

Topic: Role of the Resettlement Agency/Community Services
(International Organization for Migration, Overseas Processing Entity, Bangkok)

Activity: Video and “Test”, Role Play

Assumptions	<p>Knowledge: Refugees will not know the role of their “sponsor,” or resettlement agency, nor what other resources may be available to them.</p> <p>Skills: Refugees may not have the skills necessary to get what they need from their resettlement agency, or to deal with the resettlement workers, volunteers, and government agencies in a culturally appropriate manner.</p> <p>Attitudes: Refugees may have expectations that do not match the reality; this may cause frustration and disappointment to both parties.</p>
Objectives	<p>Knowledge: By the end of this unit, participants will be able to list the services offered by their resettlement agency, volunteers, and government agencies.</p> <p>Skills: By the end of this unit, participants will be able to demonstrate, in role plays, behavior that is appropriate and inappropriate in regards to dealing with their RA and other helpers.</p> <p>Attitudes: By the end of this unit, participants will express attitudes that are consistent with reality.</p>
Lesson Time	1 ½ – 3 hours
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome to America video• Signs or hats identifying the various players• Role-Play Instructions for each group (included)• Situation and Attitude Cards (included)• Flip chart paper and markers• Props: ‘business cards’ for resettlement agency; paper, scissors, string, tape, crayons for name tags, hats, etc.; IOM bag; EAD, Social Security cards; I-94 form• Location signs: airport, school, hospital, Food Stamp office, Medicaid, Social Security, refugees’ new home, etc. (see Unit 4 and 5 in USCO pictures in the CO network for a full set of pictures)
Practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introduction<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Knowledge/expectations<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Determine how much participants know about what assistance awaits them by asking the following questions:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What will you do when you step off the plane in America?2. Who will meet you? Where will you sleep your first night in America?3. How are you going to support yourself until you get your first job?

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- ii. Ask participants what assistance they will get in their first few months in America. List their replies on the board / flip chart. (Don't do this if you will be doing the simulation exercise.)
- b. Video
- i. The video can be shown before the role play as a introduction, or after, as a wrap-up.
 - ii. Tell participants you will show them a video related to the assistance they will receive. Tell them to watch carefully as they will be tested!
 - iii. Show the video.
 - iv. Divide the class into two groups and test them with questions you have made up about the services they will receive. This can also be done as a tic-tac-toe game. Each team only gets to make their "X" or "O" if they answer the question correctly.
2. Before starting the activity, tape up the various location signs in different parts of the room.
- a. As a whole class, discuss and list the various items and services that people think they will need help getting in order to start life in the US. How long should this assistance continue? (e.g. transportation, school enrollment for children, food for the first days, language training, child care while working or looking for work, medical care, etc.)
 - b. Alternatively, the trainer can the 'refugee' group (see below) brain-storm their own list about what needs they will have. After 5-10 minutes they can present their list to the class.
3. Divide the class into 8 groups:
- a. Refugees (5-10 people)
 - b. Resettlement agency workers (2 or 3 people); the "resettlement agency" group has the most information to absorb, and so the trainer should select the best participants for this group
 - c. Family (2-3 people)
 - d. Volunteers (2-3 people); these could be MAA people
 - e. Food stamp workers (2 people)
 - f. Medicaid office workers (2 people)
 - g. Cash assistance program workers
4. Station each group in a different area of the room, with a sign designating what agency or group they are; the refugees can make little hats for themselves out of paper (if you choose "B" above, the refugees will be making the list of things they need help with and will not have time to make hats; in that case, the trainer must supply the hats).
5. Each group gets a ROLE CARD that details their task. Give each group time to study their roles. Assist the resettlement agency group as they have the largest task.
6. Before the start of the simulation, each group introduces itself to the whole group as who they are. There is no need at this point to say what they do.
7. The simulation:

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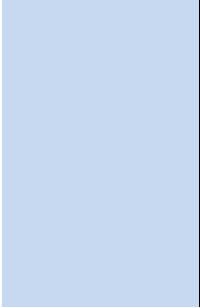
- a. Begin the simulation with the refugees arriving at the airport. The resettlement agency reps (and family? - let them take the initiative to come!) meet the refugees and takes them to their new home. The rep should show and explain that there is furniture, clothing, and some food in the house. The reps should also smile, give them the RA's telephone number, shake the refugees' hands, say "Welcome to America," and leave.
- b. The trainer says that it is now the following day.
- c. Ask the 'refugees' what they need to do first thing in the morning. Eat! Present the refugees with a problem: The food in the fridge is completely foreign to them, or, the food is fine but the refugees don't know how to use the stove. The refugees, or anyone in the group, can make suggestions as to what to do about this problem. (The best solution to this first problem is for the refugees to use the business card and call the resettlement agency. We want to emphasize that when confronted with a problem, they need to take the initiative to solve the problem themselves; and that for help, the refugees' first resource is the resettlement agency.)
- d. The resettlement agency now takes the refugees through all of the various appointments and interviews that should take place (as according to their role card) - social security card application; food stamp and Medicaid application; cash assistance; post-arrival medical check-up; school registration for children; transportation orientation; ESL classes; job training; etc. The RA worker should also tell them of the volunteers and MAAs available.

8. Situation Cards

- a. Divide the refugee group into groups of 2-3 people.
- b. Have each of these refugee groups pick a Situation Card. Give them 2-3 minutes to discuss the situation and figure out how to deal with it. Give them the instructions that, when dealing with the problem, they will act out the situation, rather than just tell the class how to deal with it.
- c. As refugees act out their solutions, the trainer can stop them at any point to complicate the situation (for example, if they decide they need the volunteer, ask if the volunteer speaks their language). At any point any participant who has an idea can come up and "trade places" with the "refugee" and act out their idea.
- d. After each role play, the trainer asks the whole class what they think about, or learned from, the exercise, and what they may have done differently.
- e. At the end of the whole exercise, ask the class what they learned about the roles of the resettlement agency and other groups, as well as their own role as new refugees, in getting the things and services that they need in a new and unfamiliar environment.
- f. Do 2-3 situations and then introduce the Attitude Cards.

9. Attitude Cards

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- a. After a few situations have been solved, introduce the ATTITUDE CARDS. Refugees will continue solving problems as before, but will now need to take on the attitude given in the card. The attitude cards dictate the demeanor that the refugees have towards the helping agencies and parties. They may be told to be demanding, or passive, or pro-active but polite. One role-play situation could be acted out three times, with each of the three attitudes, and after the participants playing the part of the agency, or the whole class, can discuss what attitude is most likely to get people to want to help them.

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Role Play Instructions

Refugees

You have just arrived in America. Because of your CO class in Thailand, you know that a settlement worker will be at the airport to meet you. Make sure you hold your IOM bag high so he or she can see it! You have just passed immigration and your I-94 has been stamped and you have received your EAD (Employment Authorization Document).

Resettlement Agency Workers

A group of refugees has arrived from Thailand. You are obliged to help them for 30 days.

Day 1

Meet the refugees at the airport and make sure they have all their luggage, their I-94, and their EAD (Employment Authorization Document).

Take refugees to their new apartment and show them around. The apartment is not large and the furniture is old. Tell the refugees the resettlement agency cannot afford to buy them new furniture. Show them how to use the stove, fridge, bathroom, etc.

You have some warm clothes for the refugees. These clothes are used but in good condition.

You have bought a box of food for the refugees first days. You have bought some canned food and some rice.

Give the refugees your name card; shake the 'refugees' hands, say "Welcome to America," and leave.

Day 2

Come to see the refugees. You bring with you a volunteer and explain that you don't have time to help them today but the volunteer will show you where to go shopping and how to use the bus. The volunteer does not speak English.

Tell the refugees that you are in a hurry because you have another group of refugees arriving today. Tell them that you will be back tomorrow and help them get some necessary documents.

Day 3 and Day 4

Call the refugees and tell them that you don't have time to see them today.

Day 5

Take the refugees to the following places:

- The office to get their Social Security Card
- The Medicaid office
- The Cash Assistance Office
- The food stamp office

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Tell them that there are still many things you need to help them with but you don't have time today. These things include:

- Set up a bank account (as you tell them about these, point to the pictures of these places on the wall),
- enrolling their kids up in school,
- signing up the adults up in English classes,
- making an appointment for a full medical exam, and
- helping them look for a job. Warm them: "It is not my responsibility to give you a job; you have to find the job yourself; it is only my responsibility to help you look."

I will also teach you about American money, the costs of things, and how to make a budget.

Complain that the budget at the agency was cut again, and that there are not enough workers. Every year, it seems, you are able to offer fewer and fewer services.

Tell the refugees that you are very, very busy, because even more refugees have just arrived. Promise to visit as soon as you can and leave.

You don't visit again.

Social Security Card Office Worker

A resettlement agency worker has brought some refugees to apply for their Social Security Card. Ask the refugees if they brought their EAD and I-94 cards with them. If they didn't, tell them that they need to go home and bring them. If they do have them, fill out the form for the refugees; ask the refugees their names (first and last names) and their addresses. Give the refugees their SS card; tell them that they will need this card in order to work or to receive any money from the government. Tell them that the Social Security number is confidential information and avoid giving it out unnecessarily.

Medicaid Worker

A resettlement agency worker has brought some refugees to apply for their Medicaid cards. Ask the refugees if they brought their I-94 and Social Security cards with them. If they didn't, tell them that they need to go home and bring them. If they do have them, fill out the form for the refugees; ask the refugees their names (first and last names) and their addresses. Give the refugees their Medicaid card; tell them that they will need this card in order to get free (or cheaper) medical care. They must take the card every time they go see a doctor. Tell them they will be covered by Medicaid only for 8 months.

Cash Assistance Programs Worker

Ask refugee to show their I-94 and Social Security Card.

Ask them the following questions:

- How many people are in your family, and how old is each person?

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- How much income does each family member make? How often do they get paid?

Explain to them about Cash Assistance as the following, which may available for them.

- Refugee Cash assistance (RCA) is the main cash assistance program for single refugees or people with grown children, benefits are for 8 months only.
- Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) is a federally funded program for families.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal program for people 65 and over, or for people who are blind or disabled. This assistance is limited to seven years for non-citizens, so, they should become citizens as soon as possible.
- Inform them that Cash Assistance programs are different from state to state. Cash Assistance that they will receive is just enough for their most basic needs.

Tell the refugees that you will check what category that they are qualify and contact them later.

Food Stamp Office Worker

A resettlement agency worker has brought some refugees to apply for food stamps.

Ask them the following questions:

- Do you have your I-94 and Social Security Card? Please show me.
- How many people are in your family, and how old is each person?
- How much income does each family member make? How often do they get paid?

Tell them that...

- Food Stamps can be used only to buy food.
- The amount of assistance receive is based on family size and income.
- Selling food stamps is illegal and is a crime that could lead to deportation.
- You will consider all the information that you get and contact them later.

Show them the card that they will get for food stamps.

Volunteers

You are a 55-year-old woman, married and working full time. God has been good to you and you want to share your happiness by helping others. A new refugee family is moving into your neighborhood and you want to help them get settled. You can offer one or two evenings a week to help them out. You speak only English.

The resettlement agency worker calls you to help show a new family how to use the bus and how to go shopping. You meet the family and show them around, but it's difficult cause you can't speak the same language.

Family

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You have been in the US for two years. Both you and your spouse are working at two jobs to make ends meet. You get home each evening at 6:30, you have to prepare supper and see the kids off to bed. Sunday is your only day off.

Your relative is soon coming to the US with their family as a refugee. You know he / she doesn't have to worry so much because the resettlement agency will help him / her out the same way they helped you out two years ago. However, there had been some misunderstandings with the agency, and now you think you know better than the agency about how to help these new refugees.

In the first few minutes of this exercise, make a list of the things you can do for your relative. Remember that you have your own family, and are working all the time!

MAA

You are a Mutual Assistance Agency, made up of people who used be refugees yourselves, and you understand the needs of the new refugees, such as cultural shock and adjustment, and language barriers. Your MAA provide used furniture, clothing, and food; interpretation; help people to find entry-level jobs, etc. However, the MAA has limited funds, therefore, services are also limited. You all have jobs, but must work hard to support your own families, and don't have a lot of extra time to give outside of your work with the MAA.

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Situation Cards

- A. Your child has a high fever at midnight one night; the hospital you have been told to use is on the other side of town, and you have no car.
- B. After bringing you to your new “home,” your resettlement agency representative has not visited you for over a week. You would like to start looking for a job / begin ESL lessons / enroll your children in school, but don’t know how to go about doing it. Ask the trainer for an “Attitude Card.”
- C. The furniture in your new home is not in very good condition. It is old and looks bad. The bed gives you a back-ache. The kitchen table is too small for your family, and the couch springs poke into your bum when you sit down.
- D. You just got a new job but it is located across town, and you feel that you should have a car to get to work. You want someone to help you get a car.
- E. It’s your second month in America. You have received what look to be phone, water, and electricity bills in your mailbox. You don’t know what to do about paying these things. Ask the trainer for an ‘Attitude Card.’
- F. You have a friend in another state who says that there are good jobs available there. They want you to move next week.
- G. You just arrived in the U.S., and your luggage has been lost. What do you do?
- H. You want to find other people from your people group in your city.
- I. Your wallet has just been stolen. What do you do?
- J. You have been in America for over a month, but no one has come to give you a job. What should you do? Ask the trainer for an “Attitude Card.”
- K. Your child is having problems at school, and the teacher wants you to come to the school to talk. But you are worried that your English isn’t good enough to understand. What do you do?
- L. You arrive at the airport in America, but no one is there to receive you! What do you do? Ask the trainer for an “Attitude Card.”

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Attitude Cards

DEMANDING!!

You are very angry about your situation, and demand that someone should do something about it RIGHT NOW!!

PASSIVE

You are very unsure about yourself, and about what to do. You want to wait until the resettlement agency or someone else comes to help you, and takes care of this situation for you. You are totally passive.

PRO-ACTIVE

You take action to deal with your situation, or you take the responsibility to contact someone to help you. When someone helps you, you are polite to them, saying “please” and “thank you”. You show some initiative and self-reliance.

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