

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

Unit Overview for the Trainer

This unit provides participants with an overview of the role of the local resettlement agency. It focuses on the following key points:

- ▶ The local resettlement agency ensures that refugees are provided with assistance and basic services after they first arrive in the United States. This assistance is limited and may vary from person to person, depending on many things, such as family size and situation, age, the agency, and the resettlement site.
- ▶ The resettlement agency is the new arrival's first point of contact for accessing services and getting information on topics that refugees need to know. Resettlement agencies and other service providers conduct orientation, which refugees are encouraged to attend in order to learn about their new U.S. community.
- ▶ For resettlement to succeed, refugees need to work together with resettlement agency staff. Good communication is central to the partnership between refugee and the resettlement agency. Refugees who take responsibility and learn to do things for themselves will adjust more quickly to their new communities.

Each refugee entering the United States is assigned a resettlement agency that is responsible for ensuring that s/he receives certain basic services. Resettlement agency workers are refugees' main guides to their new communities and are most effective when refugees work in partnership with them. The activities in this section will help participants learn more about what the resettlement agency does and what refugees should do to work with the agency.

This unit includes five activity plans. The first provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided to all newly arrived refugees in reception and placement (R&P) orientation sessions. The rest of the activities can be covered if there is a need for them and enough time.

At the beginning of each activity plan in this unit is an introduction for the trainer, which highlights the plan's key concepts and main messages.

The five plans are as follows:

- ▶ *The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency.* In this session, participants learn that they will need to work closely with their resettlement agency, and that the services they receive will be provided for a limited time.
- ▶ *Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided.* In this session, participants will learn about the R&P process and the support they can expect to receive from their resettlement agency. Participants will then identify the areas of orientation and resettlement that interest them most.
- ▶ *Attending Orientation Classes.* This session looks at orientation offered by the resettlement agency and other service providers in the area. Participants will discuss the importance of attending orientation in order to learn about the aspects of resettlement that interest them and are important to their successful resettlement.

- ▶ *A New Partnership.* This session highlights the partnership between refugees and resettlement agency staff. The success of the partnership depends on respect and good communication between the partners. Participants learn about common ways to communicate in the United States and how to work with resettlement agency staff to ease their adjustment process.
- ▶ *Overcoming Challenges.* During this session, participants will learn about challenges that may occur when working with their resettlement agency and how to overcome them.

The following chart shows which *R&P Orientation Objectives and Indicators* are included in each of the activity plans in this unit.

	Content Objective	Learning Indicator	Activity Plan
Role of the Local Resettlement Agency	The local resettlement agency is not a government agency	Participants can articulate the difference between the local resettlement agency and the government	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
	Assistance provided by the local resettlement agency and public assistance is limited and benefits vary across agencies, locations, and cases	Participants can articulate that the services they receive will be for a limited time	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
		Participants can state that the services they receive may not be the same as what other refugees will receive	Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can verbalize that they will receive assistance but non-urgent issues may not be addressed immediately	Overcoming Challenges
	There are a number of organizations that will work alongside local resettlement agencies to assist with access to locally-available programs and provision of services	Participants can identify the local resettlement agency as the first point of contact for accessing services	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can articulate that the local resettlement agency may assist refugees with access to other agencies or organizations for services	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided Attending Orientation Classes

	Content Objective	Learning Indicator	Activity Plan
Role of the Local Resettlement Agency	The local resettlement agency provides assistance to refugees through the provision of items and/or money to meet initial needs, a limited scope of services, and advocacy on refugees' behalf to receive services for which they are eligible	Participants can identify four types of items that will be provided soon after arrival: initial housing, basic furnishings, seasonal clothing as necessary, food or food allowance	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can identify basic services provided by the local resettlement agency	The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Attending Orientation Classes Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can state that they may receive money and/or money may be spent on their behalf	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
	The quality and quantity of items provided will vary	Participants can identify factors related to the quality and quantity of items they might receive, including the availability of resources, the need of the family, and budgets	Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can state that the items they receive might not be new or what they would choose for themselves	Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can state that the items or money they receive may not be the same as what other refugees will receive	Overcoming Challenges
	Refugees are responsible for their own successful resettlement in partnership with the local resettlement agency	Participants can affirm that refugees and the local resettlement agency work in partnership and have rights and responsibilities with respect to each other	The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can name the local resettlement agency case manager as a source of reliable and accurate information	The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided A New Partnership
		Participants know the caseworker/office contact info and how and when to contact them	The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

	Content Objective	Learning Indicator	Activity Plan
Refugee Status	There are responsibilities related to refugee status	Participants recognize that refugee and public assistance are limited in scope	The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency
	Public assistance is available to help refugees pay for their needs, but is limited in amount and scope	Participants know that there are limitations on eligibility based on employment and marital status, income level, family size, etc.	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
Public Assistance		Participants can acknowledge that assistance varies from state to state	Overcoming Challenges
	There are a variety of types of government assistance	Participants know that there is assistance available for low-income families (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF], Electronic Benefit Transfer [EBT, formerly food stamps], Medicaid, public housing assistance, unemployment)	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
		Participants know that there is assistance available for people with disabilities and the elderly (Social Security, Medicare)	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
	Participants can identify types of assistance for families (e.g. WIC, Children's Health Insurance Program [CHIP], free/reduced school lunch program)	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided	
	Participants can identify types of assistance for refugees (R&P, Matching Grant, Wilson Fish)	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided	
	There are responsibilities associated with some types of assistance	Participants can identify the responsibilities associated with the types of assistance they are receiving, such as community service or attending job readiness classes	Attending Orientation Classes
Participants understand the importance of maintaining communication with their public assistance caseworker (when applicable)		Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided Overcoming Challenges	

	Content Objective	Learning Indicator	Activity Plan
Your New Community	There are community and public services that are available to support residents	Participants can identify community services relevant to their specific needs, such as senior services or child care/day care	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
		Participants can identify community services that refugees may need to access, such as food banks, family support services, and the local government	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
	Members of the refugee's ethnic or religious group who live in the area may be a good source of support	Participants are aware of Ethnic Community-Based Organizations or other organizations that serve members of their community	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
Employment	Early employment and job retention are essential to survival in the U.S., and must be the primary focus for all employable adults (men and women)	Participants can identify good interview skills such as firm handshake, eye contact, appropriate body language and also negative actions such as not answering questions well, stressing the need for a lot of money, or a disinterested expression	A New Partnership
	The refugee plays a central role in finding/obtaining employment in the U.S.	Participants can explain the role of the resettlement agency and various outside service providers in assisting them with employment services	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
	A crucial way of finding better paying jobs is learning how to speak English	Participants can identify English language acquisition as a key to a better job	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
	There are general characteristics of U.S. professional and work culture to which refugees must adapt in order to be successful in finding and maintaining employment	Participants can identify appropriate and desirable workplace behavior	A New Partnership Overcoming Challenges
		Participants can list effective ways to communicate with their employer and fellow employees	A New Partnership Overcoming Challenges
	Health	Initial health screenings and immunizations will be scheduled within 30 days of arrival	Participants can acknowledge that a basic health screening and immunizations will be scheduled for after their arrival
There are norms associated with health care services in the U.S.		Participants understand how to effectively communicate with health care professionals	A New Partnership

	Content Objective	Learning Indicator	Activity Plan
Cultural Adjustment	There are cultural norms and expectations that are fairly widespread throughout the U.S.	Participants are familiar with issues of etiquette, such as punctuality, politeness, appropriate noise levels, and appropriate dress and appearance	A New Partnership
	The philosophies of self-sufficiency and self-advocacy are central to American culture and to refugees' cultural adjustment	Participants understand the importance of politely communicating their needs and wants	A New Partnership
	There are some basic coping mechanisms to deal with the stressors of adjustment	Participants can state that learning English will facilitate their adjustment to life in the U.S.	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
Education	There are legal and normative expectations regarding schooling in the U.S.	Participants can identify the rights and responsibilities of parents and children in the school system	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
		Participants understand the concept of parental involvement in schooling	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided
Transportation	Transportation options exist in most communities	Participants are aware of public transportation options in their locality	Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

Introduction for the Trainer

Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about the basic services provided by the resettlement agency and about the need to work with resettlement agency staff. Participants will also learn that the assistance from the resettlement agency is limited.

Main Messages

Resettlement staff will be refugees' main guides to their new communities and will ensure that they are given basic services when they first arrive. It is important that refugees work with agency staff by listening to them and sharing their questions and concerns. Resettlement staff will provide reliable and accurate information. Refugees should understand that to succeed in the United States, they will need to play an active role in their own resettlement, especially since assistance from others is limited.



20 minutes

Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Identify their resettlement agency as the first point of contact for accessing services
- ▶ Describe basic services provided by their resettlement agency
- ▶ Define the partnership between the resettlement agency and the refugee

Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *case worker/manager*
- ▶ *resettlement agency*
- ▶ *Social Security number*
- ▶ *Who is your case worker/manager?*

Materials

- Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements (included)

Note to Trainer

This session is best conducted in an empty training space or with furniture pushed to the side, so that there is space in the middle of the room for participants to stand in a circle. If this is not possible, try to push furniture toward the middle of the training space, or have participants stand around outside the furniture, along the edge of the training space.

Session Preparation

Review the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements. Add or edit statements to ensure that all information is accurate and reflects the role of the resettlement agency in your area.

Understand the way in which clients are supposed to contact their case worker/manager, according to the resettlement agency policies. Prepare to share this information with participants.

Trainer's Introduction of Session to Participants

You will need to work in partnership with your resettlement agency. The services you receive will be for a limited time. During this session, we will talk about the basic things you need to know about the role of the resettlement agency.

Introductory Exercise

Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the question. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the question whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.

Activity

Ask participants to stand in a circle. The trainer should stand in the circle with the participants. Tell participants that you will read a statement. If participants agree with the statement or think it is correct, they take one step into the circle. If participants disagree with the statement or think it is incorrect, they continue standing where they are.

Read the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements one by one. Give participants time to decide if each statement is correct or incorrect, or if participants agree or disagree with the statement. Once participants have made their decision, ask them to talk about why they responded the way they did. Let participants know whether the statement is correct or incorrect. Then, before reading the next statement, ask participants who stepped into the middle of the circle to step back so all participants are back in the circle.

When all of the statements have been read, ask participants to turn to a partner and tell that person how to contact her/his case worker/manager.

Tell participants that when they first arrive in the United States, their case worker/manager will be the one to get in touch with them. After a period of time, refugees will need to know when and how to make contact with the agency. Explain the basic process that refugees should follow when contacting agency staff, based on what you found out about the resettlement agency's policy during the session preparation.

Then debrief the session using the questions below.

Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What are some of the basic services that your resettlement agency should provide?
- ▶ For how long will these services be provided to you?
- ▶ What is a partnership?
- ▶ Why do you think establishing a partnership with your resettlement agency is important?
- ▶ When you need to access basic services, who should you contact for assistance?
- ▶ When is it appropriate to contact your case worker/manager? How should you make contact?

Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with one to three participants, sit together in a group. Read the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements to participants one by one. Participants can be asked to raise their hands or move an object (such as a pen, pebble, or piece of paper) forward to demonstrate their agreement with the statement.

Variations and Considerations

Prepare a list with pictures of agency staff. When introducing the term *case worker/manager* during the introductory exercise, ask participants to identify and name their assigned case worker/manager.

If needed, use translated versions of the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements.

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements

Your resettlement agency will help you access important public services, such as medical assistance and English language classes.

Note to trainer: Stress that participants should discuss accessing public assistance with their resettlement agency.

Your resettlement agency is always available to help you, so you do not need to work with the agency.

Note to trainer: Discuss the importance of establishing a partnership with the resettlement agency.

You will receive basic services from your resettlement agency, such as scheduling your first medical appointment and registering your children at school.

Note to trainer: Discuss some of the other services the resettlement agency offers.

Your resettlement agency will be able to help you for as long as you need the help.

Note to trainer: Stress that services are for a limited period of time.

Whenever you need your case worker/manager, s/he is available, so you can call her/him anytime.

Note to trainer: Define appropriate hours to call case workers/managers. Remind participants that they can leave a message, either in English or a language they are more comfortable in.

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

Initial Resettlement Assistance and Services Provided

Introduction for the Trainer

Key Content

During this session, participants will learn more about the basic assistance and services that they will receive with the help of their resettlement agency.

Main Messages

Refugees should understand that the local resettlement agency is not the U.S. government. The local resettlement agency will make sure that refugees are provided with basic services when they first arrive in the United States. There is also some public assistance available for low-income families who are eligible for it. Refugees need to know that services and assistance are limited, and that different refugees may receive different services because of factors such as family size, age, family situation, resettlement site, and income.



30 minutes

Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ State that the resettlement agency provides refugees with basic services
- ▶ Describe initial assistance and services available
- ▶ Discuss what they have learned or will learn during the initial R&P period
- ▶ Identify and share what they would like to learn more about after initial resettlement

Materials

- Initial Assistance and Services Game Board (included), 1 per group of 3-5
- Playing pieces (such as pebbles or small pieces of paper), 1 per group of 3-5
- Optional: Scissors

Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *appointment*
- ▶ *office*
- ▶ *orientation*
- ▶ *What time is my appointment?*

Session Preparation

Be sure that the steps described on the Initial Assistance and Services Game Board reflect what actually takes place (and in more or less the order shown) within your agency. Edit and/or reorder as necessary. Add examples of local social services in the space provided.

Trainer’s Introduction of Session to Participants

During this session, we will learn about the support and help that you receive from your resettlement agency when you first arrive in the United States.

Introductory Exercise

Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the question. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the question whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.

Conduct a “think-pair-share” exercise by asking participants to think about how they have worked and interacted with staff at the resettlement agency up to now. Ask participants to also consider what they have learned about their new community and about resettling in the United States.

Ask participants to share their thoughts about these topics with a partner. Participants may feel uncomfortable speaking about their own experiences, so tell them that they may also share experiences they have “heard about.”

Bring the full group together and ask for highlights from the partner discussions. Tell participants that some issues that may have come up during the exercise will be discussed later in this session. If issues came up that will not be discussed during the activity, assure participants that they have been heard and that their issues can be discussed later during a break, after the session, or with a case worker/manager.

Activity

Divide participants into groups of three to five people. Give each group an Initial Assistance and Services Game Board and playing piece.

Each group places its playing piece on the “Start” square of the Initial Assistance and Services Game Board. To begin, the group moves the playing piece to the first square. Participants look at the picture and read the question in the square. Within the group, participants discuss the picture and what it represents, and answer the questions on the square. Then the group moves the playing piece to the next square and continues as before. Groups continue until they have reached the “End” square.

When finished, bring the full group together to debrief the session using the questions below.

Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What tasks have you already taken care of with the help of your resettlement agency? What did you learn as you moved through the first steps of resettlement?
- ▶ What else can you take care of or learn about with the help of your case worker/manager or other resettlement agency staff?
- ▶ What other things would you like to do or learn about? How will you take care of them or learn about them?

Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with an individual or a small group, conduct the introductory exercise by asking participants to think about how they have worked and interacted with staff at the resettlement agency to date. Also ask them what they have learned about resettlement and their new community in the United States. Discuss this for a few minutes before moving to the activity.

The Initial Assistance and Services Game Board is very simple. The trainer places a playing piece on the “Start” square and then moves the piece to the first square. The trainer reads the question in the square aloud and asks participants to look at the picture. Participants respond to the question. Then the trainer moves the playing piece to the next square and does the same thing. This should continue until the “End” square has been reached. The trainer should use the questions provided to debrief the session.

Variations and Considerations

If possible, assign at least one literate participant to each group. If participants cannot read English, encourage groups to discuss what the pictures represent and what would happen at that stage of resettlement in terms of working with the resettlement agency and accessing other social services. The trainer should visit each group frequently to help start and keep conversations going. If you are working with an interpreter, s/he can help groups read the questions. You could also have all the groups move their pieces to the same spaces at the same time. The trainer then reads the questions from that space aloud, and each small group discusses the questions before the full group moves onto the next space and next questions.

If possible, group participants by language background for the activity so that they can communicate in a common language.

If needed, use translated versions of the Initial Assistance and Services Game Board.

Initial Assistance and Services Game Board

<p>S T A R T</p>	<p>Preparation of home</p>  <p>What did resettlement agency staff do to prepare your home for your arrival?</p>	<p>Airport arrival</p>  <p>Who met you at the airport? What happened there?</p>	<p>Home orientation</p>  <p>What did you learn during your initial home orientation?</p>	<p>Assistance enrolling children in school</p>  <p>How can resettlement agency staff help you with this? What is your responsibility?</p>	<p>Connections with local services such as</p> <hr/> <hr/>  <p>What local services are available to you?</p>	<p>Using transportation</p>  <p>What types of transportation are available to you? Why are they useful?</p>	<p>E N D</p>	<p>Ongoing assistance</p>  <p>What kind of assistance can your resettlement agency help you access in the future?</p>	<p>Employment assistance</p>  <p>How can employment assistance be helpful to you? Why is having a job important?</p>	<p>Enrollment in English language classes</p>  <p>Why are English language classes important?</p>	<p>Attending medical screening appointment</p>  <p>Why do you need a medical screening?</p>	<p>Attending community orientation classes</p>  <p>What can you learn in orientation classes? What would you like to learn more about in these classes?</p>	<p>Using shopping facilities</p>  <p>What type of shopping do you need to know how to do?</p>
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Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

Attending Orientation Classes

Introduction for the Trainer

Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about the importance of attending orientation sessions and of sharing their questions and concerns.

Main Messages

Local resettlement agency staff members are the most reliable source of information for a refugee resettling in their new community. Participants will need to clearly understand the relevance of orientation classes to them so that they will attend. This is also the time when trust between the agency and the refugees is built, so encourage participants to share their questions and concerns with you and/or resettlement agency staff. Identify for the refugees other service providers in the community who will be helping them with their resettlement.



25 minutes

Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Explain why it is important to attend orientation sessions
- ▶ Identify the orientation topics that interest them most
- ▶ Share their concerns and questions about orientation and resettlement

Materials

- Orientation Session Pictures (included)
- Orientation Cards (included), 1 set per group of 4-6
- Pencil (or pen), 1 per group of 4-6

Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *community services*
- ▶ *English class*
- ▶ *public transportation*
- ▶ *I would like information about _____ [employment for me; English classes I can take; enrolling my child in school].*

Note to Trainer

When thinking about orientation sessions available to refugees in the area, consider not only the reception and placement (R&P) orientation sessions but also sessions offered by other service providers, either during the R&P period or after it has ended.

Session Preparation

Review the Orientation Pictures and Orientation Cards. Edit these to reflect what is available in your area. Substitute pictures of local options available if possible.

Print the Orientation Pictures and cut them in half along the dotted lines.

Print sets of Orientation Cards for each group. Then cut the cards along the dotted lines, keeping sets together.

Trainer's Introduction of Session to Participants

The resettlement agency and other service providers offer orientation sessions on different topics about life in your new community. Attending these sessions is very important because you will learn many things that will help you adjust to life in the United States. We will tell you what topics are offered during orientation and find out from you what else you might want to learn when you attend these sessions.

Introductory Exercise

Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the sentence. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the sentence whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.

Activity

Hold up Orientation Session Pictures one by one and briefly describe what is provided at the session shown in the picture.

Divide participants into groups of four to six people. Groups sit in a circle with a flat surface (table, chair, or floor) between them. Distribute a set of Orientation Cards and a pencil to each group.

Participants place the pencil on the flat surface in the middle of the group. Orientation Cards are placed near the writing implement, like this:



One participant spins the pencil by holding it in the center and twisting it, letting it fall to the flat surface. When it stops spinning, it will be pointing at a participant. For example:



If the pencil is pointing between participants or at the participant who spun it, turn the point so it is pointing to the person seated to the left of the point of the writing implement. This is the person "chosen."

The person chosen turns over the Orientation Card on top of the pile. The participant says the type of orientation that is being shown on the card. Then the participant says one thing s/he thinks can be learned by attending this session. For example, an employment session might teach someone how to look for a job, while a person might learn about cleaning an apartment at a housing session. Encourage other group members to give ideas after the chosen participant has done so.

The chosen participant returns the card to the bottom of the pile and spins the pencil, and the game continues as before.

The trainer should try to listen in on conversations to make sure accurate information is being given.

After 15 to 20 minutes, bring the full group together and debrief the session using the questions below.

Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What orientation sessions sound most important for you to attend? Why?
- ▶ What else would you like to learn about?
- ▶ Do you have any other questions about the orientation sessions that are offered?
- ▶ What are some of the disadvantages of *not* attending orientation sessions?

Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with an individual or a small group, the trainer should review the Orientation Cards and choose fewer cards, selecting those that are most likely to meet the needs and interests of participants. The trainer should hold up the chosen Orientation Cards one by one during the activity and ask participants what type of orientation session is represented by the picture. The trainer then asks participants what they might learn about during that session. For example, a participant might learn about how to use public transportation in a session on transportation, or how to get involved at their child's school during a session on education. When the Orientation Cards have all been discussed, the trainer should debrief the session with participants using the questions provided.

Variations and Considerations

Before copying the Orientation Cards, type or write where each service pictured is offered in the blank space at the bottom of the card. Encourage participants to include this information in their discussion of the cards.

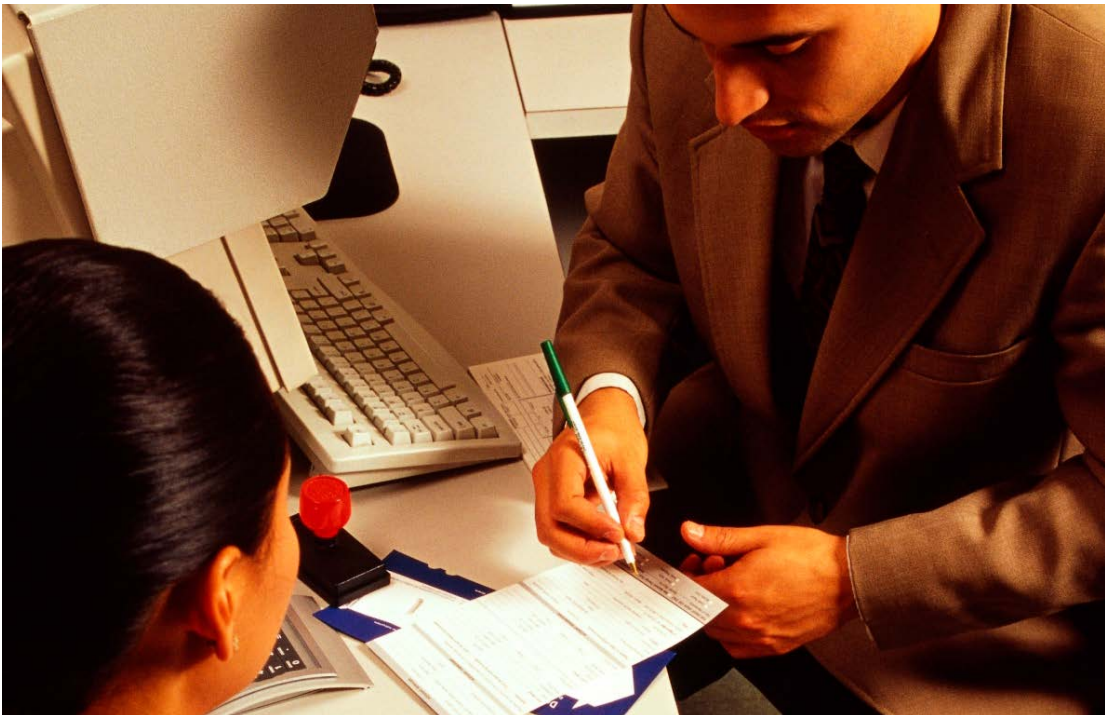
If possible, group participants by language background for the activity so that they can communicate in a common language.

If possible, consider dividing groups by educational level to better meet the interests and needs of participants.

If needed, use translated versions of the Orientation Session Pictures and/or the Orientation Cards.

If possible, provide participants with a schedule of upcoming orientation sessions at the end of the session.

Orientation Session Pictures



Adjusting your refugee status



Budgeting and personal finance



Children and youth



Community services and public assistance



Cultural adjustment



Employment



Family and parenting



Health and hygiene



Home safety



Housing



K-12 education



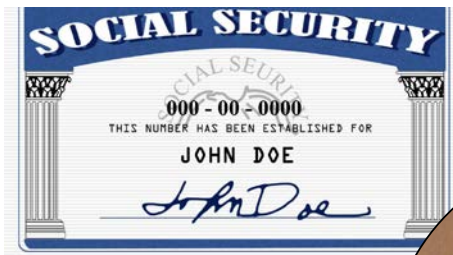
Learning English



Older refugees



Rights and responsibilities



Role of the resettlement agency



Safety



Transportation



U.S. laws

Orientation Cards



Adjusting your refugee status



Budgeting and personal finance



Children and youth



Community services and public assistance



Cultural adjustment



Employment



Family and parenting



Health and hygiene



Home safety



Housing



K-12 education



Learning English



Older refugees



Rights and responsibilities



Role of the resettlement agency



Safety



Transportation



U.S. laws

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

A New Partnership

Introduction for the Trainer

Key Content

During this session, participants will learn how good communication leads to a positive working relationship with their resettlement agency and with others in their community.

Main Messages

Resettlement staff and refugees work together as partners to help refugees resettle successfully. Polite and effective communication and mutual respect are critical to this relationship. Participants will learn and practice ways to communicate effectively with resettlement staff—and with others in the community as well, such as service providers, employers, their children’s teachers, and their neighbors.



20 minutes

Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Practice communicating with others
- ▶ Identify communication practices considered respectful in the United States
- ▶ Identify ways to work with resettlement agency staff

Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *entrance*
- ▶ *exit*
- ▶ *front desk*
- ▶ *Hello. How are you?*

Materials

- Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle (included)
- Scissors
- Flipchart paper, markers, and tape
- Optional: New Partnership Critical Incidents (included)

Note to Trainer

While this session is a good stand-alone activity, it is also a good introduction to the activity plan, “Role of the Local Resettlement Agency: Overcoming Challenges.”

Session Preparation

Estimate the number of participants who will attend the session. Cut the Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle into enough pieces so that each participant has at least one piece. Each Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle Piece should be approximately the same size and shape.

Determine where participants will complete the Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle. It should be a flat space where all participants can stand or sit around and easily view the puzzle.

Label a piece of flipchart paper “Good Communication.”

Trainer’s Introduction of Session to Participants

You have entered a new partnership with the staff at your resettlement agency. Treating the staff with respect and communicating appropriately and effectively is important for this partnership. During this session, we will talk about common ways to communicate in the United States, and how you might work with your assigned resettlement agency to help ease your adjustment process.

Introductory Exercise

Hang the Good Communication flipchart page in front of the training space. Ask participants how they would say “good communication” in their first language. Ask participants who are literate to write these words at the top of the flipchart alongside the printed “Good Communication.” Interpreters can write if participants cannot.

Conduct a “think-pair-share” exercise by asking participants to think about one aspect or example of good communication. Ask participants to share their thoughts about this with a partner.

Bring the full group together and ask participants to share something that came up in their discussions. Record highlights on the Good Communication flipchart paper.

Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the sentence. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the sentence whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.

Activity

Distribute one Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle Piece to each participant. Direct participants to the flat space. As a group, participants place their puzzle pieces together to complete the Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle. Tell participants to think about the aspects of good communication discussed earlier in the session and how they might practice these during this activity. Tell participants that everyone must place a piece into the puzzle. If some are not placing their pieces, ask them questions about the puzzle and their pieces, and remind the group of the rules.

When the Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle is complete, ask participants to look at the picture of a resettlement agency and identify the scene, describing some of the things in it (for example, the desk in the reception area, the computer for clients to use, and the toys for children to play with while they are waiting).

Then ask the full group if they have anything else to add to the Good Communication list based on what they learned during the activity.

Debrief the session using the questions below.

Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What happened during this session?
- ▶ What was helpful about the session? What was challenging?
- ▶ What was one example of good communication that was helpful to the group in completing the puzzle?
- ▶ What else did you notice about the session?
- ▶ What did you see in the picture of the resettlement agency that might be helpful to you?
- ▶ Why is your partnership with the resettlement agency important to consider when looking at this picture?
- ▶ What have we learned in this session that will help us work well with the resettlement agency or others?

Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with an individual or a small group, conduct the introductory exercise by asking participants to share aspects of effective communication. Record these ideas on flipchart paper. For the activity, the Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle should be cut into at least ten pieces. Each participant receives an equal number of pieces to complete the puzzle. The trainer can help participants complete the puzzle if there are one or two participants.

Variations and Considerations

When working with a large group, divide participants into groups of five to eight participants. Each group completes a Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle.

Consider hanging the list of good communication strategies in the waiting room or another space where clients would often see it.

Use a different picture (or multiple pictures) for the Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle that shows different aspects of communicating. For example, a picture of two people sitting together discussing papers could demonstrate trust or working together, while a picture of two people talking animatedly could demonstrate rich and open conversation. When choosing a picture, be careful to choose one that will not culturally offend participants. You may choose a communication scene that is culturally familiar to participants, or one that shows something unfamiliar that participants need to know about.

Use a different picture for the Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle to address different topics, such as a community map to discuss transportation or community services, or a picture of a bathroom when discussing hygiene or cleaning.

Instead of the puzzle activity, choose from the New Partnership Critical Incidents based on common challenges in your area. *[The trainer might also consider using relevant Challenge Cards from the “Role of the Local Resettlement Agency: Overcoming Challenges” activity plan and adding questions regarding good communication with agency staff for small groups to consider.]* Divide participants into small groups of three to four participants. Read a New Partnership Critical Incident aloud. Present the questions provided for small groups to discuss. Then debrief the incident as a full group, asking for highlights from the small group discussions. Read the next chosen New Partnership Critical Incident and continue as before.

When working with a literate group of participants, give one New Partnership Critical Incident to each group to discuss, in English or the translated versions. Each small group selects a spokesperson to share highlights from their discussions with the full group. Debrief the session using the last two questions provided.

Resettlement Agency Partnership Puzzle

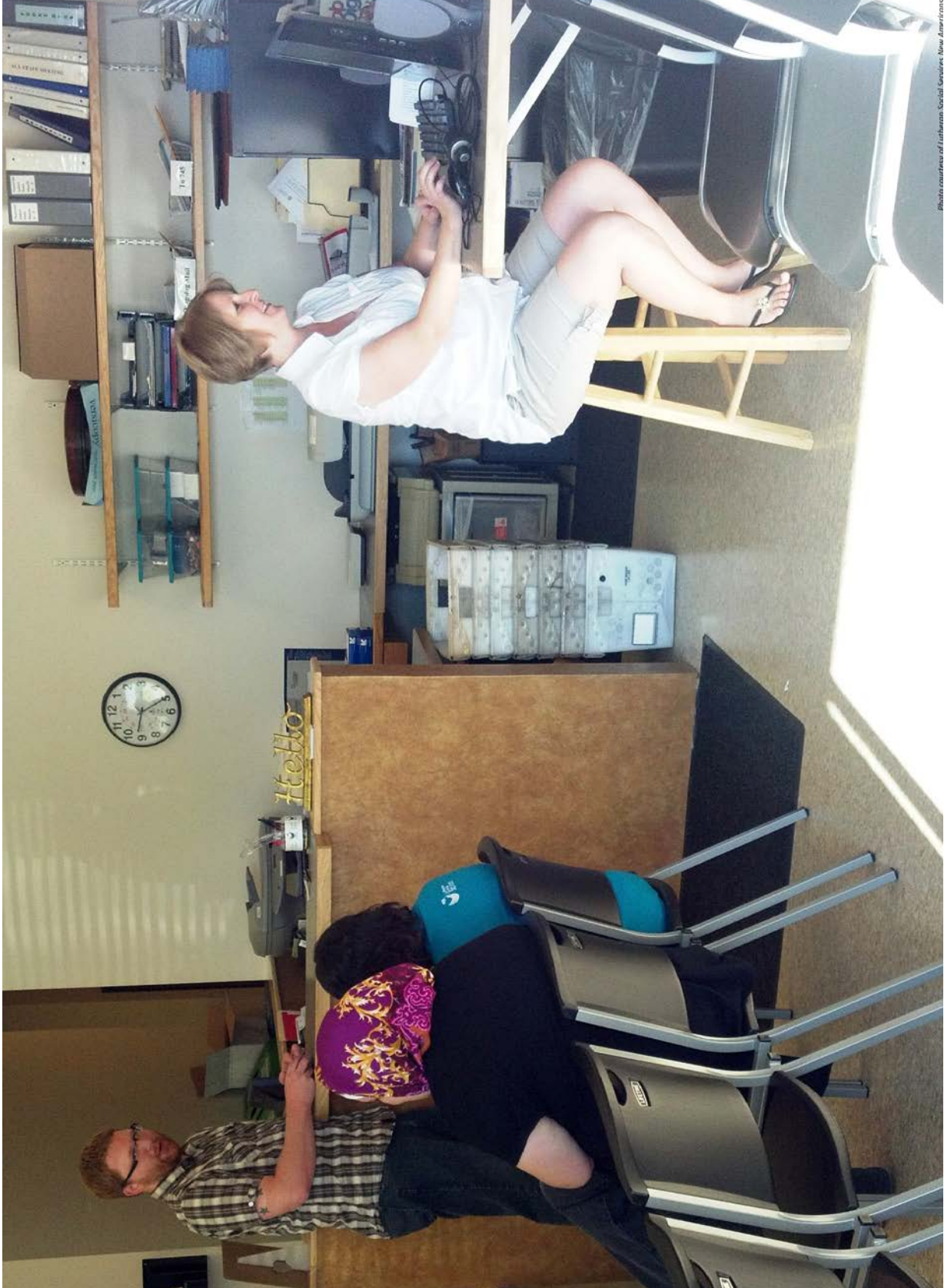


Photo courtesy of Lakshmi Social Services, New Americans

New Partnership Critical Incidents

New Partnership Critical Incident 1

Maryam and Bandeh's case worker/manager, Joan, told them to meet her at the resettlement agency at 10:00 the next morning. When they didn't show up, Joan called them at home, and was surprised when they answered the phone. Maryam and Bandeh had thought Joan would pick them up and were surprised to hear they had been expected at the resettlement agency.

Questions to consider:

- ▶ What was the confusion in this incident?
- ▶ To avoid a similar situation, what could you do?
- ▶ What are some things Maryam and Bandeh should remember about good communication?

New Partnership Critical Incident 2

Sandhya needs to make a follow-up appointment with her doctor. She has forgotten what the phone number is. Sandhya goes to the resettlement agency, but her case worker/manager is not at the office.

Questions to consider:

- ▶ What is the issue in this incident?
- ▶ What should Sandhya do?
- ▶ What could Sandhya have done to avoid this situation?
- ▶ What are some things Sandhya should remember about good communication?

New Partnership Critical Incident 3

Cirguje feels his case worker/manager is not helping him enough to look for a job. He calls his case worker/manager and leaves a message demanding more assistance.

Questions to consider:

- ▶ What is the issue in this incident?
- ▶ What could Cirguje have done differently?
- ▶ What are some things Cirguje should remember about good communication?

New Partnership Critical Incident 4

The employment specialist has offered to help Hau Lian Khup apply for a part-time job stocking shelves at a grocery store. Hau Lian Khup's neighbor, who is from his home country and has been very helpful to Hau Lian Khup, tells him not to trust the employment specialist and to wait for a full-time position that pays more.

Questions to consider:

- ▶ What is the issue in this incident?
- ▶ If Hau Lian Khup does not take the part-time job, what could happen?
- ▶ Why does Hau Lian Khup's neighbor tell him not to trust the employment specialist?
- ▶ What do you think Hau Lian Khup should do?
- ▶ What are some things Hau Lian Khup should remember about good communication?

New Partnership Critical Incident 5

There is a leaky sink in Camilo's apartment. He calls his case worker/manager Danna for advice. Danna tells Camilo that she will report the problem to Camilo's landlord. Three days later, Danna stops at Camilo's apartment to drop off some paperwork. Camilo asks Danna about the leaky sink, and Danna says she forgot but will call the landlord soon.

Questions to consider:

- ▶ What is the issue in this incident?
- ▶ What should Camilo do?
- ▶ What are some things Camilo should remember about good communication?

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

Overcoming Challenges

Introduction for the Trainer

Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about the challenges they may face when working with their resettlement agency and how to deal with these challenges. They will also learn that the services refugees receive may vary from person to person.

Main Messages

Refugees will work closely with resettlement staff during their first few weeks in the United States as basic services are provided. They may face challenges with staff and/or case workers/managers. Resettlement staff members often help several refugees at the same time and may not be able to respond right away to non-urgent issues. Participants should also understand that the amount and type of services and assistance refugees receive varies from person to person depending on different factors.



20 minutes

Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Understand better the basic services that they will be provided
- ▶ Identify challenges that might arise in working with their resettlement agency
- ▶ Consider how to overcome these challenges
- ▶ Understand that they may not receive the same services as other refugees

Materials

- Challenge Cards (included)
- Flipchart paper, markers, and tape

Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *assistance*
- ▶ *challenge*
- ▶ *services*
- ▶ *We can make it work.*

Note to Trainer

While this is a good stand-alone activity, it is also a good follow-up to the activity plan “Role of the Local Resettlement Agency: A New Partnership.”

Session Preparation

Review the Challenge Cards and choose cards that reflect common challenges between refugees and case workers/managers in your area. There should be enough Challenge Cards for two participants to share one. (With 10 participants, use 5 cards; with 32 participants, use 16 cards.) With a larger group, Challenge Cards can be duplicated.

Cut the chosen Challenge Cards along the dotted lines. Then cut each card down the middle so half of the picture and sentence is separated from the other half of the picture and sentence.

Find out the resettlement agency’s policy regarding client grievances—how they are submitted and handled. Be prepared to discuss this policy when debriefing the session.

Trainer’s Introduction of Session to Participants

As we have discussed, the partnership with your assigned resettlement agency and case worker/manager is very important. Sometimes there will be challenges in this partnership. During this session we will talk about how to handle these challenges.

Introductory Exercise

Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the sentence. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the sentence whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.

Distribute half of a prepared Challenge Card to each participant. Each participant finds the person holding the other half of their picture. Partners sit together with their shared Challenge Card.

Activity

Ask partners to look at their Challenge Card and identify what challenge is being shown. Ask partners to talk about how they would feel if they were faced with this challenge, and what is the best way to handle the situation.

The trainer should visit partners and make sure they understand what is being shown in the picture by reading the text at the bottom of the pictures to participants.

After about 5 minutes, bring the full group together. Ask partners to share briefly the challenge being shown on their card and what they would do if they were in that situation. Record notes on flipchart paper. Help participants come up with different ways to handle challenges—for example, openly talking and sharing your thoughts, concerns, and possible solutions with your case worker/manager; asking your case worker/manager for advice; trying things you have never done before; and taking the lead in finding a solution.

When partners have finished, debrief the session using the questions below.

Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What are some of the services and forms of assistance that your resettlement agency can help you with? *[If participants bring up forms of assistance that are not usually provided by resettlement agency staff, tell them so. Then tell them where the services are provided, or, if you do not know, tell them you will find out and get back to them with that information.]*
- ▶ What are some things that you may have to do by yourself?
- ▶ What can you say about the services provided by resettlement agencies?
- ▶ Are the services the same for everyone? *[Responses should be, “No.” Emphasize that there are reasons for this, such as legal requirements, funding requirements, etc. Tell participants that refugees differ in many ways—for example, by age, marital status, physical condition, and gender—and that in many cases the law and government policy decide what services a refugee will receive based on her or his situation.]*
- ▶ What are some ways of handling challenges that may arise? What are some things you would like to remember when challenges come up? *[If appropriate, discuss the resettlement agency’s grievances policy that you looked into during the session preparation.]*

Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with an individual or a small group of participants, choose three to four Challenge Cards that have been common challenges in the past. Cut the cards in half as described in the session preparation and mix up the half-cards. Introduce the session and review the key English vocabulary. Then spread the half-cards on the table. Participants match up the two halves. Ask participants what is being shown in each picture and how they might handle that situation. Debrief the session using the questions provided.

Variations and Considerations

When working with a large group and duplicate Challenge Cards, consider putting participants with the same cards together in small groups of four to six to discuss the challenge and its solution.

If needed, use translated versions of the Challenge Cards.

If participants have already attended the session “Role of the Local Resettlement Agency: A New Partnership,” encourage them to apply what they have learned about good communication as they look for solutions to the challenges.

Challenge Cards



The couches in your new home are very old, and you do not like the color.



The resettlement agency's employment specialist tells your 55-year-old mother that she has to get a job.



The sink in your apartment is not working, so you go to the resettlement agency for help. Your case worker/manager is not available to talk with you.



There is no space in the ESL class that your case worker/manager helped you find. You will have to wait for a month before you can start taking classes.



You want to go to college, but your case worker/manager tells you that you will need to start working first.



Your case worker/manager has found a part-time job for you. Your neighbor tells you to wait for a full-time job that pays more.



Your case worker/manager is a young female non-native English speaker who resettled in the United States as a refugee 5 years ago.



Your case worker/manager tells you that you need to actively look for employment.



Your case worker/manager tells you to call the receptionist at the resettlement agency to schedule an appointment.



Your cousin's family resettled in another state and their family was placed in a house. Your family has been placed in a small two-bedroom apartment.



Your daughter has been at school for 2 weeks, and her teacher asks you to come to the school to discuss her behavior.



Your neighbor's family was given a television by a resettlement agency volunteer, but your family was not given a television.



*Your son wakes you up in the middle of the night because he is sick.
You try to call your case worker/manager for advice,
but she does not answer the phone.*

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

Unit Vocabulary

The following lists key English vocabulary words related to this unit. The words are in alphabetical order.

[The following paragraph consists of instructions for the trainer. If you choose to share the Unit Vocabulary with participants, we recommend removing the following paragraph.]

Introduce words by using the definition and contextual sentence. Omit words that participants already know. A partner talk is meant to be a 2-minute exchange between participants and should include two to three terms that the participants easily understand. Encourage conversation and interaction, and focus on what participants already know about the word from its use during the session. Following the list of vocabulary words, there are two unit vocabulary worksheets for participants who would like to practice the words more.

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
<i>appointment</i>	An agreement to meet or do something at a particular time.	Kumar made an <i>appointment</i> to see his case worker/manager on Tuesday morning.	Who do you make <i>appointments</i> with? Why?
<i>assistance</i>	Giving help or support; the help or support given.	Kavitha receives <i>assistance</i> from her case worker/manager in completing forms for renting an apartment.	What kind of <i>assistance</i> do you need right now? Why?
<i>case worker or case manager</i>	A person from the resettlement agency who works with individuals and families.	Every refugee family has a <i>case worker/manager</i> who helps them.	What is the name of your <i>case worker/manager</i> ?
<i>challenge</i>	An interesting or difficult problem.	Mariam doesn't have a car. She finds it a <i>challenge</i> to get her daughter to school before going to work.	What do you think are or will be some <i>challenges</i> you face in your own or your child's education? How will you deal with these <i>challenges</i> ?
<i>clock</i>	A thing for measuring and showing time that is not a watch.	Rosa sees by the <i>clock</i> that she is on time for her appointment.	If you need to find out what time it is and you don't see a <i>clock</i> anywhere, what do you do?

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
<i>community services</i>	Public services that are available to support residents, often for free or at a low cost.	Julia uses the following <i>community services</i> for her family: food banks, day care for her son, and senior services for her parents.	What <i>community services</i> would you like to access? Why?
<i>English class</i>	A group of students who study English together with a teacher. Classes to learn English as a second language may also be called <i>ESL classes</i> .	Oo Meh goes to her daughter's elementary school at night for her <i>English class</i> .	Would you like to go to <i>English class</i> in the evening and work during the day? Why or why not?
<i>entrance</i>	A door or area that you go through when you enter a building.	The <i>entrance</i> to the resettlement agency faces the street.	Where is the <i>entrance</i> to your home?
<i>exact time</i>	The precise time to the minute.	Most Americans expect people to arrive at the <i>exact time</i> or earlier for appointments or events.	What do you think might happen if you don't arrive at the <i>exact time</i> or earlier for an appointment with your case worker/manager?
<i>exit</i>	A door or a way out of a building or a place.	Please leave the theater by the nearest <i>exit</i> .	Where have you seen the word <i>exit</i> before?
<i>front desk</i>	The area of an office, clinic, hotel, or apartment building for checking visitors and guests in and out and handling other requests.	You must check in at the <i>front desk</i> when you have an appointment at the resettlement agency.	What is the name of the person who sits at the <i>front desk</i> at the resettlement agency?
<i>home</i>	The place where a person lives.	Bashir's new <i>home</i> is in the apartments on 1 st and Elm Street.	Where is your <i>home</i> in the United States? How many people live in your <i>home</i> ?
<i>office</i>	A place where business or professional work is done.	Moe Aung is meeting with Rene in her <i>office</i> right now.	Do you meet with your case worker/manager in her <i>office</i> ? Where is her <i>office</i> ?

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
<i>older refugee</i>	A refugee who is older than age 65. <i>Older refugees</i> (and people in general) might also be called <i>seniors</i> or <i>senior citizens</i> .	Many older people, including <i>older refugees</i> , in the United States work until they are at least 65 years old.	What strengths do you think <i>older refugees</i> bring to a job? Why?
<i>orientation</i>	The process of preparing oneself or others for a new situation.	Grace and her family attended <i>orientation</i> before coming to the United States.	Did you attend <i>orientation</i> overseas? What did you learn about?
<i>public transportation</i>	Moving people from one place to another, usually by a vehicle. <i>Public transportation</i> is a means of moving people from place to place by bus, train, ferry, and other means.	In big cities like New York and Chicago there is a lot of <i>public transportation</i> . In smaller towns there may be less <i>public transportation</i> .	What kind of <i>public transportation</i> did you use before you came to the United States? What have you used since you arrived?
<i>resettlement agency</i>	An organization that helps refugees resettle in a new country.	The <i>resettlement agency</i> serves many families.	What is the name of your <i>resettlement agency</i> ?
<i>services</i>	Work or help that an organization or person does for someone else.	Jeevan's resettlement agency provides <i>services</i> to help refugees find jobs.	What <i>services</i> do you need right now? What <i>services</i> do you think you might need after a few months?
<i>shopping</i>	Looking for and buying food, clothes, appliances, or anything else.	Amira does food <i>shopping</i> at the grocery store near her apartment.	Have you found a place to go <i>shopping</i> for food from your home country yet?
<i>Social Security number</i>	An identification number issued by the U.S. government to citizens, permanent residents, and temporary residents of the United States.	You need to know your <i>Social Security number</i> when filling out many documents.	Why do you need to know your <i>Social Security number</i> ?
<i>waiting room</i>	A room in the doctor's office or resettlement agency where people stay until someone can meet with them.	The receptionist tells Javad to hang his coat up in the closet in the <i>waiting room</i> .	What does the <i>waiting room</i> in the resettlement agency look like?

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Unit Vocabulary Worksheets

There are two unit vocabulary worksheets. Worksheet 1 is for beginning-level English language learners, and Worksheet 2 is for learners with more advanced English language skills.

The worksheets can be incorporated into an orientation session, or they can be given to participants to work on at home.

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Unit Vocabulary Worksheet 1

Directions: Look at each picture and find the word in the word bank that matches it. Write the word on the line under its picture. One is done for you.

Word Bank		
1. appointment	2. clock	3. entrance
4. exit	5. front desk	6. home
7. older refugee	8. shopping	9. Social Security number

 <hr/> <input type="text"/>	 <hr/> <input type="text"/>	 <hr/> <input type="text"/>
 <hr/> <input type="text"/>	 <hr/> <input type="text"/>	 <p style="text-align: center;">appointment</p> <hr/> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto; padding: 5px;">1</div>
 <hr/> <input type="text"/>	 <hr/> <input type="text"/>	 <hr/> <input type="text"/>

Now you can check your work! In the word bank, each word has a number next to it. Write that number in the box under the picture of the word. Add up the rows, columns, and diagonals and make sure each line equals 15.

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Unit Vocabulary Worksheet 2

Directions: Use the clues to fill in the words in the puzzle below. The words are included in a word bank. The first one is done for you.

Word Bank		
case worker	exact time	orientation
older refugee	resettlement agency	waiting room

Across ↔

(words that go from left to right):

5. The process of preparing oneself or others for a new situation

Down ↓

(words that go from top to bottom):

1. An organization that helps refugees resettle in a new country
2. The precise time to the minute
3. A room where people stay until someone can meet with them
4. A person from the resettlement agency who works with individuals and families
5. A refugee who is older than 65