



Special Employment Issue

National Immigrant Farming Initiative: Helping Refugees and Immigrants to Succeed as Farmers

by Rachel Dannefer, NIFI Coordinator

New American Sustainable Agriculture Project

Jamal Sharif Mor left Somalia fourteen years ago, escaping a civil war that had left his country without a central government and operating by the “law of the jungle,” as Jamal put it. Searching for basic personal security, Jamal fled to Kenya where he lived in a refugee camp for five years. “We just ate maize and beans, there was no medicine, people were dying from malnutrition,” he remembered. Eventually, after a U.S. Department of State visit to the refugee camp, the United States granted asylum to many Somali refugees, and Jamal came to the United States.

Upon his arrival Jamal first lived in a Boston neighborhood plagued by violence and drugs. A year later, he moved to Portland, Maine, searching for peace and safety. As Jamal said, “If I needed crime I would have stayed at home in Somalia. I came here for stability, to settle myself and my kids.” Jamal’s experience is similar to that of many Somalis now settled in Maine. Most come from other cities and towns in the United States seeking a safer environment or reunion with family already established in Maine. Also like Jamal, many of the Somalis in Maine have ties to agriculture, having farmed and pastured animals in Somalia.

Jim Hanna and others established the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project (NASAP) two years ago in Portland, Maine, to help the incoming population of Somali refugees, Latino farmworkers, and other immigrants to start their own farm businesses. The project provides agricultural training, access to small parcels of land, and marketing opportunities to farmers in the Lewiston, Maine area.

When Jamal learned of this new project, he had already been searching for a way to produce and slaughter goats to supply the great demand for goat meat in Maine’s Somali community. Now, Jamal is part of a group of sixteen Latino and Somali aspiring farmers who are cultivating individual plots on NASAP’s three-acre farmer training site in the town of Greene, Maine, just north of Lewiston.

“I learned a lot of things here. We have the land there [in Somalia], but we don’t have the technology.” Jamal spoke of the differences in climate between Somalia and Maine, and the challenge of adapting to the seasons. He also pointed out that Somalis often have difficulty adapting from the nomadic practice of pasturing their animals by traveling all over the countryside.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Lead Story

NIFI: Helping Refugees and Immigrants to Succeed as Farmers.....	1
Withholding of Removal.....	6

Refugee Voices

A Walk Through the Palestinian Refugee Camps of Beirut, Part I.....	9
---	---

Recent Developments

Preparing Refugees to Enter the Workforce.....	12
Vocational English as a Second Language.....	14

Current Research

A New Rural Initiative by ORR.....	15
Somali Women Speak Out.....	16
Wage Subsidy Refugee Employment Programs.....	16
Refugee Microenterprise Development.....	21

Resources

“The Way to Work”.....	19
Trauma and Coping in Refugee Youth.....	19
Benefits of Income Tax Credits.....	20
Myanmarese and Hmong Briefs.....	21

Updates

Job Board.....	22
----------------	----

Esperanza Echeverria, another NASAP farmer, is growing cabbage, tomatoes, jalapeño peppers, corn, lettuce, cilantro, broccolini, and a few Central American vegetables at NASAP's farm. Originally from Guatemala, Esperanza grew up farming, but using very different techniques, including doing everything by hand rather than using a tractor or other machinery.

According to Jim Hanna, NASAP's founder and director, it is difficult for refugees and immigrants in the United States to understand how to buy or lease land and to borrow money for obtaining basic farming resources. Cultural norms can also present a challenge. For example, borrowing money with interest is against Muslim beliefs, and therefore not a possibility for Somali farmers. NASAP addresses these issues and teaches aspiring farmers about farm machinery, differences in climate, cultural differences, and understanding how the United States' agricultural services function.

National Immigrant Farming Initiative

These same challenges confront immigrant farmers not only in Maine, but throughout the country. The National Immigrant Farming Initiative (NIFI) addresses these very obstacles by bringing resources and visibility to immigrant farmers – who currently comprise the fastest grow-

ing population of farmers in the United States. This new initiative seeks to address the common barriers faced by immigrant and refugee farmers across the United States, since – whether from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, or South America – these farmers all experience similar struggles in understanding U.S. culture and agricultural production and marketing.

Heifer International (Heifer), a nonprofit with 60 years of experience in helping small farmers around the world, collaborated with partners to launch NIFI in the fall of 2002. Heifer had been working with immigrant farming projects through its USA Country Program. When members of the budding immigrant farming movement began to recognize a need for a national effort to connect diverse and uncoordinated programs, Heifer was a logical partner due to its prior experience with immigrant farmers. Alison Cohen, Program Manager for Heifer's Northeast Office, has worked with many immigrant farming projects in the Northeast: "Since Heifer began working with immigrant farming projects five years ago, the number of requests for assistance from new projects around the country has grown tremendously. This points to a critical opportunity for us to reach out to immigrant farmers and make sure they have the resources they need to farm."

Now, with substantial funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, USDA's Risk Management Agency and Heifer, NIFI is a partnership between Heifer International, immigrant farming projects and representatives, and other stakeholders. Cohen, who also serves as the Project Director for Heifer's grant with W.K. Kellogg Foundation, points out that, "It's a natural extension of Heifer's mission to work with immigrant farmers who demonstrate so much passion for producing high quality food that consumers want. There is a real opportunity for immigrant farmers to help us rebuild local and regional agriculture as well as provide for their own economic futures."

Rooted in diverse immigrant farmer experience, NIFI strengthens the capacity of im-



Beginning farmers from the NASAP, sell their fresh vegetables at the Lewiston Farmers' Market. (From left: Esperanza Echeverria, Jamal Sharif Nor, and Rosendo Romero from NASAP, and Jennifer Hashley from the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project in Massachusetts)

migrants to farm successfully and to advance sustainable farming and food systems. NIFI increases the visibility of immigrant farmers, providing funds and technical assistance to immigrant farming projects and helping to share models and strategies. Projects similar to NASAP exist in California, Texas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Georgia, New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Additional projects are emerging in Texas, Pennsylvania, Florida, Idaho, and Oregon. Many of these projects started for reasons similar to NASAP – the presence of an immigrant or refugee population with agrarian roots, and a need for future farmers. As Hanna stated, “Our farmers are getting older, and their kids aren’t continuing the tradition. Maine farmers are retiring, and we don’t have enough farmers.”

This is echoed in almost every region of the United States, and in many areas, immigrant farmers are stepping in – often with the help of a local immigrant farming project. In many instances, immigrant/refugee farmers innovate by producing niche market crops new

to Americans but highly prized by local immigrant communities. In some cases these farmers have revitalized farmers markets by supplying the local demand for these crops. For example, the New Farmer Development Project, which works with Latino farmers in the New York City region, has found that participating Mexican farmers have introduced products virtually unknown to New York State farming into local farmers’ markets such as the aromatic herbs papalo and pipicha and varieties of Mexican hot peppers. These farmers have found loyal customers among Mexican shoppers who are thrilled to find these products freshly harvested from a nearby farm.

Challenges

Although immigrant farmers may have certain advantages, such as niche marketing opportunities and strong family and community support systems, there are still many challenges to overcome. James Attia, an aspiring farmer from Liberia, is working with a group of African farmers cooperatively growing hot peppers, collard greens, tomatoes, sweet potato leaves, okra, bitter ball (an African eggplant), and beans in Dracut, Massachusetts. The land is provided by the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, which assists Hmong, Cambodian, and

African farmers in Massachusetts. As James points out, “Farming needs commitment . . . there are a lot of sacrifices that you have to make, and not everyone is willing to be so involved and so committed.”

But even committed immigrants have difficulty with cultural differences and accessing agricultural programs. Cooperative Extension (Extension) is a program of land grant universities and provides valuable technical expertise to farmers through its county offices. But often extension does not have staff who speak local immigrant farmers’ languages or who are familiar with their crops. According to Hanna, “Extension is definitely a resource the farmers wouldn’t have a clue about if we weren’t trying to educate them about it.”

Malaquias Flores directs the Center for Latino

Farmers in Yakima, Washington, which informs Latino farmers about USDA programs and services. He is intimately familiar with the challenges facing vegetable, fruit and livestock farmers in the Yakima area. “They don’t know about Cooperative Extension. They don’t

know that the university has help for them. This week I did a farm tour for the Small Farms Program, and nobody knew that [these farmers] existed.” In reference to a survey conducted by the Center for Latino Farmers in 2001, Flores states, “We learned that [farmers] didn’t know anything about government programs or about Extension. Also, about 90% didn’t speak English. It’s easier for them to get the information in Spanish.” The Center for Latino Farmers works with about 275 farmers, and finds that agricultural service providers are not always aware of the presence and needs of these immigrant farmers; conversely, farmers are not always aware of the existence of local service providers. Individual projects and organizations are bridging this gap at the local level, but NIFI hopes to bring it to national attention.

Increasing Visibility and Leveraging Resources

NIFI aims to serve as a national voice and resource for immigrant farmers. Juan Marinez, from Michigan State University, and Hugh Joseph, Director of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, both sit on the NIFI Steering Committee and are spearheading an effort to address the chronic undercounting of immigrant and refugee farmers in the agricultural census conducted

Rooted in diverse immigrant farmer experience, NIFI strengthens the capacity of immigrants to farm successfully and to advance sustainable farming and food systems.

every five years. “How do we bring visibility to an invisible, growing farming sector in our rural counties?” asks Marinez.

The objective of this effort is to encourage the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to expand its methods for collecting farmer information. When the census is conducted, farmer names and addresses are collected from various sources, including USDA and other agricultural programs, and from tax return forms for those who declare farm income. Since immigrant farmers tend not to use USDA and other agricultural programs, and often do not file their farm taxes – especially if they are farming part-time and have other income – these farmers often never receive the census form.

Even if immigrant farmers do receive the census form, they may never fill it out because they don’t understand English, can’t read, distrust the government, or simply do not feel that it is important. As Marinez points out, “Right now the demographics – your ethnicity, your language, your acreage, and types of crops – are at the back of the [census] form. A lot of them give up at the beginning because they don’t think it’s relevant for them.” Goals for this effort are to get field enumerators to help individual immigrants fill out the forms, and to encourage NASS to implement changes to the census form, such as putting demographic questions first and adopting a new category for immigrant status.

NIFI will also undertake a comprehensive national assessment of immigrant farmers’ needs as well as their existing knowledge base and contributions to U.S. agriculture. A first step in this endeavor is a focus group workshop scheduled for the end of July at the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA) in Salinas, California, which offers opportunities for farmworkers and aspiring farmers to grow and sell crops from its two organic farms in Monterey County. This meeting will explore the particular barriers and opportunities facing Latino farmworkers who are transitioning from seasonal hired labor or farm management to starting and sustaining their own farms. ALBA’s Executive Director Brett Melone points out, “Many of these new farmers lack access to information, capital, and markets. At the same time, they are interested in protecting public health and the environment and improving access to healthy foods for low-income and minority communities.” The focus group workshop will identify common experiences for these farmers and related opportunities for NIFI and others to provide needed support to this population.

Another focus group workshop is scheduled for the fall to compare and contrast the challenges and opportunities for distinct immigrant farmer populations, and to document programmatic models and field practices for those working with these farmers. The final step in this national needs assessment is to create a guide of immigrant farming projects, information and resources throughout the country, and a summary of the needs assessment results. The results from this needs assessment and the resulting immigrant farming guidebook will enable NIFI and other service providers to better target and respond to immigrant farmer needs.

All of these activities will respond to the key question posed by Marinez: How to bring more visibility to what in many cases has been an invisible population. Once information about immigrant farming is more accurate and available, both through greater census accuracy and the national needs assessment, NIFI and other immigrant farming advocates can more successfully leverage resources for this population.

Direct Support to Immigrant Farming

NIFI will also provide direct funding and technical support to immigrant farming efforts. Through funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and USDA’s Risk Management Agency, Heifer will provide funding to at least twelve immigrant farming projects over the next four years, in addition to five immigrant farming projects which are already receiving Heifer funding and technical support from its regional field staff. Heifer provides funding for livestock, seeds and transplants, agricultural supplies, and training through its model of passing on the gift. When farmers in participating projects receive livestock or other farm resources, they make a commitment to “pass on the gift” to other farmers, giving the offspring of their animals, or seeds and transplants that they’ve produced, or the financial equivalent, to other participating farmers, thereby multiplying the impact of the initial ‘gift’ and fostering community sharing and support. As Alison Cohen points out, “Heifer’s field staff work directly with immigrant farmers to help them build a community of farmers who support and learn from each other. Passing on the gift is a form of a revolving loan fund – a way to get more resources into a community and keep them there – but it’s also a way of building community and important long-lasting networks between farmers.”

Heifer-supported immigrant farming projects have provided poultry, seeds and transplants, marketing

equipment, and training to participating immigrant farmers. Now that NIFI has leveraged funds specifically for immigrant farming projects, Heifer field staff are working with developing projects in the Pacific Northwest, Southwest, Southeast, Midwest and Northeast regions of the United States. Developing projects are focused on Hmong, Cambodian, and other Southeast Asian farmers, farmers from all over Latin America and the West Indies, and farmers from Liberia, Somalia, and other African countries.

In addition to direct support, NIFI offers training opportunities to immigrant farming projects throughout the country. Over the next year, NIFI proposes to provide a national training at Growing Power, Inc., a Milwaukee-based Community Food Center with a national training program in sustainable agriculture techniques. The hands-on training will equip both immigrant farmers and those working with immigrant farmers in worm composting and raised bed techniques, small- and mid-scale organic farming methods, and marketing strategies. NIFI will also offer skills-building training to interpreters who provide oral interpretation for immigrant farmers, and other field-based training for immigrant farmers and service providers.

NIFI is collaborating with non-agricultural agencies that are also responding to increasing numbers of refugee farmers. Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement recently launched the Refugee Rural Initiative to examine ways to expand opportunities for refugees to become self-sufficient through starting or expanding farm businesses. This initiative will link refugee service providers with USDA and other agricultural agencies, and provide funding to organizations developing programs specifically for refugees seeking to become self-sufficient through agriculture. According to Dr. Van Hanh, Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, "We want to be sure that the refugees receive training and engage in farm activities so that they generate income and food for their families and grow ethnic produce to revitalize rural areas and make themselves part of the community."

The Refugee Rural Initiative was prompted in part by the significant numbers of refugees already involved in agriculture. As Dr. Hanh explains, "They really want to work. They are hard working people. They survived a lot and with proper training and assistance they can contribute." Another impetus is the imminent arrival of two refugee groups with strong agricultural ties who will be resettling in the United States over the next few

years. Fifteen thousand Hmong will be arriving from refugee camps in Thailand, and approximately thirteen thousand Somali Bantu refugees are scheduled to arrive from a Kenyan refugee camp through 2004. Working with partner organization ISED, the Office of Refugee Resettlement has already made pilot grants to nine organizations, many working with these newly arriving refugees in addition to those already established here.

Networking and Exchange

Another key goal for NIFI is to create a network to link these efforts, providing a forum for projects throughout the country to exchange experiences, models, and strategies for helping immigrants to farm successfully. This will happen through a national conference that NIFI is planning for next year, and through regional networks of immigrant farming projects, which NIFI is establishing throughout the country. The Northeast Network of Immigrant Farming Projects, which was actually formed before NIFI's creation, meets quarterly to exchange strategies for successfully getting immigrant farmers off the ground and to provide regional farmer and staff training opportunities. The Pacific Northwest Network was launched through a direct marketing workshop held on March 2, 2004, in Portland, Oregon. Over 90 people including Hmong, Cambodian, Somali, and Latino farmers attended the workshop. The Southwest regional network will be meeting this fall. Development of the Midwest networks will be initiated over the next year, and the Southeast will be piloting a Farmer Field School training to review marketing and organic production practices in the Southeast, for replication in other regions nationally.

In addition, this year NIFI will pilot an immigrant farming exchange program for staff and farmers to spend a few days with similar projects in other regions. Jennifer Hashley, coordinator for the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project in Massachusetts, spoke of the value in sharing experiences with others engaged in similar work. "It's great that there's a national initiative to pull everyone together. The issues that face different ethnic groups and different project participants are similar . . . we can all take nuggets from different projects and make ours better."

Conclusion

The growing numbers of immigrant farming projects in all regions and the creation of NIFI point to the need to link immigrant farmers' enthusiasm with critical resourc-

es through local, regional and national support. As Brett Melone of ALBA summarizes, "The National Immigrant Farming Initiative offers immigrant farmers, and organizations like ALBA that serve immigrant farmers, the opportunity to identify with a national movement, contribute to raising public awareness of the role of immigrant farmers in U.S. agriculture, and work together to attract much needed resources to this growing demographic sector of farmers." The growing immigrant farming movement presents a unique opportunity to help a new generation of farmers create viable livelihoods for themselves and contribute to the vitality of our rural economies.

For more information about the National Immigrant Farming Initiative, please contact Rachel Dannefer, NIFI Coordinator, at nifi.coordinator@heifer.org or 718-875-2220.

"Withholding of Removal" and the Right To Work

By Will Coley

Blinking in the sunlight, Kashala Ntumba stumbled outside the Elizabeth Detention Center finally and truly inside the United States. After fleeing persecution in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and spending five months in immigration detention, he found himself standing in a wrinkled suit with an immigration status that would authorize him to work in the United States, but would not permit him to bring his wife and five children to safety or allow him to ultimately receive a Green Card granting permanent residence. Relieved to be free, he still did not quite grasp the implications of having been granted withholding of removal as he started to rebuild his life.

Seven weeks later, still awaiting the employment authorization card that will allow him to work, Ntumba is confused about whether he should be grateful or bitter. "I had no other choice, no other way out of detention. But now I feel like I am still in detention. I'm not free. The judge told me that it would be almost like asylum. It's not. Everywhere I go, I see people who don't understand my status." Even after a grant of "withholding," recipients often encounter further challenges in the United States since the status is not well known or understood. In their daily negotiations

with employers, the Department of Motor Vehicles or welfare caseworkers, withholding recipients report that they are often left to fend for themselves. Ntumba is eager to work but is frustrated that he must wait another five to six weeks for his work permit. In the meantime, it has been difficult for him to find means of support in New Jersey. His wife in Congo does not understand why he is unable to send for her or even wire money to help their family. All of this weighs heavily on him. Other recipients of withholding who were interviewed for this article reported that this period of limbo just after being granted withholding was the most difficult in their three to four years in the United States. Upon the grant of withholding status, these individuals faced administrative and bureaucratic hurdles just as they were beginning to effectively rebuild their lives in the United States. These challenges could be lessened with more information and clarity from U.S. Immigration and other federal agencies.

Meeting International Obligations

U.S. immigration judges grant withholding of removal (formerly known as "withholding of deportation") to individuals for whom there is a clear likelihood that they will be persecuted if returned home. As a party to the 1967 Protocol of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and 1987 Convention against Torture (ratified by the United States in 1994), the United States may not return individuals to a country where they would be persecuted. Member states of the European Union that are parties to the same treaties have long made use of "complimentary" or "subsidiary" forms of protection for individuals they do not consider refugees. In such cases, the burden of proof is higher than asylum, which requires that the applicant show a "well-founded fear" of persecution. Even if a judge finds this, granting asylum is still discretionary and there are several statutory grounds of ineligibility. Even if disinclined or unable to grant asylum, the judge is legally bound not to return the applicant to a country where he or she would more likely than not be persecuted and must grant withholding where this higher standard has been met. While the standard is higher, judges grant withholding on the same grounds as asylum: persecution based on race, nationality, religious belief, political opinion or membership in a social group. Some former detainees report that they did not fully grasp the limitations of the status. It does not allow them to reunite with family, apply for permanent residence, or travel

outside the United States (they may leave the United States but may not be re-admitted).

Judges increasingly use withholding almost as a consolation prize in lieu of asylum. In the Elizabeth Detention Center, immigration judges often offer it if the claimant agrees to withdraw the asylum application or waives an appeal to the asylum denial. In Ntumba's case, the judge indicated that she would be willing to grant withholding if he withdrew his asylum application. "She made it clear to me that she didn't want to grant me asylum. Withholding was my only choice," reports Ntumba. The alternative for Ntumba would have been appealing the asylum denial, which may have meant waiting another year in detention. Attorneys have pointed out to judges that withholding requires a higher standard and hinges on their clients' credibility. Marguerite Marty of American Friends Service Committee reports, however, "Some judges say they are offering withholding as a settlement if the client agrees to withdraw their asylum claim." Reena Arya of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society says that judges often offer withholding precisely because they don't want the applicant to receive the benefits that come with asylum or don't want to "do them the favor" of granting asylum. "They don't want them to be able to bring family here. They don't want them to receive any assistance. They don't want them to become citizens."

On the other hand, some noncitizens have no other option because they may be barred from asylum for a number of reasons including having firmly resettled in another country, having a criminal conviction, or having failed to apply within one year of arriving in the United States. For example, some individuals who were apprehended by Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Special Registration program were barred by the one-year filing deadline. The requirement created by the 1996 Immigration Act only allows exceptions in cases such as changed country conditions or in exceptional circumstances such as extreme health concerns and has contributed to a marked increase in the number withholding applications. In 2000, there were 12,432 applications for withholding under the Convention Against Torture (CAT) but by 2003, the most recent year for which statistics are available, more than 32,929 individuals were considered for this form of withholding. Roughly one to three percent of these applications were granted. Since asylum seekers can receive both asylum and CAT, it is difficult to determine exactly how many individuals have solely been granted withholding and/or CAT.

Individuals granted withholding face on-going hardships and burdens as they try to establish themselves in the United States despite the fact that the United States is obliged under international law not to deport these individuals. According to Erin Walters, an attorney who donated pro bono legal services through Human Rights First to a Burundian client who received withholding, "We are penalizing recipients of withholding by the lack of information about the status or how to handle it. There is nothing wrong with getting withholding, especially since it requires a higher standard of proof."

Post-Grant Concerns: Employment

Like all employees, recipients of withholding must present documentation that demonstrates that they are authorized to work in the United States. Like asylees, withholding recipients are authorized to work incident to their status but they do not have documentation or guidance from the government to prove it. Not knowing better, many employers will only hire withholding recipients who have an employment authorization document (EAD or work permit). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) can take 90 to 120 days to issue an EAD, a seemingly endless period of time for someone who may have no community contacts in the United States or who is relying on the limited resources of compatriots who may also be indigent. The cards the Social Security Administration (SSA) gives withholding recipients bear the annotation "Valid for Work Only with DHS Authorization" unlike those given to asylees and resettled refugees. This frequently causes employers to doubt their right to work. Ntumba received his SSA card ten days after he applied but he is distressed that it is not the same as his asylee friends' cards which have no restriction. "I thought I would get the same things as people with asylum."

As a result, withholding recipients depend on their EADs. This can cause further complications with new procedures implemented at many state and federal agencies following the events of September 11, 2001. Recipients must remember to apply for renewal eight months after receiving it and hope that USCIS processes it in a timely manner. In many states, the Department of Motor Vehicles now sets the expiration date for noncitizens' driver licenses as the same as that of the EAD. The New Jersey Department of Motor Vehicles Commission, for example, gives no grace period for USCIS processing delays. Kanagasabai, a recipient from Sri Lanka, realized that his EAD expired in April and had to wait four

months for the document before DMV will allow him to complete his driver's test. Such delays hinder withholding recipients' success in the job market. In similar circumstances, asylees and refugees can fall back on a recent Department of Justice memorandum to clarify that asylees don't need work permits. There are no comparable memoranda for recipients for withholding.

Post-Grant Concerns: Accessing Transitional Public Assistance

While he waits for permission to work, Ntumba has encountered difficulty proving his eligibility for public benefits although the law clearly provides for it. Advocates and the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement have informed state welfare agencies that asylees and refugees are eligible for public benefits rarely do so for recipients of withholding. During Ntumba's first visit to the city welfare office before he had applied for a Social Security Card, he says the city employee bellowed at him, "We can't help you without a Social Security number. You are from A-FRICA! Africans don't get Social Security numbers!" The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) eventually placated the office with a letter citing federal law and state policy that a receipt of an application to Social Security is sufficient for a welfare application. Once his application

was accepted, it took another three weeks for Ntumba to receive cash assistance and Food Stamps. In the meantime, he relied on donations from individuals. Local refugee resettlement agencies refuse to help Ntumba because he is not an asylee and they have no funding to offer assistance. AFSC gave him short-term housing and some pocket money and introduced him to other Congolese living in Newark, New Jersey for support.

Some recipients have been unsure about applying for benefits for fear that they may one day be deemed a "public charge" and barred from permanent residence. This concern may seem a bit incongruous since withholding recipients are not guaranteed a Green Card and can only get one through marriage, employment sponsorship, or possibly through the diversity visa program also known as the "lottery." According to Tim Block of Legal Services of New Jersey, the regulations on public charge determinations clearly say that the receipt of public benefits alone will not jeopardize a withholding recipient's adjustment of immigration status in the future. There are a variety of considerations in determining whether someone will be looked at, including age, health, family status, resources, education, and skills among others. Receipt of public benefits should not be a problem by itself.

Concerns Over Family

As withholding recipients struggle to adjust to life in the United States, many support family members overseas. All the withholding recipients interviewed for this article stressed that the single most difficult part of their status was the strain on their relationships with their families. Many asylum seekers have been separated from family for years while they have journeyed in search of asylum. Some withholding recipients, who were still able to appeal the asylum denial, eventually won asylum and the right to bring their families to the United States. One of these individuals, a man from East Africa, reported that the years waiting for an appeal decision cost him his marriage. His wife, a refugee in Kenya never understood why she was unable to join her husband in seven years. For withholding recipients who waived their appeal, it is unclear when they will ever see their families. Some of these recipients are considering starting the process over again in Canada. In ten European countries with complementary or subsidiary forms of protection, recipients are permitted to reunite with their families. Recipients of withholding in the United States are not necessarily barred from sending for their families; there is just no provision in U.S. immigration law to permit them to do so.

Tips for Recipients of Withholding of Removal

- Mail application for employment authorization to the USCIS district in which you were granted, unless you have relocated to another district.
- NEVER pay for the EAD. If necessary, attach a copy of page 6 of the instructions for Form I-765 with the fee section (a)(10) highlighted to remind USCIS.
- If you have photographic identification and/or an I-94 with a photograph, apply for a Social Security Number as soon as possible after the grant, even before you get an EAD.
- Under federal law, you are among the "Qualified aliens that are eligible for any State public benefits." To help clarify this to welfare staff, write a cover letter that cites 8 U.S.C.A. § 1622 (b)(1)(C).
- Consider applying for the Green Card lottery each year.

What Can Be Done?

The lives of individuals like Ntumba could be immeasurably easier with several steps to create parity with asylees. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as well as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services can amend regulations and practices to clarify the internationally mandated nature of withholding status. DHS could revise its recent memorandum to point out that withholding recipients, like asylees, are “employment authorized incident to status.” The Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices effectively alerted the public about the work authorization of asylees and should be able to include recipients of withholding in this campaign. With these changes, advocates can insist that SSA issue unrestricted SSA cards to withholding recipients. At the same time, the Office of Refugee Resettlement should permit resettlement agencies to assist withholding recipients under the Match Grant program, as the agency did for asylees and victims of trafficking.

Some recipients of withholding have no forms of identification and need EADs to open bank accounts or apply for driver’s licenses as soon as possible after their grant. The 2002 Border Security Act made it possible for asylees to receive work permits immediately upon the grant but this is not being properly implemented, as USCIS in the New York district has started conducting additional security screenings after grants and delays the issuance of EADs. Asylum-seekers (and withholding applicants) are already the most scrutinized of all immigration applicants. In the spirit of the Border Security Act, DHS should issue guidance to require USCIS to issue work permits to withholding recipients within seven days of the grant. Knowing the constraints of U.S. Immigration operation, it may require Congressional action such as passing legislation which amends the language of the Border Security Act to include recipients of withholding and mandating this procedure for them.

As it stands, withholding is a half-hearted welcome and a second-class status. Diminishing the unnecessary hurdles that withholding recipients face would make it possible for them to rebuild their lives in the US more effectively. Withholding recipients have fled similar traumatic experiences as refugees and asylees and already have their own challenges in starting over. The bureaucratic struggles they face are uncalled for and avoidable burdens in a critical time in their lives. Ntumba is hopeful that his story will help lead to changes in the system. “You have to take the opportunity given to you

in order to save your life. I need to get a job to rebuild my life. I want to be free, to know that I am really free.”

Will Coley is a Project Coordinator at American Friends Service Committee’s New York Metropolitan Regional Office and is currently facilitating the development of two asylee and refugee associations. Will would like to offer special thanks to Amy Gottlieb and Marguerite Marty for their input for this article.

A Walk Through the Palestinian Refugee Camps of Beirut

Part One of a Two-Part Series

by Lisa Raffonelli

This summer, USCR Policy Analyst Lisa Raffonelli conducted a site visit to Lebanon, meeting with refugees, community leaders, Lebanese authorities, and international organizations in the country. Conducting interviews in twelve camps and settlements throughout the country, she engaged these local representatives to elicit their ideas for ending the long-term deprivation of basic human rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon—an issue highlighted and examined in detail in USCR’s World Refugee Survey 2004: Warehousing Issue. In spontaneous interviews in the Palestinian refugee camps of Beirut, Ms. Raffonelli spoke with dozens of refugees while accompanied by her translator, a young Palestinian-American woman. What follows are the voices of some of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon they met along the way. Part I features refugees from Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut. Part II, with voices from Bourj el-Barajneh camp, will be printed in the next issue of Refugee Reports.

Abu Nadr’s Story

The main street through Sabra and Shatila refugee camps bustles in a typical Sunday’s flurry of activity. Tables are piled high with tomatoes, eggplants, and onions. Pushcart vendors—Syrian, some of them—hawk batteries, tools, toys, clocks, and socks. There is freshly butchered meat for sale in one window; t-shirts and jeans in another; and in a third, the shelves sag under boxes of laundry powder and bottles of bleach.

It takes a minute for our eyes to adjust to the dim interior of the *narghile* café, as we step in from the noisy street. Smoke from the water pipes hangs in the air, the acrid scent of regular tobacco a jarring change

from the strawberry and apple-flavored tobaccos preferred by students and tourists who gather in the fancier cafés all over the city.

Few of the men present even look up as we enter, so we stand in the middle of the room and ask, bluntly, "Who will talk to us about being a Palestinian refugee in Lebanon?" The request generates a lot of discussion, and finally, the group nominates Abu Nadr, the shop owner, who sits at his table quietly smoking—unfazed by the discussion or the interest of the strangers.

Abu Nadr was born in a Palestinian village near Jaffa in 1920 - three years after Lord Balfour conveyed British support for the creation of a Jewish state within the boundaries of historic Palestine—and nearly three decades before the 1948 war that established the modern state of Israel. Before the war, he said, Jaffa was a mixed Arab-Jewish town. He recalls some Hebrew from his interactions with the early Jewish settlers, and remembers Palestine as "not having anyone too poor."

In 1948, however, the war forced him to leave—one of some 700,000 Palestine refugees who fled to-

*Top: Abu Nadr in his narghile café in Sabra.
Photo: USCR/L. Raffonelli*

*Bottom: Young men at Internet café in Sabra.
Photo: USCR/L. Raffonelli*



wards Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria. “We didn’t want to leave Jaffa, but we took boats to Beirut because we were surrounded.”

Today, 56 years later, Abu Nadr is still a refugee in Lebanon, as is his wife. His four sons and two daughters were born in Lebanon, but have no status beyond “Palestine refugees”, according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) working definition. The girls—women with children of their own now—married Palestinian men; one lives in Jordan, another in Kuwait. A son moved to Dubai 25 years ago, while the other three remain in Lebanon.

One son works by his side in the family’s water pipe café, which Abu Nadr has operated for 45 years. Business is steady, but the small income he earns from the café is increasingly insufficient to meet the rising costs of medicine and doctors’ visits he and his wife incur as they grow older. As refugees registered with UNRWA, Abu Nadr and his wife receive most of their monthly medicines from the UNRWA health clinic. Sometimes, the clinic cannot fill the prescriptions, and the couple is forced to pay full price at the Lebanese pharmacies. Despite more than five decades of residence in Lebanon, Palestinian refugees are ineligible for state-subsidized health care coverage. Abu Nadr suffers from cataracts; although UNRWA paid for surgery for one eye, it was unsuccessful and he lost all vision in that eye.

Life in Sabra camp in Beirut has been particularly hard these last few decades. The site of a horrific massacre in 1982—in which Lebanese right-wing Christian militia slaughtered more than 1,000 Palestinian refugees, with the tacit assistance of Israeli troops deployed around the perimeter—residents of Sabra and Shatila have been caught at the epicenter of the Israeli, Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian power struggle for control and suppression of the refugee population. Abu Nadr refuses to discuss this dark period of Sabra’s history, wordlessly chastising us for our inquiry. “No people in the world have been as oppressed as the Palestinians,” he says. “My son has a Ph.D. in science, but he cannot work as a scientist. He cannot even find work as a garbage collector here.”

Lebanon restricts Palestinian refugees from employment in more than 70 skilled professions, and competition for accessible jobs is fierce. Discrimination is rife against the Palestinian refugees, whom Lebanon blames for the wars and occupations of the past decades, thereby justifying its systematic discrimination against the refu-

gee population. Abu Nadr raised his family as stateless refugees in Lebanon, waiting for the day when he could go home to his village outside of Jaffa. He questions us about the U.S. intervention in Iraq, implying that America, when it wants to, will step in to defend the rights of the oppressed. As we pack up and take our leave, his final question hovers in smoky air of the café, yet follows us wherever we go: “Where are the human rights for Palestinians?”

At the Beauty Salon

With no windows open to the street and the door firmly closed, the beauty salon does not appear to be open for business. As we try the door however, the heat of several hair dryers pushes back at us like a furnace, carrying the scent of hair styling products into the street of the refugee camp. Women sit in the sauna-like small shop, talking and waiting their turn. The stylists are two Palestinian sisters whose family arrived in Lebanon in 1948 after they fled from their home in Acre. There is an air-conditioning unit, but it is not running. After several minutes in the sweltering heat, someone turns it on for our benefit as foreign visitors. The forced air has barely enough time to become cool before the electricity cuts out, a common occurrence throughout Sabra and Shatila camps. Without the noise and heat of the hair dryers, the shop is quieter but still sweltering.

Twenty-year-old Ibtisem sits in front of the mirror, waiting for the electricity to resume so the stylist can finish straightening her long hair. Having long given up the battle for any presentable hairstyle in the heat and humidity of a Beirut summer, we ask a dozen questions about the process. Ibtisem tells us that the straightening—done the low-tech way with a hairbrush and dryer—will last for several days, even in this humidity. A hairstyle and blow-dry costs just 3,000LL (Lebanese Pounds)—two dollars—compared to 5,000LL at most other shops. Coloring costs between 10,000 to 15,000LL (\$20-30), a bargain by international standards, but equivalent to 10 percent of a working Palestinian’s monthly salary. Finally, the power is restored, and everyone gets back to work as the noise and heat build anew.

“I was born in the camp,” Ibtisem says, “and so were my parents. We’re from Haifa.” When asked if she finished school, she admits that she stopped attending after 8th grade, deciding that there was no reason to keep going. She is engaged to a Palestinian man; he is 25, a registered refugee like Ibtisem. She met him two years before, and did not know him well before he came up to

her and asked her to marry him. She liked him, and her parents liked him, so she agreed. He is employed—as a painter—unlike many of the young men in the camp who cannot find work. Ibtisem tells us that she does not work, explaining that there is nothing she could do. “There needs to be more English-language training for girls and women,” she suggests, as a reason for her unemployment. When they marry, she says, the couple will rent an apartment in the camp and she’ll stay home—presumably to raise the children she expects to have soon. Unless a solution to the decades-long situation is found first, her children will be refugees, too.

This turn in the conversation leads the hairstylist to offer this joke that is making the rounds in the camp: an Iraqi woman is in an American hospital, about to give birth. The doctor tells her, “Push! Push!” which she hears as “Bush! Bush!” Tired and in pain, she glares at the doctor and says, “I swear to God, if you don’t stop that, I am going to name him Saddam—now, go to hell!” Everyone laughs, even though they have heard it many times before, and we laugh too as we walk back out into the relative coolness of the Beirut sunshine.

In the next issue, Part II will introduce Palestinian refugees in Beirut’s Bourj el-Barajneh refugee camp, and describe what you can do to help. For more information about Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, or refugees around the globe, please visit USCR’s website, <http://www.refugees.org>

Recent Developments

The International Institute of Akron: Preparing Refugees to Enter the Workforce

The International Institute of Akron has assisted in resettling refugees in the United States for the past twenty-five years. One of the major responsibilities in the resettlement process is securing employment for these refugees as soon as possible so that they become self-sufficient and not dependent on government funding. In spite of Ohio’s high unemployment rate, and the uncertain economic conditions, the International Institute of Akron has succeeded in quickly finding work for most

of the employable refugees who have recently resettled to the area.

One of the Institute’s goals is to make sure that all employable adult refugees find work within 120 days after their arrival in the United States. Achieving this goal requires the staff to work diligently at educating, preparing and training refugees (from a wide variety of countries and cultures) on how to find and keep a job. It also requires maintaining a good working relationship with employers to educate them regarding the needs of refugees and alleviate concerns that an employer may have regarding hiring foreign-born workers. “Bridging the Gap” between the prospective refugee employees and the employers, is an important function of the International Institute of Akron.

The Need for Job Preparation Training

Because of the competitive environment in securing a job, and the employer’s stringent selection process, it became apparent that more job preparation instruction had to be provided for refugee clients. The International Institute of Akron introduced classroom instruction in two additional areas:

- Understanding the “new hire” forms to be completed by all job applicants
- Basic technical mathematics and measuring in the Imperial measuring system

Job applicants who are fluent in English find it difficult to understand and complete all the forms and read all the paperwork when applying for a job. This problem is compounded when the applicant is not fluent in the English language. Although most job applications contain similar instruction and questions, there are often subtle questions that pose a problem to the foreign-born.

For example: Most applications have the question, “Are you legally authorized to work in the United States? Yes or No.” This is a simple question and can be understood and answered correctly by checking, “Yes.” However, occasionally the question is presented, “Is there anything that prevents you from legally working in the United States? Yes or No.” Obviously checking “Yes” in this case would probably result in the applicant not being considered for the job. The Institute’s classroom instruction gives refugee students an opportunity to practice completing a variety of sample application forms so they are familiar with most of the information that will be required when they start their job search.

Other topics covered in the class are:

- Company drug testing policies
- Understanding and completing the W-4 tax form and also the state and local tax forms
- Understanding and completing the I-9 form required by all employers in the USA.

This classroom instruction, complementing the individual counseling by the employment counselor, helps prepare the Institute's clients when presented with job applications and other forms to complete as they search for employment.

The other area of classroom instruction prepares refugee students for the testing programs that some of the manufacturing companies in the Akron area have introduced in their applicant selection process. These tests are generally related to the skills and abilities that will be required on the job. Although many refugee clients know about the subject of the test, they need help in understanding the way in which the questions are presented. Also, some of the tests require knowledge of the Imperial measuring system, rather than the Metric system that is used in most countries of the world. Using sample practice tests and measuring exercises, as part of the classroom instruction, helps prepare refugees when faced with a pre-employment mathematics or measuring test.

These classes have benefited many of the Institute's clients seeking employment. For example, two companies in the Akron area, Alside Windows and Imperial Electric, have hired more than twenty-five refugees. Both of these companies have pre-employment tests.

Employment Preparation Training Class at II Akron

Maintaining an ongoing relationship with the companies in the Akron area enables the Institute to structure class instruction to address the needs of the employer. This employment-related instruction assists refugee clients and better prepares them to make the transition into the United States workforce.

Overcoming Barriers to Employment

Two of the barriers to employment faced by most refugees in coming to the United States are limited English and lack of transportation. The International Institute of Akron has restructured their ESL class schedule to provide more opportunities for refugee students to learn English. They have also organized a satellite ESL class at a location closer to where many of the refugees live.

These changes have resulted in more of their clients being able to attend class, enabling clients to improve their level of English and prepare to find employment.

Many of the manufacturing companies in the Akron area are located in the suburbs and are not accessible by the public bus system. This presents a challenge for many of the refugees who do not have their own means of transportation. Working with Forest Corporation, a local manufacturer of advertising products, the Institute was able to connect with an employment-staffing agency that agreed to place clients at Forest Corporation and provide transportation to and from work for the first ninety days. Seven refugees have now completed their ninety-day probationary period, are working directly for Forest Corporation, have acquired driving licenses, and have their own means of transportation. The Institute continues to work with this company, and other companies in the area, to use this solution for the lack of transportation faced by many of the clients.

Training for Job Promotion and Advancement

Working in partnership with the University of Akron, the International Institute of Akron has organized computer classes for refugee clients. These classes, held on the University campus, are designed to provide instruction in basic computer applications and help some clients advance in their career. Having the classes at the University also gives exposure to other opportunities for advanced studies at the University. Some refugees who had started advanced studies in their home country are grateful for the opportunity to continue their education in the United States and to achieve their educational goals and embark on a successful professional career.

Finding a job is essential for a refugee to attain self-sufficiency in the United States. As an agency working with refugees, the Institute is aware of the importance of employment in the resettlement process. The International Institute of Akron keeps in focus the goal, "a job for every employable refugee." They continue to pursue every resource and approach to achieve this goal.

Vocational English as a Second Language

The following profile has been contributed by The International Services Center of Cleveland, Ohio. The agency demonstrates that vocational English language training is a critical component of the resettlement process that facilitates high job placement and retention rates for refugees. This profile highlights a refugee ESL program operated within a typical resettlement agency, and while faced with several challenges that include obtaining funding, may serve as a model for other agencies to follow.

Our agency has provided formal and informal English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for more than 50 years. Another fundamental component of our refugee resettlement program includes job development and job procurement services.

In our early programs, we found that refugees had special needs which were not being met by existing programs. These needs included job placement and skills development training. Thus, we currently provide English language skills training focused towards securing work (Vocational English as a Second Language) along with job search services. These services enable refugees to realistically compete for and retain jobs.

The level of sophistication and expectations of the American workplace require additional job training in order for refugees to have adequate access to job opportunities. Not only do refugees require English language training — which our program addresses — but they also require such skills as basic data entry.

The U.S. Congress recognized this need and authorized funding for targeted counties throughout the United States with significant refugee populations that were continuing to access refugee welfare assistance. In 1997 the government added Cuyahoga County in Ohio to the targeted assistance list, and our agency successfully secured a Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG) grant for enhanced refugee social services. Jewish Family Services Association of Cleveland and Migration and Refugee Services of Catholic Charities were subgrantees. The overall goal of the grant was to make refugees, particularly refugee women, self-sufficient soon after their arrival in the United States, ideally within one year.

The Targeted Assistance Grant provided us an opportunity to create an essential bridge between vocational English language acquisition and success in securing suitable employment.

Vocational English training is a fundamental component of our programs. Its emphasis on survival and vocational English relates directly to our employment programs. Our orientation to the American workplace is designed to better meet the refugee's needs in understanding the societal and technical requirements of seeking, securing and maintaining a job. Similarly, the Acculturation Training for Job Placement and Job Retention program is designed so that experts are invited to speak about areas essential for self-sufficiency including personal appearance, driver's license and insurance issues, credit issues, interracial and intercultural understanding, and general community responsibility issues. We offer on-site keyboarding, ten-key and computer skills training, cashier training, and sewing with commercial applications. Nurse's assistant certification training is offered under the support of the Cleveland chapter of the Red Cross. In anticipation of market needs and client requests, we initiated a certificate program in cosmetology through a local licensure academy. We also host a commercial driver's license program through an accredited school that assures employment upon completion of the program.

In order for refugees to practice their newly acquired language skills, our subgrantee, Jewish Family Services Association, initiated the ESL Buddy Program. This program encourages the community to train, monitor, and match volunteers to converse with refugees. Many of the volunteers share professional backgrounds with the refugees.

Most of our programs are offered on-site, except for the sub-contracted licensure programs. The programs are successful because they are interrelated and comprehensive. For example, an employability plan is developed for each refugee client and coordinated so that all elements compliment each other. The main goals are first to secure a job and then to develop and retain skills that lead to self-sufficiency. Typically, a refugee client will receive job counseling and vocational training along with English language classes. Our programs are also successful because of the "one-stop shopping" services — services where refugees are able to participate in a wide range of programs that are administered by qualified staff.

The ultimate measure of our success is the high job placement and retention rates of our refugee clients. A major factor in this, besides the structure of our programs themselves, is the dedication and longevity of our staff who combine their professional talents and experience with a sensitivity and understanding of refugee client needs. One of the major lessons in combining a

successful education program with a job training component is to secure talented professionals. Staff development activities are also crucial, as are adequate material resources. Obtaining funding for these activities is often challenging, however, we look forward to further developing and expanding these programs so that we may serve as a model for other agencies.

Current Research

A New Rural Initiative by the Office of Refugee Resettlement

Daniel Krotz, Senior Consultant for ISED Solutions, discusses ORR's Rural Refugee Initiative, explaining the potential benefits and challenges of the new program

In May of 2003, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) sought to identify the number of refugees engaged in U.S. based agricultural enterprises, such as the production of crops, the cultivation of livestock, the processing of foodstuffs and value-added products, and the wholesale of food to institutions or to individual consumers at such venues as farmer's markets. The impetus for this exploration was ORR's recognition that many refugees arrive in the United States with employment backgrounds in farming or related agricultural enterprises, which results in robust secondary migration to communities with agriculturally-based economies. For ORR, a central question was, "Are there sufficient numbers of refugees engaged in or interested in farming to benefit from special or targeted services from refugee services providers?"

The answer appears to be yes. A rudimentary survey of refugee service agencies across the United States by ISED Solutions, a Washington DC based economic development consulting and research firm, identified nearly 11,000 refugees who make at least \$1,000 a year through engagement of one or more of the activities listed above. Although most of these refugees appear to be concentrated in locations such as California's Central Valley, refugee farmers are present in nearly every state.

USDA and census data bolstered ISED Solutions survey results. For example, immigrants and refugee farmers, primarily from Asia, Africa and Latin America, constitute the majority of farmers in the US whose first language is not English (and who thus have limited Eng-

lish language proficiency). Based on data from the 2002 Census of Agriculture, they are also the only expanding constituency in agriculture. An estimated 60,000 to 75,000 recent immigrants and refugees are farm owners or operators in the United States. Furthermore, hundreds of new arrivals say that they want to establish their own farming enterprises here, as do thousands of immigrant farm workers. Recent federal, regional, and local initiatives are encouraging and facilitating this trend.

Among the non-refugee specific initiatives underway are various Immigrant Farming Projects (IFPs). IFPs are local initiatives that provide comprehensive outreach, education, training and technical assistance to help immigrant and refugee farmers address barriers to developing successful farm enterprises. Most IFPs started in recent years focus on addressing risk management strategies for their clients, for example, safe handling of chemicals and facilitating access to crop insurance. IFPs also provide a critical bridge between the providers of programs, services, and resources and the farmers who can benefit from them. For example, IFPs help farmers become eligible for Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan programs, cost-sharing programs, and insurance programs offered by state and federal programs. Each year, through outreach, training and technical assistance, IFPs are helping hundreds of immigrants to develop viable farm operations.

Another initiative is the formation of regional and national networks serving immigrant (and now refugee) farmers, such as the National Immigrant Farming Initiative (NIFI). With strong support from Heifer International and the involvement of the IFPs, NIFI was created as a national network of agencies to support programs, resource development, research, demonstration, and dissemination activities that address the agricultural enterprise needs of immigrants and refugees.

ISED Solutions has been charged by ORR to assure that refugee agricultural entrepreneurs are adequately represented in Immigrant Farming Project initiatives. The driving force behind that charge is the Refugee Rural Initiative (RRI), which ORR implemented during the summer of 2004 by funding nine demonstration projects across the country. These projects were selected on the basis of their experience providing asset development programming such as refugee microenterprise development, community development, individual development account programs, and experience providing services and resources to refugee owned and operated agricultural and related food sector businesses.

Important goals of the RRI are: (1) to facilitate collaborations and partnerships between the local refugee service providers and USDA and IFP agencies; (2) to help agencies retool or redesign their microenterprise programs for a better fit with the needs of food sector entrepreneurs; (3) to compile as much information as possible about the involvement of refugees in the agricultural sector; and (4) to create a network of agencies serving rural refugees—mostly among existing ORR microenterprise agencies, but certainly with others that can serve this population using non-ORR funding.

The nine demonstration projects will certainly encounter barriers to refugee entry into small-scale agriculture. For example, most refugees lack resources and access to credit to buy land and farm equipment, and to cover operating costs. They lack familiarity with growing in temperate climates and using commercial production and marketing systems in the United States. Language, literacy, and cultural factors also make it difficult to initiate independent enterprises that often involve complex arrangements, paperwork, and familiarity with their region's farming sector. Access to federal, state and private agriculture agencies, programs and services has been very limited among these farmers.

Perhaps the greatest barrier to refugee success in the agricultural sector, however, is the lack of experience among refugee service provider agencies with the world of agriculture. Most refugee service agencies—voluntary agencies and mutual assistance associations alike—are urban creatures whose focus is on resettlement of refugees in urban settings. The Department of Agriculture, University Extension Services, and agricultural organizations are rarely represented on their lists of funders or collaborators. For the Refugee Rural Initiative to succeed, and for refugees who seek new realities in farming to more quickly realize their ambitions, traditional refugee service agencies will have to stretch their visions and their capacities.

The best possible outcome of ORR's Refugee Rural Initiative is that the nine demonstration projects will achieve their various goals—such as setting up a Halal meat processing plant, acquiring land for Hmong farmers, or creating “branded” refugee products—to show how refugees and refugee communities can become a vital and important part of American agriculture. As Blong Lee of Fresno County Economic Opportunity Council has said, “Refugees deserve to have a choice among the opportunities that are offered to them. Sometimes that choice is to live and work on a farm out in the countryside.”

Somali Refugee Women Speak Out About Their Needs for Care During Pregnancy and Delivery

The July/August issue of the Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health features a study on important issues in refugee natal care.

Given that the majority of Somali refugees in the United States live in Minnesota, the researchers in this study, motivated by the desire to develop culturally sensitive medical materials, conducted two focus groups with 14 Somali women who had each given birth to one child in Minnesota. In this report, they publish their important findings, which include:

- Overall, women thought that their childbirth experience was positive. However, they also reported racial stereotyping, apprehension of cesarean births, and concern about the competence of medical interpreters.
- Women wanted more information about events in the delivery room, pain medications, prenatal visits, interpreters, and roles of hospital staff. The most desirable educational formats were a videotape, audiotapes, printed materials, and birth center tours.
- To increase their attendance at prenatal appointments, participants said they needed reminder telephone calls, transportation, and childcare.

This study should give medical professionals and refugee case workers a guiding rubric as they customize health care to meet the unique needs of refugee clients.

Herrel N, Olevitch L, DuBois DK, Terry P, Thorp D, Kind E, Said A., JOURNAL OF MIDWIFERY & WOMENS HEALTH 49 (4): 345-349 JUL-AUG 2004. Addresses: Herrel N, Minnesota Int Hlth Volunteers, Somali Hlth Care Initiat, 122 W Franklin Ave, Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55404 USA

Wage Subsidy Employment Programs for Refugees

In 1998, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) initiated a wage-subsidy program targeted to “difficult to employ” refugees, specifically refugees who had been in the United States for many years without obtaining sub-

stantive employment. In 1998, seven agencies received three-year grants from ORR to implement this employment subsidy program, and in 1999 four additional agencies received three-year grants. The grants went to two voluntary agencies, six mutual assistance associations, a state refugee program, a community action agency, and a health clinic.

Eight of the eleven programs used a special Management Information System (MIS) developed by ISED Solutions, the ORR technical assistance provider to the grantees. This database provided significant insight into the outcomes and achievements of the programs. Generally, the program reached the people it was intended to serve: refugees age 21 and older who had been in the United States for a significant period of time without attachment to the work force, and who had low incomes, limited education, and limited English competency.

The eight reporting agencies placed 2,088 refugees in jobs, 85 percent in full time positions. Some of the employers requested wage subsidies, but 21 percent were placed in unsubsidized positions. Average hourly wages ranged from \$6.21 to \$9.87. Of the 1,090 participants placed in subsidized positions, 66 percent later transitioned into unsubsidized status. Of the total of 2,088 placed, 69 percent (1,444) were retained at 90-day follow up.

The analysis of the financial benefits generated by these programs suggests that their costs could be recovered by the taxpayers in 2.65 years. ORR grants to the eight programs totaled \$25 million. Annual earned income for the participants increased by more than \$23 million, and public assistance decreased by more than \$7 million (TANF by \$4.6 million, food stamps by \$1.5 million, and SSI by nearly \$1 million).

ORR and the operating agencies learned significant lessons from the experience with the program. One lesson was that the length of the subsidy and percentage of wages subsidized needed to vary according to the position; thus the agencies needed to learn to negotiate subsidies with employers if they were to maximize the use of subsidy funds. Agencies also found that when job development efforts preceded participant enrollment, the agency felt pressured to recruit enrollees to fit the jobs, whereas the purpose of the program was to identify difficult to employ refugees and then develop jobs appropriate to their skills and aptitudes.

Grantees found that the effective operation of the wage subsidy program required them to develop their organizational capacities—for example, in the areas of case

management, and data management—which increased their ability to operate other programs effectively and increased their credibility with local mainstream funding sources.

Due to the success of the initial wage subsidy program, ORR funded a similar program beginning in the 2004 fiscal year. Eight private nonprofit organizations and one state agency currently have Employment Subsidy Program (ESP) grants. Of these, four are former grantees that have been ready and willing to share their experiences with the inexperienced programs. With the help of ISED Solutions and RefugeeWorks (a LIRS program), the grantees came together shortly after receiving their awards to learn about the program, share ideas, and gain insight from those who came before them.

After the first six months, the Refugee Employment Subsidy Program's nine grantees had enrolled 428 participants. Of these, 40 had been placed in full time subsidized jobs averaging \$8.94 per hour. Five of the 40 have already transitioned from subsidized to unsubsidized positions. Another 100 had been placed in full time unsubsidized jobs with wages averaging \$8.57 per hour. Thus, the total of 140 subsidized and unsubsidized placements after the first six months of the program means that 33% of the participants have already been placed in jobs. This is particularly impressive given the fact that the ESP program, like its predecessor program, focuses on those refugees who are the hardest to serve.

Gerald Brown is a Senior Consultant for ISED Solutions

Resources

RefugeeWorks, Your Employment Consultants Since 1997

Three years ago following the unforgettable events of September 11, 2001, refugee service providers found it increasingly difficult to help their clients find work. Employers across the country were remarkably more apprehensive about hiring refugees and immigrants. Even old stand-by employers closed their doors on non-native applicants for the first time. Although the climate has improved with time, service providers continue to tackle questions from employers. Are refugees authorized

to work? Do they speak English? What skills do they have? How will the refugee relate to the other staff? Although the questions are the same as before, the Office of Refugee Resettlement's technical assistance provider for employment is encouraging job developers to approach employers differently.

As RefugeeWorks' senior consultant Tom Giossi explains, "Service providers are accustomed to using social service language. To effectively conduct employer outreach, employment counselors must adopt language compatible with the private sector. We can't ask employers to help us place refugees like before, we need to ask employers how we can help them."

As a result, the consultant team at RefugeeWorks has incorporated more education related to language in their training curriculums to help service providers tailor their approach to employers. During workshops, participants assume the role of employers and job developers and engage in role-plays together. After a few mock phone calls and simulated interviews, attendees provide constructive criticism to one another responding to questions such as, how did the person present their clients? Were the words appropriate? Did the person remain confident or retreat when the employer became resistant? Giossi is always impressed with the collaborative learning process. "Whenever we present a scenario, people recall similar situations from their own work and appreciate hearing how other providers have responded. The role-plays introduce new skills, as well as a lot of laughter. People enjoy playing the employer for a change. At our workshops, refugees always get a job!"

RefugeeWorks has been delivering similar employment workshops since 1997 when the program began functioning as the Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) technical assistance provider for employment and self-sufficiency. Based at the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service headquarters in Baltimore, RefugeeWorks' mission is to assist the national voluntary agencies and their affiliates, states, mutual aid associations, employment service providers, workforce development boards, employers, and policymakers in their efforts to help refugees achieve self-sufficiency, as well as share strategies and promote best practices throughout the refugee employment service network. RefugeeWorks fulfills its mission through four principle technical assistance activities: training, individualized consultations, publications, and capacity building.

On a nearly weekly basis, RefugeeWorks delivers trainings at national, regional, and local conferences.

The two-day Employment Training Institutes are most notable, as they are held several times a year in different regions of the country. The institutes cover the continuum of basic skills necessary in carrying out the functions of an employment provider, including skills assessment, case reporting, job development, pre-employment and vocational training, employer and employee incentives, marketing career laddering and recredentialing. In the past year, institutes were held in Phoenix, Atlanta, and Seattle. The next sessions are scheduled for Minneapolis and Baltimore.

Between training sessions, RefugeeWorks also conducts individualized consultations for providers within the refugee employment network at their request. The consultations range from conducting a needs assessment to assisting an agency in fostering a critical collaboration with a local or state entity. For instance, in California, RefugeeWorks worked closely with the Lao Khmu Association to develop a partnership with the City of Stockton. The City of Stockton eventually hired three Hmong refugees, which resulted in a significant increase in the Hmong community accessing city services. Meanwhile in St. Paul, Minnesota, RefugeeWorks bridged a relationship between ORR's grantee program Lao Veterans of America and University Bank as an alternative employment outreach strategy. RefugeeWorks recognized the connection the bank had to local employers and encouraged the refugee agency to capitalize on these relationships. "It was great," recalls Giossi. "By the end of the meeting, the bank manager was pulling employers out of line to meet the leaders of the Hmong Community"

To compliment the trainings and consultations, RefugeeWorks also publishes several resources. Each quarter, a newsletter is produced and distributed to service providers that cover a range of topics related to refugee employment, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, vocational training, career laddering and documentation issues. People can also request copies of their Refugee Youth Employment and Financial Management for Mutual Assistance Associations manuals for a nominal fee. In the spring of 2004, RefugeeWorks produced their first film entitled "The Way to Work: A Job Preparation Guide for the Somali Bantu." The employment orientation video features six Somali Bantu who have employment or who are actively seeking work.

Finally, RefugeeWorks engages in capacity building for refugee-led organizations on a regular basis. Giossi is particularly excited about the opportunity to participate in the Wilder Foundation's two-year Nexus Project. To-

gether with other national experts in the field, RefugeeWorks will explore and test best practices around capacity building for refugee- and immigrant-led organizations. As Giossi notes, "After our first meeting, it was obvious we had all encountered similar challenges in our work. It will be great to generate new solutions through this process so that we can share with the broader refugee network."

Between daily conversations with service providers and personal experience in working with refugees, the consultant team at RefugeeWorks is acutely aware of the challenges related to refugee employment. "Our consultants have all worked on the front line and know how demanding it is to secure work for clients," notes Giossi. "It is important that everyone in the refugee employment network know that we are their consultants, free of charge."

To take advantage of RefugeeWorks' programs and services, contact info@refugeeworks.org.

RefugeeWorks Releases New Video for Somali Bantu

Before arriving in the United States, refugees often inquire about employment. What kind of work will I do? How will I find a job? Will I be able to go to school and work at the same time? How will I get to work? Who will look after my children? To begin to answer these and other work-related questions, RefugeeWorks produced an employment orientation video for the newly arriving Somali Bantu population. "The Way to Work" helps refugees navigate the process to self-sufficiency by sharing the journeys of six Somali Bantu who either have employment or are actively seeking work.

The 20-minute employment orientation film addresses the continuum of steps on "The Way to Work", including individual employment planning, ESL classes, job readiness training, the interview process, vocational training, workplace expectations, support services, benefits, and career laddering. In each step, Somali Bantu who are establishing their lives in the United States offer guidance and encouragement to newer arrivals. The positive messages are meant to inspire refugees as they embark on their own journey to work. Employers and service providers in the film praise the Somali Bantu as hard working and enthusiastic learners. RefugeeWorks filmed "The Way to Work" in Utica and Syracuse, New

York and West Springfield, Massachusetts shortly after the first Somali Bantu families arrived.

"The Way to Work", produced in both Af-Maay and English versions, is appropriate for a variety of audiences, including new arrivals, job readiness and cultural orientation classes, service providers, employers, and others interested in learning more about Somali Bantu and the employment process. The national voluntary agency affiliates resettling the Somali Bantu each received a complimentary copy of "The Way to Work" in the spring, made possible with funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement. Additional copies can be purchased in VHS or DVD format (with both language recordings) for \$15. To order or learn more, contact RefugeeWorks at (410) 230-2767 or email chamilton@refugeeworks.org. RefugeeWorks is a program of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and the Office of Refugee Resettlement's national technical assistance provider for employment and self-sufficiency.

Trauma and Coping in Somali and Oromo Refugee Youth

The Journal of Adolescent Health July 2004 issue includes a recent study on trauma and coping among Somali and Oromo refugee youth from 18 to 25 years of age. Topics of research include trauma history, life situations, and physical, psychological, and social problems.

Results of the study show that the average emigration age for the group is 14.8 years; the average individual had spent 4.2 years in transit, and two years in the United States. Two-thirds of the youth had less than a high school education, approximately one-half had English language problems, and approximately one-half are working.

The study concludes that many Somali and Oromo immigrants in the United States experience problems associated with war trauma and torture. The findings suggest a need to create age-appropriate strategies in order to promote the health of refugee youth, and to facilitate their successful adaptation to life in the United States.

Trauma and coping in Somali and Oromo refugee youth; Halcon LL, Robertson CL, Savik K, Johnson DR, Spring MA, Butcher JN, Westermeyer JJ; Jaranson JM JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT HEALTH 35 (1): 17-25 JUL 2004. To order this article online, or for more information, go to <http://www.elsevierhealth.com>.

Benefits of the Earned Income Tax and Child Tax Credits

By Caitlin Laidlaw

In 1975, Congress approved legislation to create what has become the largest federal aid program aimed at the working poor: The Earned Income Credit (EIC) or Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). By reducing the amount of tax an individual owes, the EITC offsets the burden that taxes put on low-wage workers and creates an incentive for these individuals to continue working rather than opting for welfare. The individual's income and family size determines the credit an individual receives.

To qualify for the credit, both the earned income and adjusted gross income for 2003 must be less than \$29,666 for a taxpayer with one qualifying child (\$30,666 for a married couple filing jointly), \$33,692 for a taxpayer with more than one qualifying child (\$34,692 for a married couple filing jointly), and \$11,230 for a taxpayer with no qualifying children (\$12,230 for a married couple filing jointly). The Internal Revenue Service (<http://www.irs.gov>) provides an EITC Eligibility Checklist on their website that can help an individual quickly determine if he or she is eligible for credit. Those who are eligible can determine the credit that they should receive using a worksheet included as part of the EITC instructions in the 1040, 1040A, and 1040EZ tax packages. The IRS will determine this figure for the applicant if he or she prefers. A program called VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistant) can help people with the process of filing their taxes with no fee.

In 2001, legislation created the Child Tax Credit (CTC) to join the EITC as an important wage supplement for people earning low wages. The CTC can be worth a maximum of \$1000 for each dependent. A "dependent" is a person under the age of 17 who is the son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter, stepson, stepdaughter, or eligible foster child of the taxpayer. The credit will decrease to \$700 in 2005

and then steadily increase to \$1000 again by 2010 (unless Congress acts to keep the CTC benefit at \$1000 through 2010).

Many refugees do not understand how the U.S. tax system works and are unaware of the monetary benefits involved in receiving one or both of the credits. An important component of the credits is that they do not generally affect eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, food stamps, or low-income housing. Many workers receive EITC in one check after they have filed a tax return. However, it is also possible to receive EITC from an employer with every paycheck, known as Advance EITC Payment. Once the applicant has filed a tax return, he or she will receive the credit not included in his or her paychecks. In 2004 Advance EITC Payments are available to any worker who has an expected income of less than \$30,338 and at least one qualifying child living in his or her home.

The advantages of opting for Advance EITC Payment include being able to buy groceries, paying the rent, and meeting other day-to-day needs. Like the EITC, workers can file for and receive the CTC in advance of the normal tax refund period. If a worker was eligible for EITC in the past and did not claim it, he or she can file for EITC for the past three years. Another important aspect of the EITC is that a working refugee does not need to have a social security number to claim it. Legal immigrants, such as refugees, might not yet have a green card but are considered "resident aliens for tax purposes" and are eligible for the credit. Similarly, if the dependents claimed in the CTC do not have social security numbers, they can substitute their taxpayer identification number or adoption taxpayer identification number.

The IRS website has information on the EITC and CTC for individuals, employers, and tax professionals.

Refugee Microenterprise Development: Achievements and Lessons Learned (Second Edition)

From 1991 to 2002 various microenterprise initiatives, funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) successfully assisted refugees to become economically self-sufficient through self-employment. John Else, Daniel Krotz, and Lisa Budzilowicz highlight the efforts and successes of these programs in their publication, *Refugee Microenterprise Development: Achievements and Lessons Learned (Second Edition)*.

Before 1991, ORR provided little funding to support any type of self-employment programs. However, in 1991, ORR designed an initiative to assist refugees in starting very small businesses (microenterprises). The measurable outcomes are positive. ORR has awarded roughly \$20 million to 34 agencies and has enrolled 8,799 refugees in self-employment programs over the eleven year period between 1991 and 2003. Of the 8,799 participants, over 21% (1,863) started, expanded, or strengthened businesses. As of the end of each grant period, 89% (1,658) of the 1,863 businesses were still successfully operating.

In addition to the measurable outcomes, the authors outlined lessons learned over the past eleven years. They found the programs to be most successful when the agencies have a clear mission and a flexible organizational culture. It is also just as important to have a qualified and committed staff that is able to integrate the microenterprise mission into the agency structure. Individualized training has replaced group training, and the agencies partner with financial institutions rather than resettlement agencies to focus on business development. ORR has provided a good amount of technical assistance to the agencies. This assistance has helped the agencies think systematically about their operations and compare their activities against national standards for microenterprise program operation. Agencies have also worked on economies of scale, program sustainability, and diversifying their funding.

This publication may serve to enlighten current practitioners and others who have an interest in microenterprise development.

Summarized from material by John Else, Daniel Krotz, and Lisa Budzilowicz for ISED

Myanmarese and Updated Hmong Health Briefs

The Office of Global Health Affairs in the Department of Health and Human Services recently produced and distributed health briefings on Hmong and Myanmarese refugees. Relying on clinical, cultural and regional information obtained from sources including NIH MEDLINE plus, the Center for Disease Control and Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC), the briefings will "better prepare and inform state refugee coordinators, state refugee health coordinators, local resettlement organizations and health care providers" about health issues that may potentially impact incoming Hmong and Myanmarese refugees. To order a copy of the briefing, e-mail John Tuskan at REFUGEEHEALTH-L@LIST.NIH.GOV. Additional health information about the Hmong can be found in the 'Health Issue' of *Refugee Reports*, Volume 25, Number 2, March/April pages 8-12 at www.refugeesusa.org.

Updates

- On July 6, 2004 the Department of Homeland Security announced that it will terminate its Temporary Protection Status (TPS) designation of Montserrat. Approximately 0.6 times the size of Washington, DC, Montserrat is a Caribbean island located Southeast of Puerto Rico. Montserrat received a TPS designation because volcanic eruptions on the island were creating unbearable living conditions. Nationals of the country were unable to return to their homes. Since this initial ruling, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has extended Montserrat's TPS six times. Each time, DHS evaluated whether conditions in the state have remained temporary.

During the latest evaluation, the Secretary of DHS decided that although the volcanic situation in Montserrat warrants concern, the situation can no longer be classified as temporary. Scientists studying the volcano say that although eruptions on Montserrat will probably not last for more than 20 years, it is possible that the eruptions will continue for decades to come. The Scientific Advisory Committee on

Montserrat Volcanic Activity concluded that there is a 3.2 percent chance that the current period of volcanic activity will end within the next six months, a 50 percent probability that the activity will continue for 14-15 more years, and a 5 percent chance that it will continue for more than 180 years.

The island is divided into a “safe zone” in the north and an “exclusive zone,” covering more than half of the island, in the south. The exclusive zone is closed to the public. Returning residents face the dangers of an active volcano and the possibility of contracting silicosis, a lung disease caused by the volcanic ash that covers the island, and other diseases. Despite the hazards of living on Montserrat, on February 27, 2005 nationals of Montserrat and people without a nationality who last resided in Montserrat and who have TPS will lose their TPS classification. Persons affected by this change are encouraged by the DHS to spend the time until the TPS termination preparing to leave the United States or to apply for other immigration benefits that are available to them, such as Lawful Permanent Resident or a non-immigrant classification.

- **Nationals and persons without a nationality who last resided in Montserrat who were granted Temporary Protection Status (TPS) will have their Employment Authorization Documentation (EAD) prolonged until the TPS termination date on February 27, 2005. The Secretary of DHS decided to extend EADs automatically, without an application process, to aid in an orderly transition period before the termination of TPS. Automatic EAD extension is limited to Montserratians who have an EAD (Form I-766 or Form I-688B). An individual who qualifies for the EAD extension and who needs proof of identity to complete his or her I-9 form (Employment Eligibility Verification) may show his or her employer a TPS-related EAD as proof of identity and employment authorization. An individual may also show his or her employer a copy of the July 6, 2004 notice in the Federal Register announcing the TPS termination and EAD extension to help explain his or her situation.**
- **In April 2004, the International Institute of Connecticut (IIC) revived a shirt pressing workshop for refugees and immigrants. IIC’s Employment and Training Department coordinates the program, and**

the Office of Refugee Resettlement funds it through the State of Connecticut.

The agency works with Troy Minty, owner of Pembroke Cleaners in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Minty teaches a two-day workshop to refugee and immigrant participants on how to press shirts. It includes a classroom session, where participants watch a 45-minute training video, as well as a hands-on training session, where participants learn to press shirts on the factory floor.

Workshop participants include refugees and immigrants from a wide range of countries, including Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia, and Bangladesh. Translators from IIC help provide a thorough understanding of all instructions, techniques, and machine operations.

Another component of the two-day workshop is public transportation – participants learn how to use Bridgeport’s mass transit system. Alexandra Boucher, program coordinator, teaches trainees about tokens, transfers, and how to signal the driver to stop. Boucher then reinforces the instruction by taking the participants on practice bus rides.

For more information about the International Institute of Connecticut’s Shirt Pressing Workshop, contact Alexandra Boucher, Job Developer, International Institute of Connecticut, at (203) 336-0141.

Job Board

Deputy Director

The Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC), located in Washington, DC, seeks applications for the SEARAC Deputy Director position. Now celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, SEARAC is the national organization dedicated to advancing the interests of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans through leadership development, capacity building, and community empowerment. Responsibilities will include: representation of SEARAC and the interests of Southeast Asian Americans; Supervision of staff, consultants, interns, and volunteers; fundraising; and communications. Preferred qualifications include: extensive knowledge of Southeast Asian American communities, cultures, and languages; two or more years of supervisory experience; experience with drafting budgets, and with financial reporting; and two or more years of relevant fundraising experience.

Contact: Send cover letter, resume, three references, and one writing sample to: Southeast Asia Resource Center Attn: Deputy Director Search, 1628 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

LIRS Positions

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has the following positions open:

- Grants Coordinator
- Case Processing Assistant
- Senior Consultant and Program Coordinator for Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS)
- Director for Human Resources
- Vice President for Policy and Advocacy

Please visit www.lirs.org for more information.

Assistant Program Manager, Episcopal Migration Ministries

This position assists in the effort to oversee services provided to refugees by EMM's local affiliate offices, ensuring adherence to program guidelines for the Matching Grant, Reception and Placement, Preferred Communities, and other discretionary grant programs.

Required qualifications include: a Bachelor's degree in social sciences (or related field), at least two years experience working in an office setting, (preferably with refugee and/or immigration issues) or related work such as overseas relief and/or development, or not-for-profit administration. Also required are excellent organizational, written and verbal communication in English and analytical skills, as well as advanced knowledge of Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Access).

Candidates with experience in grant-writing and related research, government contract management, and with a knowledge and understanding of the U.S. refugee resettlement system are preferred. Position may require limited domestic travel.

The starting salary is commensurate with experience and the DFMS provides a generous benefits package. The DFMS is an equal opportunity employer.

Contact: send cover letter with salary requirements and a resume to: The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society; Attn. Vivian Harrison, Human Resources Manager; 815 Second Avenue; New York, NY 10017; 212-867-6174 (fax)

Immigration and Refugee Services of America (IRSA)

Positions

• Country Report Researchers/Writers

U.S. Committee for Refugees seeks applications for Country Report Researchers/Writers for project-based positions. On-call researchers will research and write short country-specific reports of up to 1000 words for publication in the annual Survey, on USCR's website, and in other mediums. The country reports will include up-to-date statistical information and analysis of events and conditions affecting refugees. Work to be performed from January to April 2005.

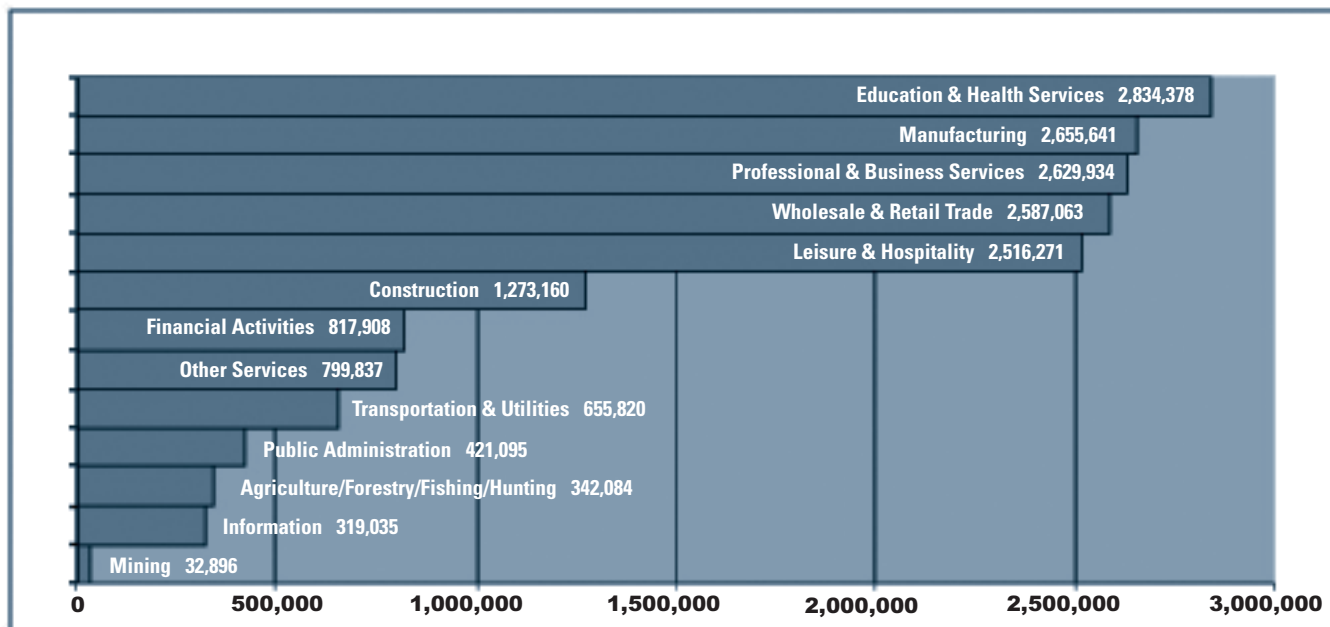
• Regional Correspondents

U.S. Committee for Refugees seeks on-call correspondents to research and write articles on refugee crises and other situations for publication in the annual Survey and other USCR publications. Opportunities available to participate in public information campaigns, public speaking, and other related activities. Travel may be required to refugee camps and other locations with limited facilities in high-risk areas.

Required qualifications include: a comprehensive knowledge of and experience in the region of assignment, working knowledge of international and local refugee law, and experience performing field-based research, writing, protection, and advocacy. Published work in relevant field a plus. Fluency in the language(s) of the region is highly desirable. Experience implementing relief projects a plus.

IRSA Contact information: Please submit by mail/email a resume that includes salary history and a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications to: Human Resources; Immigration and Refugee Services of America; 1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 200; Washington, DC; 20036, or HumanResources@irsa-uscr.org

Number of Immigrant Workers in the United States by Industry



Working for America Institute, Connections, June 2004

AFL-CIO Working for America Institute analysis of 2002 Current Population Survey Data on percentage of immigrant workers in each industry combined with 2002 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data on Industry Employment.

REFUGEE REPORTS (USPS-001-465) is published monthly for:

\$60.00 one-year subscription
 \$100.00 two-year subscription

Overseas postage is an additional \$50.00.
 Single copies of back issues: \$5.00

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Refugee Reports, IRSA
 1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036.

Editorial comments and communications regarding subscriptions should be sent to:

Refugee Reports
 Immigration and Refugee Services of America
 1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 200
 Washington, D.C. 20036
 Tel: 202-347-3507 Fax: 202-347-2576
 E-mail: rr@irsa-uscr.org

Internet: www.refugeesusa.org and www.refugees.org

Guest Editor: Merrill Smith

Managing Editor: Shannon Dennett

Contributing Writers: Hammad Ahmed, Bill Barclay, Gerald Brown, Will Coley, Rachel Dannefer, Cheryl Hamilton, Dan Krotz, Caitlin Laidlaw, Lisa Raffonelli, Algis Rukenas, Karin Wishner
Editorial Support: Shelley Goldfarb, Rachel O'Hara

Distribution Manager: Tatiana Shelbourne

Production: Raul De Leon

© 2004 Immigration and Refugee Services of America. Rights of reproduction and redistribution reserved. ISSN 0884-3554

Refugee Reports

A News Service of Immigration and Refugee Services of America

1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW, #200
 Washington, DC 20036-2003

Address Service Requested

Refugee Reports