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Worcester Inter-University Refugee Workshop

Integration and Belonging Hub

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9-2022

## "Worcester Inter-University Refugee Workshop" presentation

Jozefina Lantz

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# Worcester Refugee Inter-University Workshop

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Clark University, The College of the Holy Cross,  
Worcester State University  
Jozefina Lantz

AS LONG AS THERE HAVE BEEN WARS, PERSECUTION, DISCRIMINATION AND INTOLERANCE, THERE HAVE BEEN REFUGEES. THEY ARE OF EVERY RACE AND RELIGION AND CAN BE FOUND IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD.



**THE AVERAGE TIME TO GATHER BELONGINGS IS 10 MINUTES..**

Forced to flee out of fear for their lives and liberty, they have often left everything behind, experienced terrible suffering and been separated from their families. In refugee camps they try to find safety, but the living conditions are grim.



# Refugee Durable Solutions



**Voluntary repatriation**, in which refugees return in safety and with dignity to their country of origin and re-avail themselves of national protection



**Local integration**, in which refugees legally, economically and socially integrate in the host country, availing themselves of the national protection of the host government



**Resettlement**, in which refugees are selected and transferred from the country of refuge to a third State which has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status

# UNHCR Resettlement Submission Categories

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Legal and or  
Physical  
Protection Needs

Survivors of  
Violence or  
Torture

Medical Needs

Women and Girls  
at Risk

Family  
Reunification

Children and  
Adolescents at  
Risk

Lack of  
Foreseeable  
Alternative  
Durable Solutions



# The Entry into the USA

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- Refugees must be processed and referred by UNHCR
- Asylum seekers, temporary protected status – enter any which way; limited applications abroad
- *Exception:* “Beginning on April 25, 2022, U.S. will allow U.S.-based individuals and entities to apply to sponsor displaced Ukrainians. Sponsor will be required to declare their financial support and pass security background checks” – (same as for a family members).
- Environmental – no established practice, not recognized as refugees (hurricane Katrina example)
- Economic – many different options – not recognized as refugees



# US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) Priority System

## Individual Cases

Referred by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement.

P1



## Groups of Cases

Designated by the US as needing access by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement.

Burundians, Bhutanese, Somali Bantu

P2



## Individual Cases from

designated nationalities for purposes of **family reunification** with anchor family members already in the U.S.

P3



# Forced migration - refugees

**After the referral by UNHCR to the USA for the resettlement.**

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USA approval includes:

- ✓ Interviews - multiple
- ✓ Security checks – can take several years
- ✓ Health status – includes waiting for treatment period, refusal of entry, other
- ✓ DNA checks – in several regions
- ✓ Cultural Orientation – prior to actual arrival to the US



# The Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for each Fiscal Year

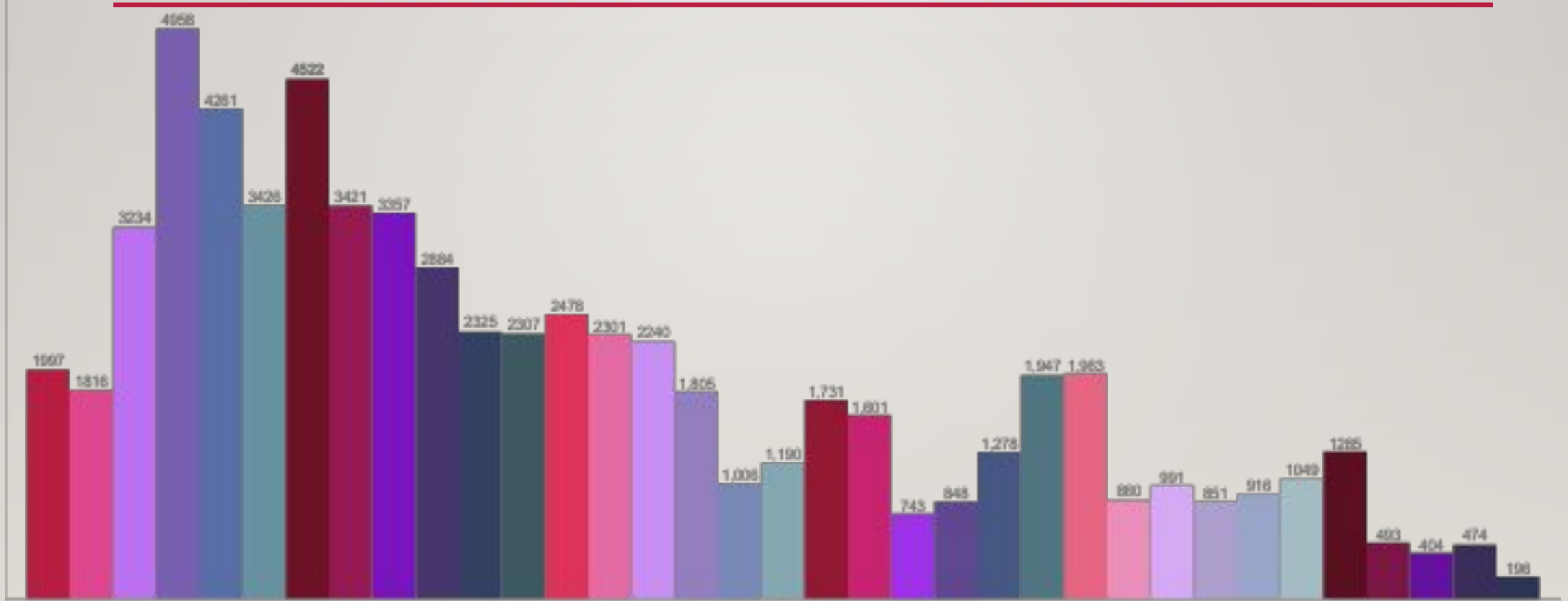
## **125,000 refugees FY 2022**

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- Each president decides on numbers for each fiscal year (funding!!)
- Report to Congress -  
<https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Proposed-Refugee-Admissions-for-FY22-Report-to-Congress.pdf>
- **Temporary Protected Status** - A country may be designated for TPS when conditions in the country fall into one or more of the three statutory bases for designation: ongoing armed conflict, environmental disasters, or extraordinary and temporary conditions – as in Ukraine now, and in other countries. **Now: Ukraine, Afghanistan, Cameroon, Sudan, South Sudan,**
- Ukrainian individuals eligible for TPS under this designation must have continuously resided in the United States since March 1, 2022. *Individuals who attempt to travel to the United States after March 1, 2022 will not be eligible for TPS.*

# REFUGEE ARRIVALS TO MA 1986 - 2020

Arrivals in MA from 1986 - 2020



Category 1

# ARRIVALS BY CATEGORY - MA

<b><u>Arrival Status</u></b>	<b>FY06</b>	<b>FY07</b>	<b>FY08</b>	<b>FY09</b>	<b>FY10</b>	<b>FY11</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Anchor Refugee	485	285	278	239	312	547	2145
Asylee	476	390	281	374	219	279	2019
Certified Victim of Trafficking	7	18	0	1	0	11	37
Cuban or Haitian Entrant or Parolee	56	69	39	38	32	52	286
Free Refugee	380	499	851	1451	1004	996	5181
Secondary Migrant Refugee	102	110	58	84	42	83	479
Special Immigrant Visa				14	24	13	51
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1506</b>	<b>1371</b>	<b>1507</b>	<b>2201</b>	<b>1633</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>10199</b>

\*FY10 does not contain 3rd Trimester Numbers. Final Number should be 2381

# Arrivals to Worcester – Fiscal Years: 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011

Total 6 years:

LSS-NE 1748

CCW 213

RIAC-W 389

Bangladesh	DR Congo	Jamaica	Stateless (Palestine)	Bhutan	Bhutan
Belarus	Egypt	Kenya	Sudan	Burma	Burma
Bhutan	El Salvador	Lebanon	Tanzania	Cameroon	Burundi
Bolivia	Eritrea	Liberia	Uganda	Cuba	Central Africa
Burma	Guatemala	Nepal	United States of ???	DR Congo	Chad
Burundi	Haiti	Nigeria	Uzbekistan	Egypt	Cuba
Cameroon	Honduras	Pakistan	Vietnam	Eritrea	DR Congo
Central Africa	Iran	Rwanda	Zimbabwe	Ethiopia	Ethiopia
China	Iraq	Sierra Leone		Haiti	Iraq
Colombia	Israel	Somalia		Iraq	Liberia
Cuba	Ivory Coast	Sri Lanka		Kenya	Rwanda
				Liberia	Sierra Leone
				Pakistan	Somalia
				Rwanda	Vietnam
				Sierra Leone	
				Togo	
				Uganda	
				Vietnam	

# NATIONAL & ETHNIC POPULATIONS OF REFUGEE arrivals in Worcester

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- Iraqis—all different groups--settlement of Mandaean Iraqis
- Refugees from Burma/Myanmar all different groups – language issues
- Bhutanese Lhotsampa
- Congolese
- Syrians
- Afghans
- Haitians & Cubans
- Indo-Chinese/Vietnamese
- Lebanese-during the civil war in 1982-84? Not sure of status
- Burundians
- Somalis & Somali Bantu
- Bosnians, mixed marriage from former Yugoslavia
- Kosovar Albanians
- Salvadorans, Venezuelans, Nicaraguans -NACARA

## Worcester: people who have been forcibly displaced

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- People identifying as LGBTQ+ (Jamaican) - the category of sexual and/or gender-nonconforming, and thus under threat
- FGM cases
- Domestic Violence case
- Survivors of human trafficking -- forced labor and sexual slavery
- Pregnant and parenting teens
- Unaccompanied minors – “lost boys”, reunification cases, orphan children

# Who decides?

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- US Citizenship and Immigration Service – **all oversees processing and asylum adjudication**
- Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is the humanitarian bureau of the State Department
- Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) oversees domestic resettlement, provides funding to VOLAGs, state offices, and others
- MA State Office of Refugees and Immigrants (MORI) oversees services to refugees, but not resettlement itself
- Voluntary Resettlement Agencies (VOLAGs) – responsible for resettlement process

# Refugees - Approved for the USA Resettlement

International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides transportation to the destination and other services

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## Where to?

Options for the location based on:

- Existing family, friends and other connections in the USA
- *Availability and capacity for services* – housing, job market, health services, etc..
- Refugee ask



# Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement

The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- ORR was established by the Refugee Act of 1980 to ensure that refugees have the resources and support to successfully integrate into their new communities.
- Since its inception over 40 years ago, ORR's statutory authority has expanded to serve other new arrivals. who we serve Unaccompanied Alien Children Office Of Refugee Resettlement These new arrivals are eligible to receive ORR Resettlement Services.
- Resettlement services provide new arrivals with tools and critical resources to rebuild their lives so that they can become integrated and productive members of American society.
- ORR provides for the care and custody of Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) referred to ORR by other federal agencies until they are released to an appropriate sponsor, usually a parent or relative, while their immigration cases proceed. 92,889 arrivals eligible for services\* \*Source: FY2018 Refugee Arrivals Data System (RADS)
- \$538 million enacted appropriations Refugees, Asylees, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Certain Special Immigrant Visa Holders and Victims of Trafficking

# Voluntary Resettlement Agencies (VOLAGs)

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- ❖ Church World Service (CWS)
- ❖ Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC)
- ❖ Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM)
- ❖ Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)
- ❖ International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- ❖ US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)
- ❖ Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS)
- ❖ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)
- ❖ World Relief Corporation (WR)

# Voluntary Resettlement Agencies

VOLAG's are contracted for initial resettlement and responsible:

Within the first 90 days of the refugee being in the USA:

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- ✓ **Prior to arrival** - Finding and furnishing place to live, clothing, cooked food, food for a week
- ✓ Meeting and picking up the refugee at the airport – initial cash
- ✓ Transportation to mandatory health assessments, SS# applications, bank account, other
- ✓ School enrolment for children – *vaccinations*
- ✓ Administering cash benefits if any – *who's check it is anyway?*
- ✓ Cultural orientation - *examples*
- ✓ Providing direct service and/or referrals to employment and ESOL assistance
- ✓ Family reunification applications

# Arrived!

## Service Mandates and Eligibility

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- VOLAG Staff; state Office of Refugees and Immigrants
- Refugee Health providers
- Employment assistance
- English Language
- Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) – TANIF varies by state
- Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)
- Cultural Orientation

# Receiving Community and Refugees

## Vulnerable Population – or are they?

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- Mandatory CORI checks for all volunteers
- Mandatory over 18 years for all volunteers
- Privacy and information protection
- Cultural orientation
  - Community & resources
  - Religion & churches
  - Police & fire
  - Driving & driving license
- Mutual Assistance Organizations

# The Good, the Bad, and the Stressful

## Refugee communities and the internal strife

- Remnants of homeland-originated conflicts
- Tribal associations persisting
- Competition for community leadership
- Financial benefits (children SS# )

## Members of the US diaspora involvement

- What information to be shared? (life stories, Afghan experience)

# The Good, the Bad, and the Stressful

## **Volunteers**

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- Priceless, no successful resettlement can happen without them
- Volunteers, and what motivates them
- Ethical conduct – (who trains volunteers?)
- Well-meaning advice – they know the best
- Had enough – “bad refugee”?

## **Religious institutions, pastors**

- Proselytizing, intentional and non-intentional

# Suggested reading material

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1. Global Compact on Refugees - <https://www.unhcr.org/5c658aed4.pdf>
2. REPORT TO THE CONGRESS on refugee admissions FY22 -  
<https://www.state.gov/report-to-congress-on-proposed-refugee-admissions-for-fiscal-year-2022/>
3. *The Ungrateful Refugee: What Immigrants Never Tell You* - by Dina Nayeri
4. *The House of Sand and Fog* – by Andre Dubus III
5. *Do They Hear You When You Cry* - by Fauziya Kassindja
6. *The Girl with Seven Names* - by [Hyeonseo Lee](#)
7. [Sarajevo Blues](#) - by Semezdin Mehmedinovic and Ammiel Alcalay (a poetry book)