

Cultural Awareness in Regional Disaster Planning

Division of Global Populations and Infectious
Disease Prevention

Bureau of Infectious Disease

MA Department of Public Health

September 24, 2015



2013 U.S. Census Results

- 990,553 Lawful Permanent Residents
 - 69,909 Refugee Arrivals
 - 25,199 Asylums Granted
- Source: 2013 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics (Office of Immigration Statistics 2014) U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Focus of the Presentation

Assist disaster planners and responders to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to refugees and other non-US born populations.

Provide an overview of DPH's refugee health program; this would *not* include all immigrant and other non-US born arrivals in the state.

Objectives

- Define cultural awareness
- Explain why cultural awareness is important
- Gain understanding of refugee migration and the plight of being displaced
- Provide demographics and statistics of refugees living in the western region
- Considerations for incorporating a multicultural approach to disaster relief
- Provide helpful information and resources on how to work with refugee families affected by disasters



http://images.forbes.com/media/2010/05/20/0520_immigration.jpg

Why Cultural Awareness?

“Cultural awareness becomes central when we have to interact with people from other cultures.

People see, interpret and evaluate things in different ways. What is considered an appropriate behavior in one culture is frequently inappropriate in another one. Misunderstandings arise when I use my meanings to make sense of your reality.”

-- *What is Cultural Awareness, anyway? How do I build it?* By Stephanie Quappe and Giovanna Cantatore. www.culturocity.com



A Somali man being carried in a wheelbarrow ambulance to a nearby medical facility. Dadaab Refugee Camp, Kenya. Photo Courtesy: Reuters News on behalf of Voice of America. <http://www.voanews.com/content/kenya-wheelbarrow-ambulances-aid-women-in-labor/2512341.html>



Dadaab Refugee Camp

Photo Courtesy: UNHCR

https://www.uno-fluechtlingshilfe.de/fileadmin/redaktion/Bilder/Pressefotos/Dadaab_UNHCR.jpg



Syrian Refugee Camp in Jordan

Photo Courtesy: UNHCR; <http://www.unhcr.org/thumb1/50167fdc6.jpg>

Culture and Diversity

- The United States is multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual, yet professional trainings do not always reflect the diverse demographics of the communities.
- Individuals representing various cultures are found throughout many towns, cities, and states across the United States.



Copyright Swen Conrad/YumeVision Reporters
Bhutanese refugees making yarn for weaving. Bhutanese Refugee
Camps in Nepal

<http://yumevision.photoshelter.com/image/I0000IfCz67bd8x8>

Need for Cultural Awareness

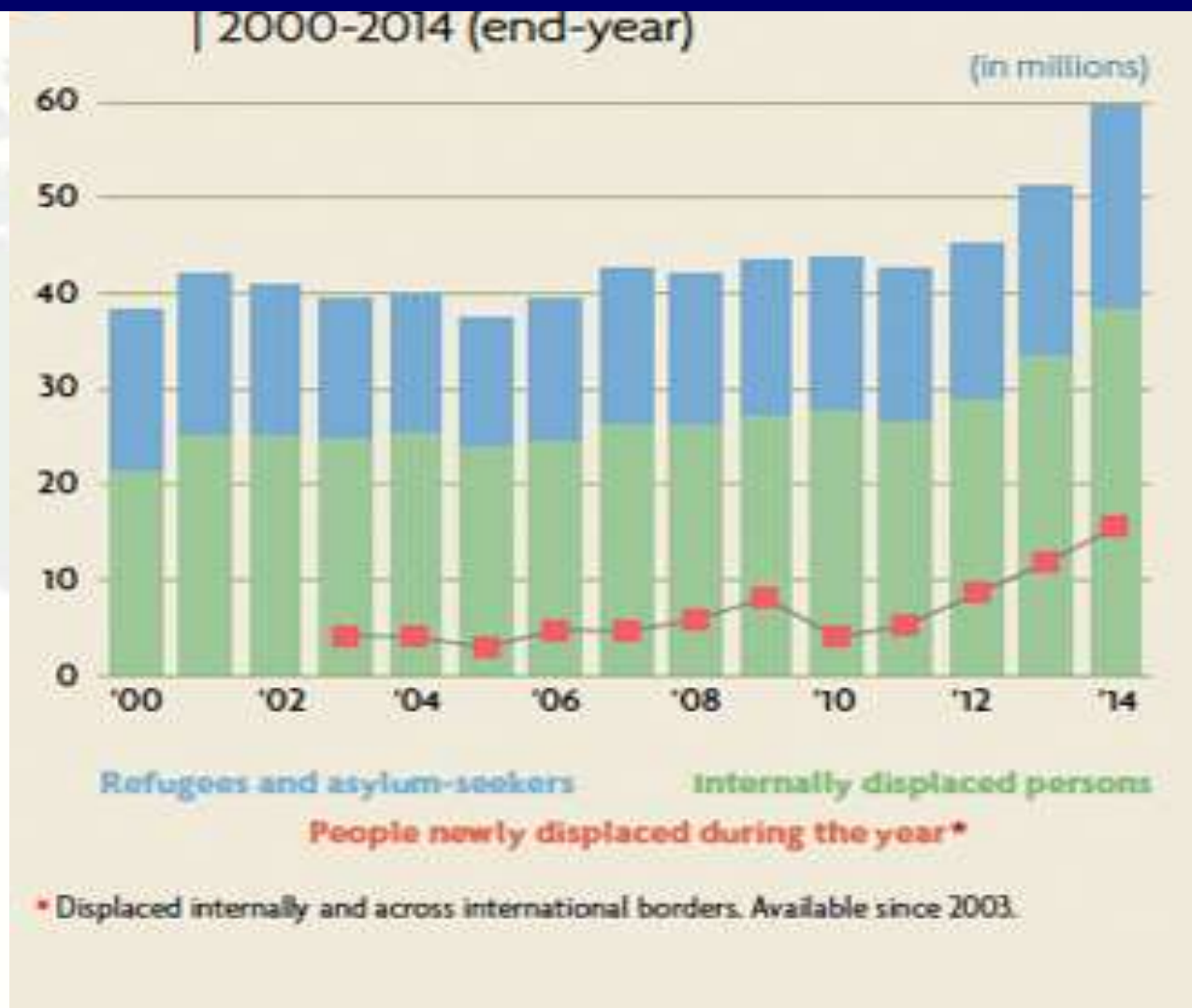
- An elevated number of traumatic events occur within minority and marginalized groups.
 - Example: The Springfield tornado in the year 2011 affected areas where majority populations were refugees and immigrants.
- There is often greater risk for negative health outcomes in these same groups after a disaster.
 - The disastrous event re-traumatizes refugee populations who fled war, famine, genocide.
- In many situations, disaster services for ethnic minorities and marginalized groups can be lacking.
 - In disasters, we are not always prepared to serve the basic needs of all ethnic minorities represented in the community (Safety, medical care, language, food, gender differences)

Factors Causing Retraumatization

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Past experiences such surviving war, disasters, genocide and **displacement.**

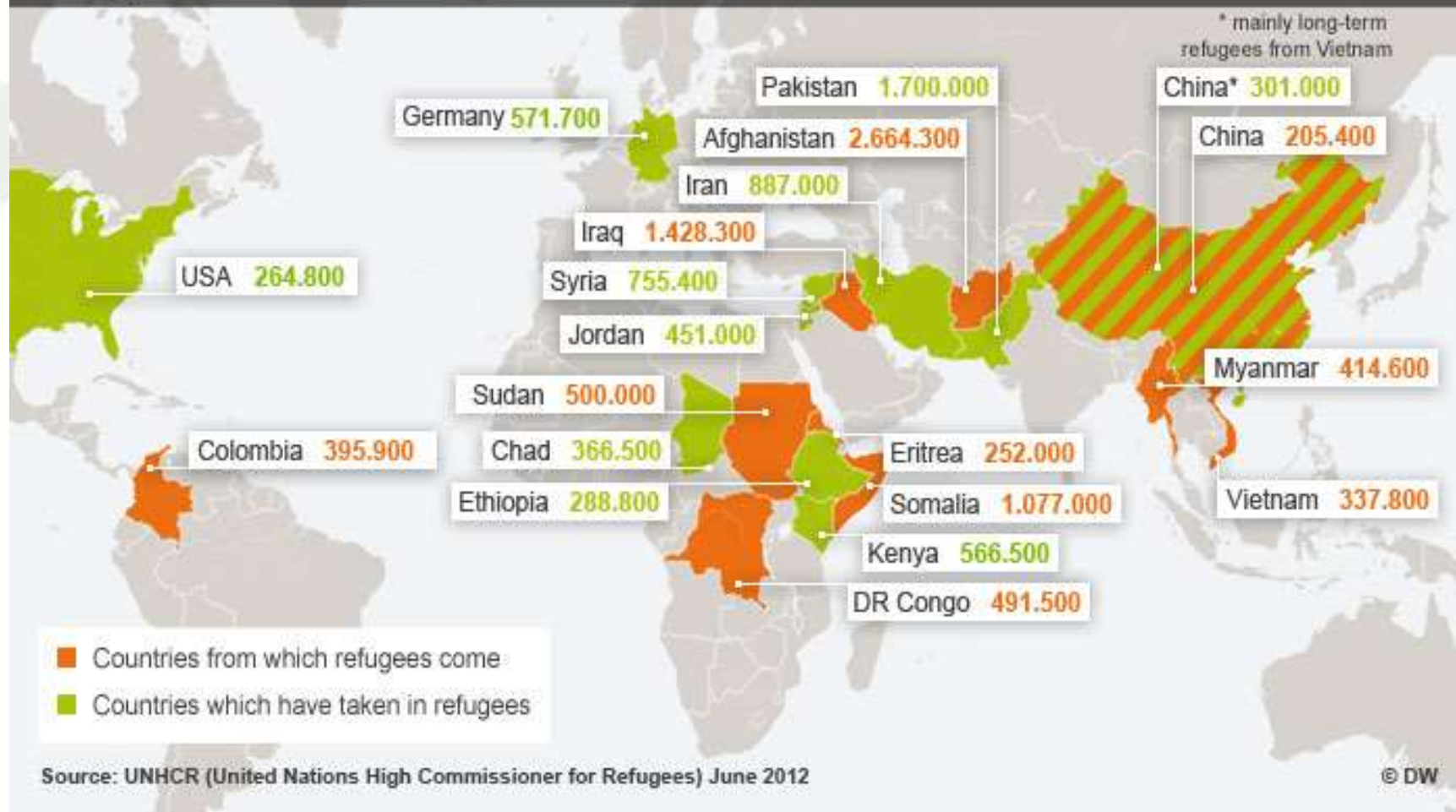
— Russell Jones, Ph.D., April Naturale, Ph.D., (2012) “Cultural Awareness: Children and Disasters”
SAMHSA education series: <http://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/podcasts-cultural-awareness-presentation.pdf>

Global Displacement: 2000-2014 (end year)



Refugee flows: June 2012

Refugees worldwide



Major Source Countries of Refugees (end-2014)

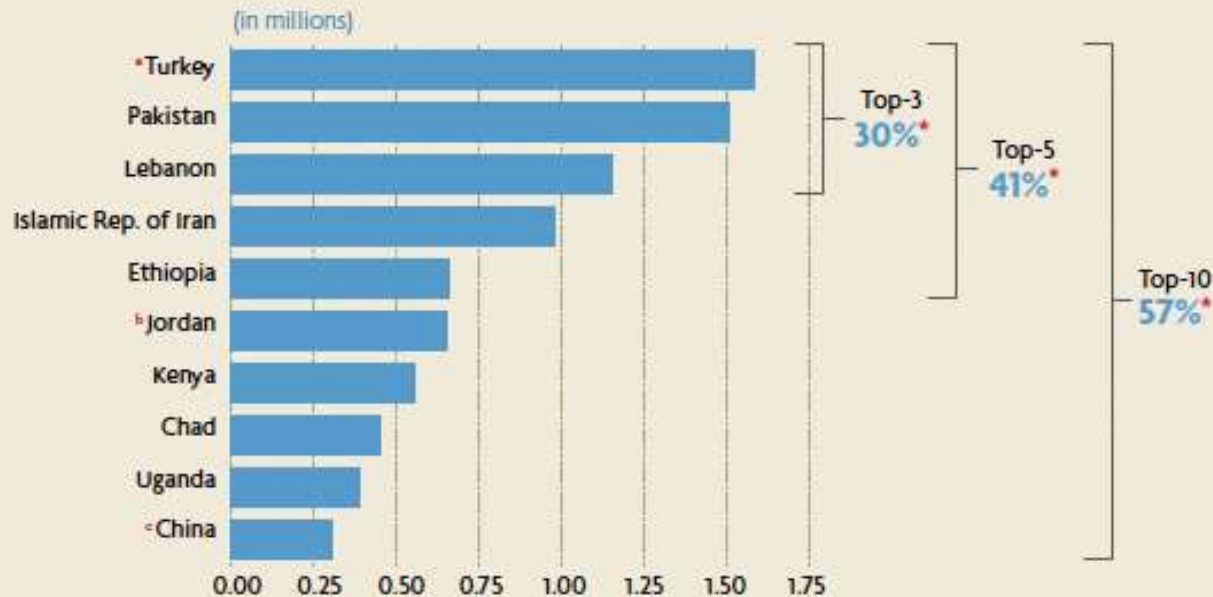
Fig. 4 Major source countries of refugees | end-2014



* Reflects proportion out of global number of refugees at end-2014.

Major Refugee-Hosting Countries (end-2014)

Fig. 3 Major refugee-hosting countries | end-2014



* Reflects proportion out of global number of refugees at end-2014.

^a Refugee figure for Syrians in Turkey is a Government estimate.

^b Includes 29,300 Iraqi refugees registered with UNHCR in Jordan. The Government estimates the number of Iraqis at 400,000 individuals at the end of March 2015. This includes refugees and other categories of Iraqis.

^c The 300,000 Vietnamese refugees are well integrated and in practice receive protection from the Government of China.



Who is a Refugee?

Photo Courtesy UNHCR/AFP C. Archenbault

<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c25d-page1.html>

Refugee Definition

A refugee is someone who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country...”

-The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees

Durable Solutions

1. Voluntary **Repatriation** - returning to one's home country.

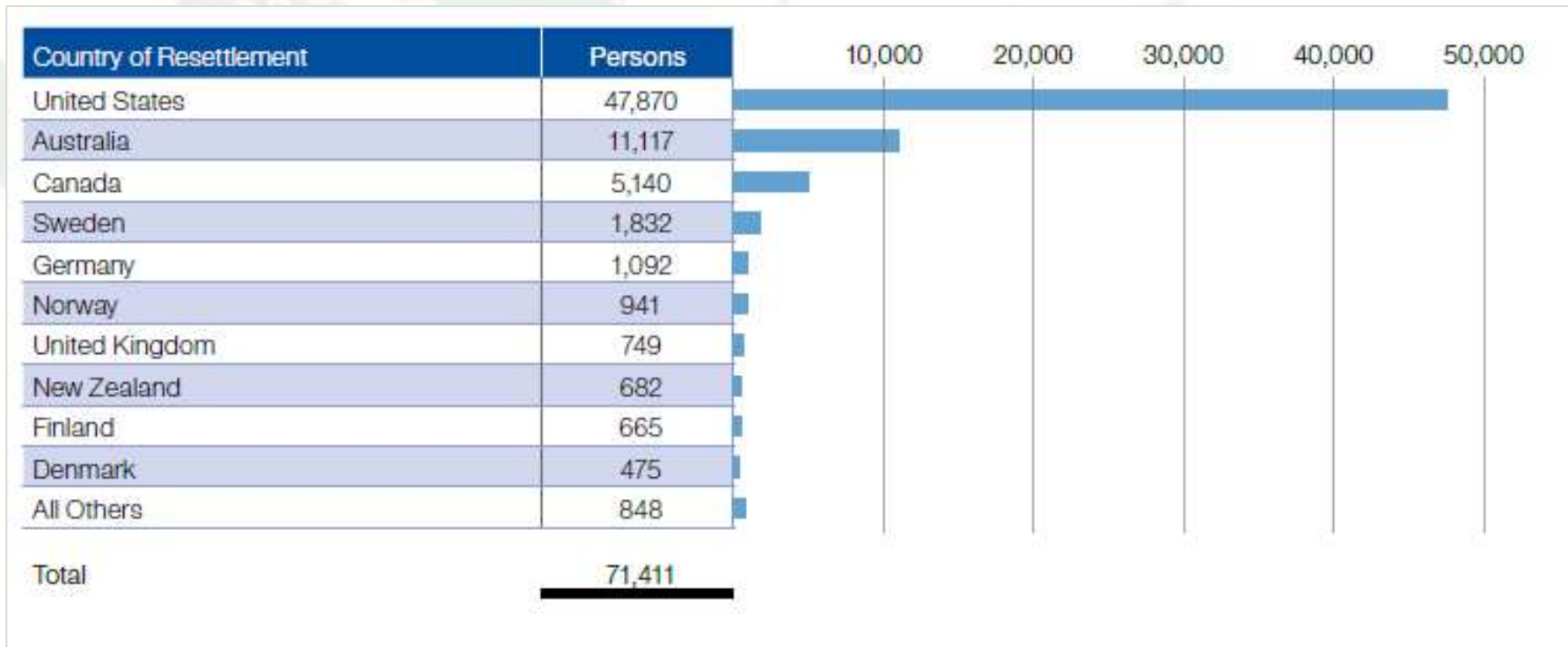
If returning home is not feasible because of ongoing instability or conflict, then,

2. **Integration** in the second country of asylum - establishing roots in the host or asylum country.

If the refugee is not sufficiently protected in the original host country or is considered to be particularly vulnerable for various reasons (e.g., disabled/injured, women-at-risk, etc) then

3. **Resettlement** to a third country - establishing a new life in a new country.

Top Ten Resettlement Countries



Source: UNHCR Resettlement Departures in 2013

The U.S. is the leading resettlement country!

U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program

The U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program is a private public partnership and has been providing safe haven to refugees since 1975.

The three-millionth refugee arrived in February of 2012!

U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program

The Refugee Act of 1980 reformed the United States immigration law and admitted refugees on systematic basis for humanitarian reasons.

The Act created the Federal Refugee Resettlement Program to provide for the effective resettlement of refugees and to assist them to achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible after arrival in the U.S.

Populations Served

- Newly arriving refugees
- Asylees
- Cuban/Haitian Entrants
- Special Immigrant Visa holders
- Victims of trafficking



U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program

Annually, the President, in consultation with Congress, determines the authorized target for refugee admissions.

The target for federal Fiscal Year 2015 is 70,000 refugees and 7,000 Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients.

US Admissions Priorities

- **Process outlined in Refugee Act of 1980**
 - Annual Report to Congress includes
 - Overview of situation
 - Admissions priorities
 - Budget
- **Priority 1:** Individual cases
- **Priority 2:** Groups of cases
- **Priority 3:** Individual family reunion cases

Regional Targets

Region	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
Africa	15,500	15,000	12,000	12,000	15,000	17,000	20,000
East Asia	17,000	19,000	18,000	17,000	14,000	13,000	13,000
Europe and Central Asia	2,500	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	4,000
Latin America and the Caribbean	5,000	5,500	5,500	5,000	5,000	4,000	4,000
Near East and South Asia	35,000	35,500	35,500	31,000	33,000	33,000	28,000
Unallocated Reserve	5,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	2,000	2,000	1,000
Total:	80,000	80,000	76,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000

Resettlement Support Centers

- The State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) manages the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program through contracts with nine Resettlement Support Centers (RSCs) overseas and nine national Resettlement Agencies in the United States.

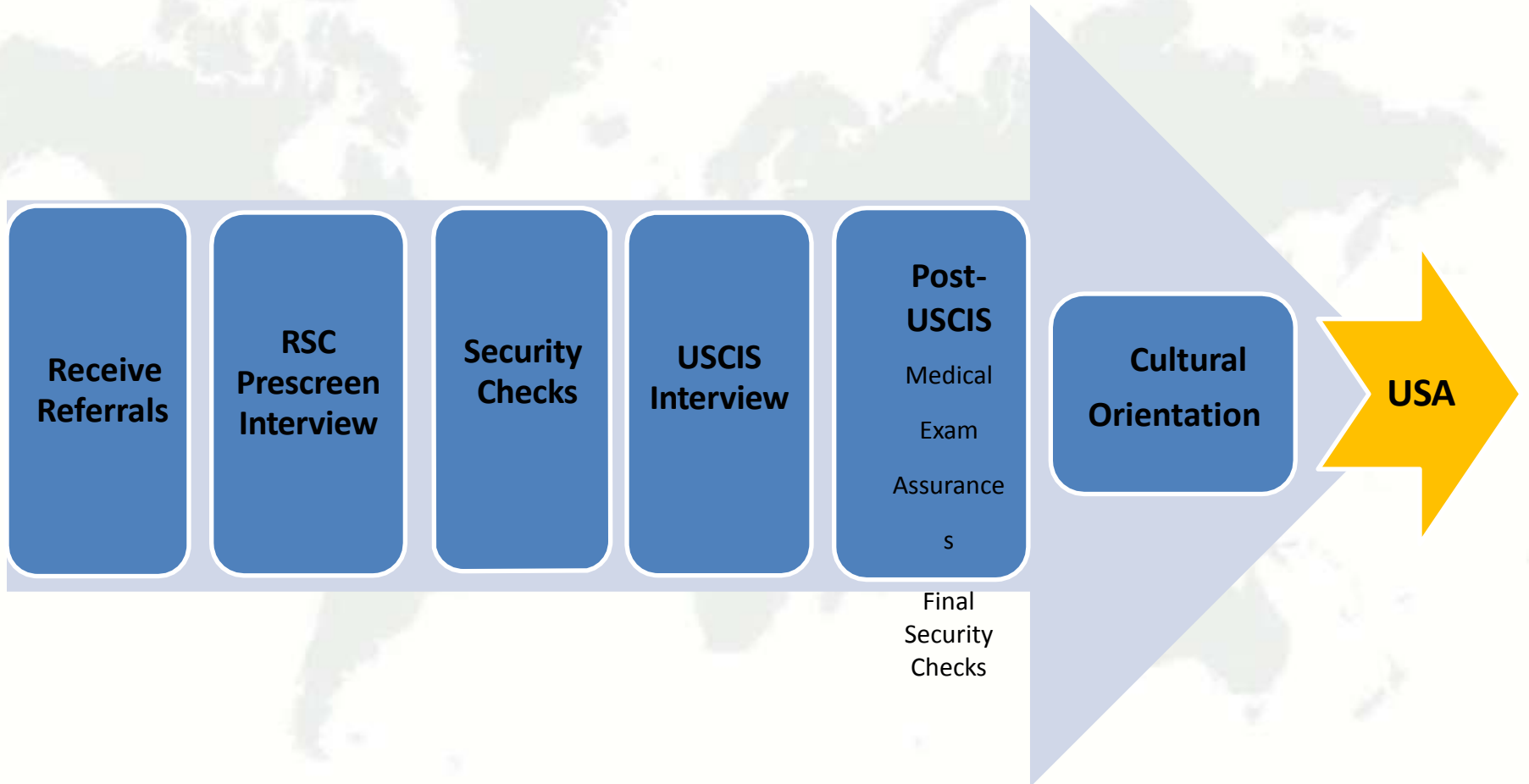
Resettlement Support Centers

RSCs are funded by PRM and are responsible for the accurate processing of refugees referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) and approved for resettlement to the U.S. by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Resettlement Agencies

- Resettlement Agencies, also known as Voluntary Agencies (Volags) are non-governmental organizations that hold contracts with PRM to provide refugee resettlement services through the Reception and Placement (R&P) Program.
- There are currently nine national Resettlement Agencies that provide resettlement services through a network of nearly 350 local offices.

U.S. Refugee Admissions Program



Refugee Resettlement Process: US Entry



Overseas

Visa issued/Cleared for travel

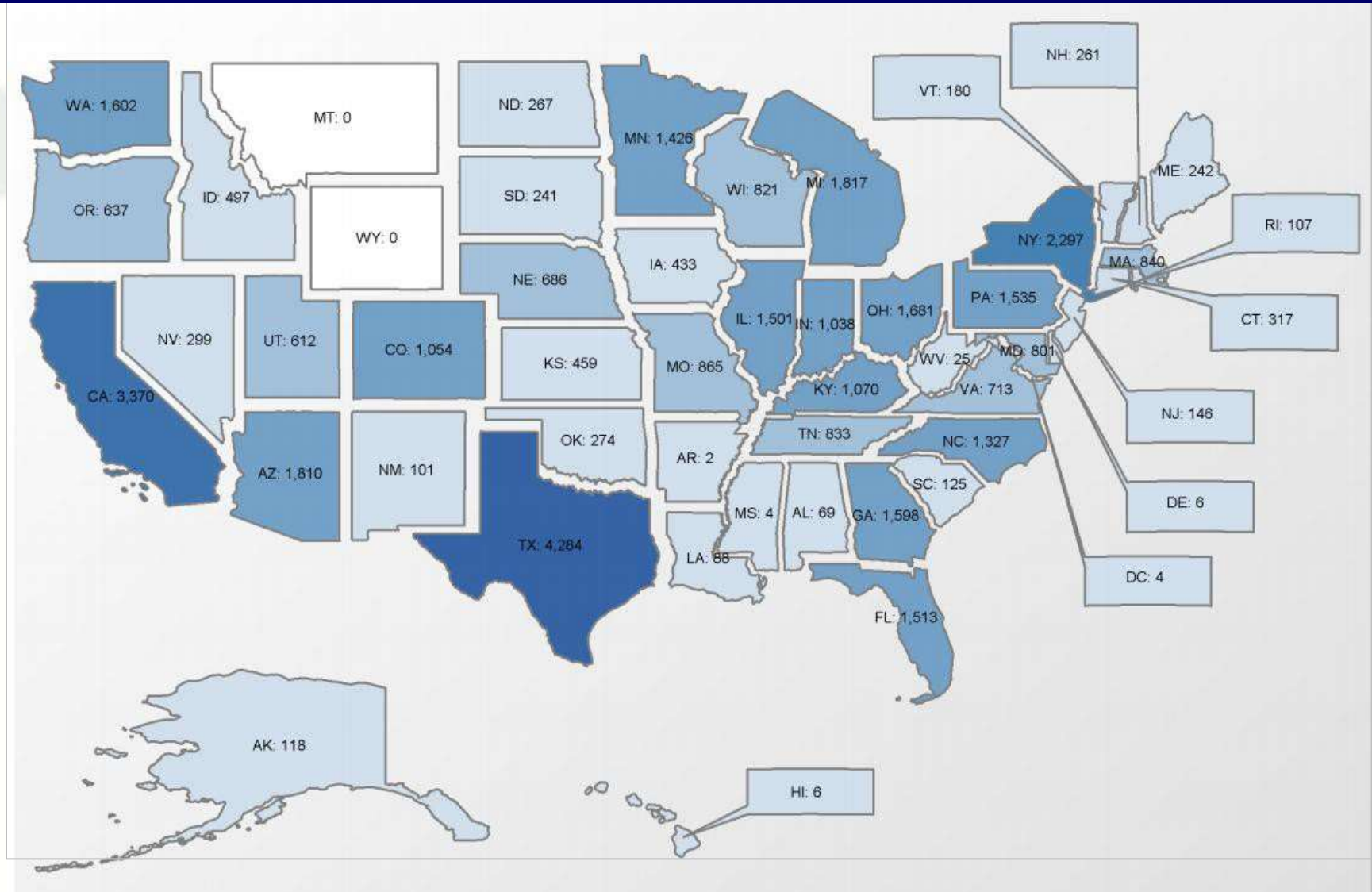
US Ports Of Entry

Quarantine officers review paperwork-
Paperwork forwarded to CDC/DGMQ

State Local Jurisdictions

DGMQ notifies health department of
refugee arrival

Arrivals by State

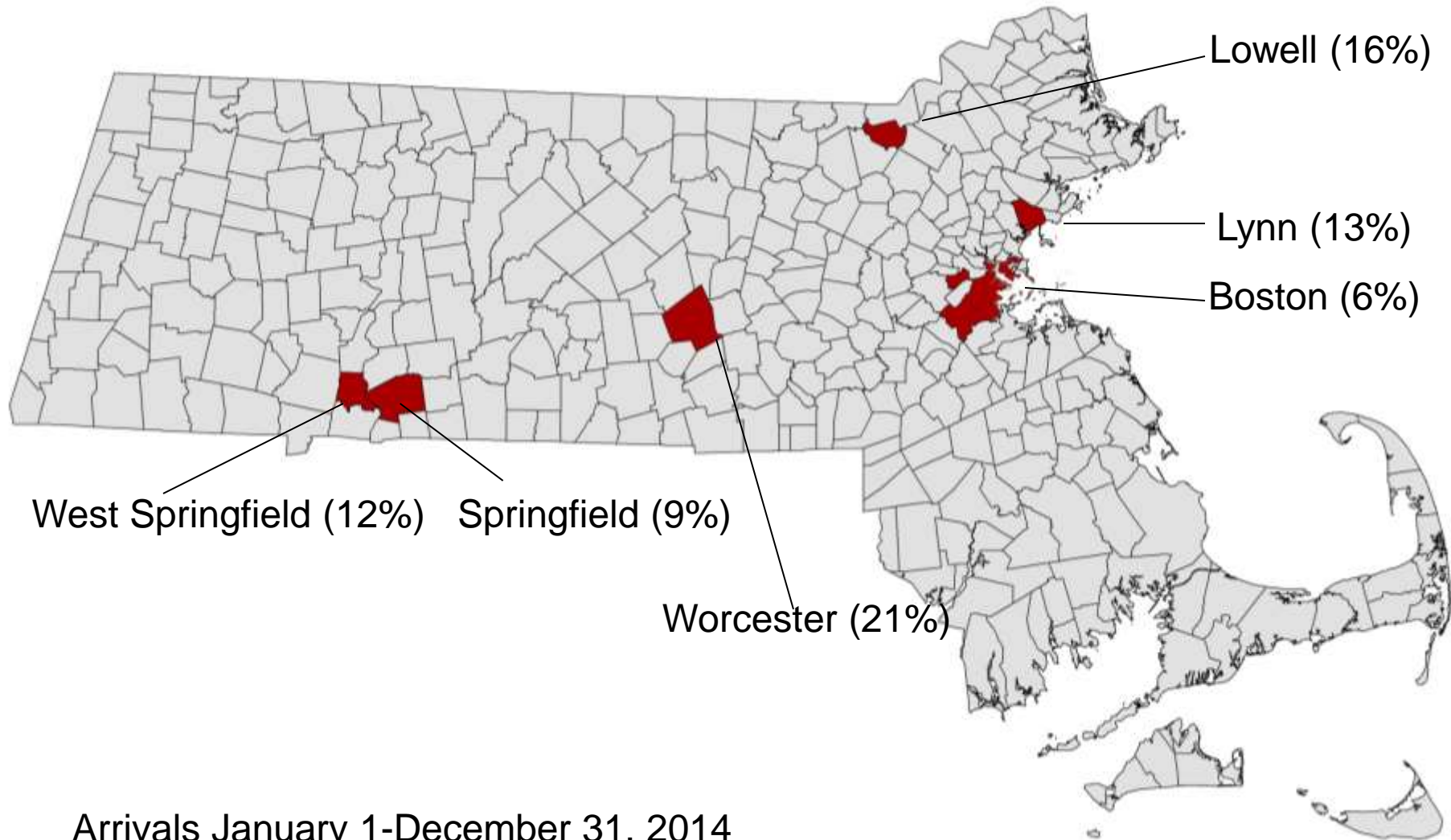


Refugee arrivals in MA: Top 5 nationalities

- 
- A faint, light-colored world map is visible in the background of the slide, centered behind the text.
- Iraq 32%
 - Somalia 16%
 - Bhutan 11%
 - Democratic Republic of Congo 10%
 - Afghanistan 5%

Arrivals January 1 – December 31, 2014 (N = 2,010); Source: MAVEN

Top 6 refugee resettlement cities in MA



Arrivals January 1-December 31, 2014

N=2,010 (who stayed in MA, with known address as of 1/29/2015)

Western MA Refugee Resettlement Over A Four Year Period (2011-2014)

- Total number: 2,500 individuals
 - Countries represented:
 - Iraq, Bhutan, Nepal, Somalia, Burma, Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burundi, Central African Republic, Ukraine, Moldova, Afghanistan, Iran, Cuba

-Source: Office for Refugee and Immigrants, Executive Office of Health and Human Services (ORI data taken from 2011-2014)

Refugee Languages Spoken

- Arabic---Syria, Iraq, Northern Sudan
- Nepali---Bhutan
- Burmese---Burma
- Karen---Burma
- Chin---Burma
- Somali----Somalia
- Kinyarwanda---- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Russian--- Countries
- Kiswahili---Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo
- Tigrinya---Eritrea, Ethiopia
- Amharic----Ethiopia
- Kirundi---Burundi
- Dari---Afghanistan
- Pashtu---Afghanistan



Limited English Proficiency

Limited English Proficiency: Limited ability to read, write and speak English

- Literacy - Some people do not read or write in their own language.
- Communication gaps create barriers for refugees/ other non-English speakers in receiving adequate care or services

Language Barriers

- Absence of bilingual/ bicultural workers results in a lack of appropriate service provision to the affected individuals.
- High risk of misdiagnoses and poor quality of treatment when working with populations that do not speak English.

▮ Russell Jones, Ph.D., April Naturale, Ph.D., (2012) “Cultural Awareness: Children and Disasters” SAMHSA education series: <http://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/podcasts-cultural-awareness-presentation.pdf>

Family Structure and Dynamics

- Children are used as interpreters when the head of the family or other adult household members cannot communicate or speak in the host language.
- Disasters shift the family dynamics
 - Sometimes older children may assume the roles and responsibilities of the family

- Russell Jones, Ph.D., April Naturale, Ph.D., (2012) "Cultural Awareness: Children and Disasters"
SAMHSA education series: <http://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/podcasts-cultural-awareness-presentation.pdf>

Risk Factors to Consider When Using a Child as an Interpreter

- Role reversal stressors
- Risk of traumatizing, re-traumatizing children.
- Guilt or feeling responsible
- Some topics may be inappropriate for the child.
- Lack of vocabulary and knowledge lead to errors in translation.

– Gilbert, M.J. (2005) "The Case Against Using Family, Friends, and Minors as Interpreters in Health and Mental Health Care Settings" From the Curricula Enhancement Modul Series. Washington, DC: National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development

Guiding Principles

- Find a cultural liaison to assist with professionals' understanding of behavioral health issues and trauma.
- Use professional or adult interpreters and/or trusted community organizations to stifle rumors and correct distorted perceptions.
- Focus on supporting children through the traumatic stressors and loss.
- Build capacity and relationships with local organizations and agencies serving the various ethnic communities.

—Russell Jones, Ph.D., April Naturale, Ph.D., (2012) “Cultural Awareness: Children and Disasters” SAMHSA education series: <http://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/podcasts-cultural-awareness-presentation.pdf>

Resources in the Community

- Local resettlement agencies such as Jewish Family Services, or Ascentria Care Alliance (formerly known as Lutheran Social Services)
- Bhutanese Association of Western Massachusetts
- Department of Public Health Division of Global Populations
- Western Massachusetts Refugee and Immigrant Consortium
- Enlaces de Familias: provides resources for Spanish speaking families (not exclusively service Spanish speaking families)
- Nuestras Raices: An urban collective that provides training, education and empowerment to Latino/Hispanic residents of Holyoke and beyond

Contact Information

- Jewish Family Services Tel: 413-737-2601 (Resettlement agency for Refugees)
 - Cultural Broker Program for Refugees
 - Family Support Services
- Ascentria Care Alliance Tel: 413-787-0725 (Resettlement agency for Refugees)
- Bhutanese Society of Western Massachusetts : bhutanesesocietyofwm@gmail.com
Founder: Bhuwan Gautam
- Department of Public Health Division of Global Populations Tel: 413-586-7525
(x3141) Coordinator: Olivia Peters
- Western Massachusetts Refugee and Immigrant Consortium (WMRIC)
wmriccoord@gmail.com
- Refugee 101 USRAP Overview (RCUSA for SCORR) Association of Refugee Health Coordinators – 6_24_15)
- Enlaces de Familias: 299-301 Main Street Holyoke, MA Tel: 413-532-9300
- Nuestras Raices: 329 Main Street Holyoke, MA Tel: 413-535-1789

Sources

- **(Photos) UNHCR Photo Gallery:** <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c25d-page4.html>
- **(Data) Massachusetts Department of Public Health Division of Global Populations and Infectious Disease Prevention** (2011-2015 arrival data)
- **Russell Jones, Ph.D., April Naturale, Ph.D., (2012)** *“Cultural Awareness: Children and Disasters” SAMHSA education series:* <http://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/podcasts-cultural-awareness-presentation.pdf>
- **Gilbert, M.J. (2005)** *“The Case Against Using Family, Friends, and Minors as Interpreters in Health and Mental Health Care Settings”* From the Curricula Enhancement Modul Series. Washington, DC: National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development
- **SAMHSA** Disaster Technical Assistance Center website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/dtac-resources>

Wrapsnet.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Refugee Processing Center (RPC) website. The browser address bar displays <https://www.wrapsnet.org/default.aspx>. The page features a navigation menu with links for Home, SIV/Iraqi P-2, CAM Program, and Reports. A search bar is located in the top right corner, and the date Tuesday, June 23, 2015 is shown. The main content area displays the RPC logo, which consists of three blue squares containing the letters R, P, and C. Below the logo, the text reads: "The Refugee Processing Center is the creator of WRAPS, a customized computer software system to assist the processing of refugees bound for resettlement in the United States."

Arrival Reports, Fact Sheets and FAQs, R&P Affiliate Directory

COResourceExchange.org



CULTURAL ORIENTATION RESOURCE EXCHANGE

[About CORE](#)

[About Refugees](#) ▾

[Tools for Trainers](#) ▾

[Resource EXCHANGE](#)

WELCOME to the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE), a technical assistance program designed to strengthen linkages between overseas CO programs for refugees approved for admission to the United States and Reception and Placement (R&P) activities conducted upon their arrival. Managed by the U.S. Department of State Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration, and administered by the International Rescue Committee, CORE provides information, materials and technical assistance to overseas CO programs and to domestic refugee service providers.

NOTE: This website is under construction, so please check back frequently for updates

The activities of the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange are financed under an agreement with the United States Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

[Refugee Backgrounders, Welcome Guides, R&P Curriculum, Lesson Plans](#)

Case Study

- Mary Allen, RN will present a case study from her experience working in the emergency shelters of West Springfield after the 2011 Springfield Tornado.

<https://youtu.be/dZ6IIArw2cs>



Thank you!

Questions?

