Nationalities eligible for “Family Reunification” applications
## USRAP:
**FY 2016 Proposed Admissions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Proposals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>25,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Asia</td>
<td>13,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe/Central Asia</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America/Caribbean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Near East/South Asia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unallocated Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>85,000</strong></td>
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USRAP Overseas Process

• Several Interviews with Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)
• Interview(s) with US Homeland Security Officers
• Persecution Claims Verified
• Security Clearances
• Medical Screenings
• Cultural Orientation
• Travel Loan Signed
USRAP Overseas Process: What About Security?

- Refugees are THE MOST THOROUGHLY VETTED group of ANY US entrants

- Entering the US as refugee is a LONG, SLOW, DIFFICULT process of application, eligibility determination, and security screening

- Security steps involve:
  - National Counterterrorism Center/ Intelligence Community
  - FBI
  - Department of Homeland Security
  - State Department
USRAP Placement Structure

• 9 National Agencies who have Cooperative Agreements with the U.S. Department of State to provide “Initial Reception and Placement Services” (R&P) to new refugee arrivals.

• Affiliate Office networks around the country providing localized services

• Refugees are allocated to various states based on local capacity and/or identified US Ties in locale

• Initial “Reception” into Communities, and “Placement” into Community Resources
FY 2015 Primary Arrivals to MN

ARRIVALS BY ETHNICITY

- Burma (Karen) 44%
- Somali 39%
- Burma (Karen) 44%
- Other Burmese 2%
- Ethiopian 1%
- Eritrean 1%
- Afghan 2%
- FSU 3%
- Iraqi 4%
- Other 3%

1,967 Total Primary Arrivals
FY 2015 Primary Arrivals to MN

ARRIVALS BY COUNTY

- Anoka: 7%
- Dakota: 5%
- Hennepin: 25%
- Ramsey: 63%
- Other: 0%
Minnesota is Special

• Highest ratio of refugee : foreign born residents in the United States

• 47% of foreign-born population in Minnesota entered as refugees, as compared to 17% nation-wide.

• Large well-established refugee communities are a national draw

• Based on ORR annual survey, Minnesota led the country in welcoming “secondary arrivals.”
  • In 2013 and 2014, more “secondary arrivals” came to MN than “primary arrivals.”
  • Highest # of secondary arrivals in US
Refugee Services Breakout Session

• Questions about Refugee Process

• Opportunities for Engagement with MCC-RS

• Faith Leader/ Congregational/ Individual Resources for Action and Advocacy in Support of Refugees

• Virtual Reality Refugee Camp Tour: Clouds Over Sidra