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The Evaluation of the Refugee Social Service (RSS) and Targeted Assistance Formula Grant (TAG) Programs: Sacramento Case Study

Prepared for:
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ACRONYMS

Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)
Cuban Haitian Entrant Program (CHEP)
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Department of Human Assistance (DHA)
Department of State (DOS)
Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
English as a Second Language (ESL)
Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR)
Immigration and Nationality Act (INA)
Legal Permanent Resident (LPR)
Mutual Assistance Association (MAA)
Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
Public/Private Partnership (PPP)
Reception and Placement Services (R&P)
Refugee Arrival Data System (RADS)
Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)
Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)
Refugee Social Services (RSS)
Sacramento Employment & Training Agency (SETA)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Social Security Administration (SSA)
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Targeted Assistance Formula Grant (TAG)
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records
United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR)
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
Voluntary Agency (Volag)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a case study of refugee employability services in Sacramento County, California. It is one of several reports presenting the findings of the Evaluation of the Refugee Social Service (RSS) and Targeted Assistance Formula Grant (TAG) Programs. The RSS and TAG programs provide services to refugees and members of certain other eligible groups with the objective of helping them achieve economic self-sufficiency soon after entering the country.[1] The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) administers these programs and sponsored the evaluation, which was conducted by The Lewin Group and its partners, the Urban Institute, Johns Hopkins University, the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), and Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC).

Components of the study of Sacramento's program included an implementation study examining how the programs operate in different settings and what types of services are provided to refugees, and an outcomes study examining refugees' receipt of services and employment and public benefit outcomes over time. Data used included refugee entry data from the Refugee Arrival Data System (RADS) database; program data from Sacramento Employment & Training Agency (SETA), which administers RSS and TAG services in Sacramento; administrative data on benefits received through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program, and the Food Stamp program; wage and employment data from unemployment insurance (UI) wage records; and a new survey of a random sample of clients of programs funded with RSS or TAG in Sacramento designed and administered by the research team. In addition, interviews with program administrators and partners were conducted during an intensive site visit to Sacramento, and several focus group discussions were held with program participants.

A. Findings in Brief

This report focuses on refugees who entered the country between the years 2001 and 2004, were between the ages of 18 and 55 at entry, and who received RSS or TAG services at some point. It relies on administrative data and a client survey that was conducted between September 2006 and March 2007. The report's key findings include the following:

- The key populations served in Sacramento over the period covered by this study are refugees from countries in the former Soviet Union and Hmong resettled from the Wat Tham Krabok Buddhist temple starting in 2004. Those from the former Soviet Union generally arrive with at least a high school education; the Hmong generally face higher barriers because of low levels of education and transferable job skills.

- California's welfare system, which offers higher cash assistance benefits than most other states, is important in understanding the context in which programs funded by RSS or

[1] The other eligible groups are asylees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, Amerasians, and victims of a severe form of trafficking. For ease of reference, this report generally uses the term "refugees" to refer to all such groups that qualify for ORR services, except where delineation is necessary.

TAG operate. TANF benefits received by refugees in Sacramento are well above the national average, and staff interviewed at Sacramento welfare offices report little sanctioning for noncompliance with work participation requirements. Other services provided through TANF, such as child care, and other public programs, such as MediCal (California's Medicaid system) also are important sources of supports to refugees in Sacramento.

- There is a strong emphasis on English language training early in the period of service receipt, and English training is integrated into the provision of employment services. Several service providers said they emphasize English training in a refugee's first few months so that the refugee is "job ready" before aggressively pursuing employment. This is in part related to the availability of cash assistance through TANF or RCA; some providers said that with cases receiving RCA, which expires within eight months of the refugee's entry, they will emphasize rapid employment once the cash assistance expires. Statistical analysis did not find evidence that English training led to improved employment outcomes when controlling for other factors (including English ability), but it did find that better English ability is associated with higher wages.

- On-the-job training (OJT) is used by several service providers as a tool for moving refugees into permanent employment; 17 percent of refugees receiving RSS or TAG services in the period of study received an OJT placement (or some other form of subsidized employment). The OJT program gives employers incentives to hire refugees by reimbursing half the employee's wage for 240 hours, generally over a period of six to eight weeks. Employers also have incentives to retain refugees in permanent positions after the subsidies end because providers will not offer future OJT placements to employers who do not.

- There is evidence of continued usage of public assistance among some refugees with dependents. In the third year after their entry, 42 percent of recipients of RSS- or TAG-funded services received TANF. From site visit interviews, it appears that some refugees enrolled with employment services providers prefer to pursue further education rather than work experience. However, many working refugees also continue to receive TANF; survey data show that two-thirds of individuals or couples receiving cash assistance when surveyed also had earnings.

- Both employment rates of refugees in Sacramento and their monthly incomes were modest, but there is evidence of improvements in earnings among those who work. UI wage records show that three-quarters of working age refugees held a job at some point within their first four years after entry, and a little over half had earnings in the fourth year. Survey data suggest somewhat higher employment rates, with 84 percent of the sample reporting having been employed at some point. At roughly $2,000 a month, income reported on the survey appears to be a little below the federal poverty threshold for a five-person family ($24,382, or $2,032 a month, in 2006). However, in every cohort, average earnings among those who worked increased with each subsequent year since entry.

- Recipients of RSS- or TAG-funded services in Sacramento are largely satisfied with the services they had received since arriving in the United States; more than a third of the survey sample said they found the services "excellent" and another 50 percent said they found the services "good".

B. Characteristics of Refugees Served in Sacramento

Arrivals during the period of this study are primarily refugees from the former Soviet Union and, more recently, the Hmong. Sacramento has historically been among the metropolitan areas where the largest numbers of refugees are resettled. Between October 1982 and June 2004, more than 37,000 refugees were resettled in Sacramento, positioning it as the tenth largest receiver of refugees in the United States over that period.[2] Arrivals data provided by the California Department of Social Services show that in federal fiscal years 2001 to 2004, 7,545 refugees arrived in Sacramento. Of these, 86 percent came from countries that had been part of the Soviet Union, primarily Ukraine, with notable numbers also from Moldova, Russia, and Belarus. In FY 2004, a large number of arrivals were Hmong being resettled from the Wat Tham Krabok Buddhist temple in Thailand, making up about 28 percent of arrivals in FY 2004 and 8 percent of arrivals over the four-year period. Smaller numbers of refugees from Iran and Vietnam arrived during this period.

Most refugees in Sacramento have large families and are married. Among the refugees surveyed for this study, the average household size is 4.7 individuals, compared with an average household size in the United States of 2.6. In 74 percent of cases, the refugee is living with a husband or wife, and 70 percent of the individuals sampled are living with one or more of their children. Smaller shares are living with a parent or a sibling (17 percent and 15 percent, respectively). In only a small number of cases are the refugees living in households with other relatives or with non-relatives. Family size and structure has implications for public assistance eligibility, and may affect employment rates; regression results show that refugees in Sacramento with more children are less likely to be employed (though have slightly higher wages).

The majority of Sacramento's refugees face difficulties with English. Program data on English language ability at entry are limited but suggest that most participants entered the program with limited or no English ability. Survey data on current English abilities show that although some survey respondents rate themselves as having good English abilities, the majority still face difficulties. About three-quarters (73 percent) say that they speak in English "not well" or "not at all". Respondents feel more positively about their ability to understand or read English, with 40 percent and 44 percent, respectively, rating their abilities in these areas as "well" or "very well". Writing abilities were somewhat weaker than reading abilities; 30 percent rated their writing ability "well" or "very well". During the site visits, interviewees reported that learning English is one of the biggest barriers facing refugees in the county, and while a large majority of refugees in Sacramento attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes or receive other English language training, focus group respondents discussed a number of barriers to learning English

[2] See Audrey Singer and Jill H. Wilson, "From 'There' to Here': Refugee Resettlement in Metropolitan America," The Brookings Institution Living Cities Census Series, September 2006, Table 3.

such as competing demands (like taking care of one's children) that make it difficult to focus on practicing English, and the large size of the Russian-speaking community in Sacramento, which limits opportunities to speak English instead of Russian.

Most, but not all, refugees served in Sacramento arrived with a high school education or better. Results from the survey show that 86 percent of respondents arrived with at least a high school diploma, and 12 percent had a college, university, or professional degree when they arrived.[3] However, while most Slavic refugees arrived with some education, the Hmong on the whole arrived with limited formal education and transferable job skills. Indeed, none of the Hmong in the survey sample had a high school degree, and several reported having no education at all. (Specific percentages are not reported because the sample size of Hmong surveyed was small.)

C. Services Delivered to Refugees in Sacramento

The Sacramento system places a strong emphasis on English language training. Provision of ESL is integrated with the provision of employment services. All the contractors of SETA who provide employment services also offer Vocational ESL (VESL) classes, and in most cases when a refugee is enrolled in employment-related services, he or she also receives English language training. The English classes provide language instruction but also focus on employment issues. Discussions with service providers and welfare office staff gave several indications of the strong emphasis placed on learning English at an early stage by service providers, case managers, and the refugees themselves. Several SETA contractors described a process whereby the English instructors will notify the job developers when a refugee is "job ready." Most classes have monthly tests (e.g., the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, or CASAS, which assesses various competencies of adults) and weekly quizzes to determine whether the student is ready for employment. While the program data is somewhat vague, it shows that as many as four out of five refugees who had received RSS- or TAG-funded services had received VESL services at some point, and about half of the sample received VESL within 60 days after entry. More than 90 percent of the survey sample reported receiving English training (through a SETA contractor or some other source) at some point after they entered the United States.

Contractors provide a number of employment-related services, most notably job search and on-the-job training. All of SETA's employment contractors provide job search and other employment services. Because such services are incorporated with VESL classes and the program data does not separate them, it is difficult to determine exactly how many clients received job search services focused on obtaining employment in the near-term. However, analysis of the program data and conversations with providers suggest that while most or all refugees enrolled in these integrated services receive basic employment-focused services such as job preparation, resume writing and interviewing practice, few individuals receive concerted job search or placement services within their first few months in the country. About half of survey

[3] The percentage reported here with at least a high school diploma includes the 11 percent who arrived with some "Other degree or certificate." Review of verbatim descriptions of these degrees or certificates show that they generally represented completion of high school-level education or more.

respondents, who had been in the country for two years or more at the time of the survey, reported having received job search services, through SETA or another source. Statistical analysis shows that job search receipt is more common for those who received other services such as ESL, child care support or transportation assistance, and for men.

On-the-job training (OJT) is an important tool in Sacramento for moving refugees into permanent employment; 17 percent of refugees in the research sample received an OJT placement or some other form of subsidized employment.

Many service recipients pursue higher education. Interviews during the site visit suggested that a number of refugees in Sacramento are very interested in pursuing further education, and that they often do so while on TANF instead of actively pursuing employment. One-fifth of the survey sample reported having pursued a degree, diploma, or certificate since arriving in the United States, and in more than four-fifths of these cases (81 percent), the individuals were pursuing an associate, bachelor's or professional degree. However, at the time of the survey only 6 percent had obtained a degree or certificate since arriving in the United States.

Several organizations provide RSS- and TAG-funded social adjustment services to refugees. SETA has contracts with four organizations to provide what it calls "Social Adjustment and Cultural Orientation", or SA & CO, services which include translation/interpretation assistance (for purposes other than employment services), crisis intervention, group counseling, and information and access to services. The organizations SETA funds to provide these services are separate from those funded to provide employment services. During a site visit interview, one SA & CO provider estimated that at least half of their RSS funding goes for medical interpretation. The rest of it is allocated for helping with legal problems and with paperwork and accessing services. Another SA & CO provider said their services include tracking their clients' stability and making sure that their basic needs are met so they can be more independently stable. About one-third of those served by SETA contractors receive SA & CO services.

Refugees in Sacramento are satisfied with services they have received. The survey asked a "customer satisfaction" question, asking the respondent to give a single overall rating of how he or she felt about all services he or she received since entering the country (whether funded by RSS and TAG or through another source). The responses were overwhelmingly positive, with more than a third of the Sacramento survey sample (38 percent) saying they found the services "excellent" and another 50 percent saying they found the services "good". Only 1 percent of the sample found the services "poor." Focus group participants were satisfied or happy with the services they had received, though they did voice some specific complaints about class sizes, limited availability of services outside work hours, and not being alerted to some services available to them.

D. Outcomes and Statistical Analysis

A large majority of RSS and TAG participants receive cash assistance and Food Stamps, and many continue to receive these benefits for years. Overall, about 80 percent of refugees served in Sacramento receive cash assistance within their first year after entry through CalWORKs (California's TANF program) or through RCA. Although TANF receipt drops off as refugees have been in the country for a longer time, 42 percent receive TANF in their third year after

entry. Food Stamp receipt is similar to cash assistance, with 75 percent of refugees served in Sacramento receiving Food Stamps in their first year and 45 percent receiving them in their third year. Survey results show similar patterns; at the time they were surveyed, which was between two and six years after their entry, 31 percent of survey respondents were receiving Food Stamps, and 21 percent were receiving cash assistance from CalWORKs or another source.

The survey results show that most individuals receiving Food Stamps or cash assistance were either working or had spouses who were working. About two-thirds of individuals receiving cash assistance, and about two-thirds receiving Food Stamps, also reported earnings in the month prior to when they responded to the survey.

Most refugees served by RSS and TAG programs in Sacramento enter employment within a few years, but a substantial minority does not. UI wage records show that overall, about three-quarters of the working-age refugees in the research sample (73 percent) held a job at some point within their first four years after entry. While employment rates grew steadily in each quarter of the first year, they leveled off afterwards; a little more than half of the refugees in the sample worked in the second, third, and fourth years. The survey data suggest somewhat more employment, with 84 percent of the survey sample reporting having been employed at some point after arriving in the United States; this could reflect a number of factors, including self-employment, informal or "off-the-books" jobs or characteristics of the survey sample.

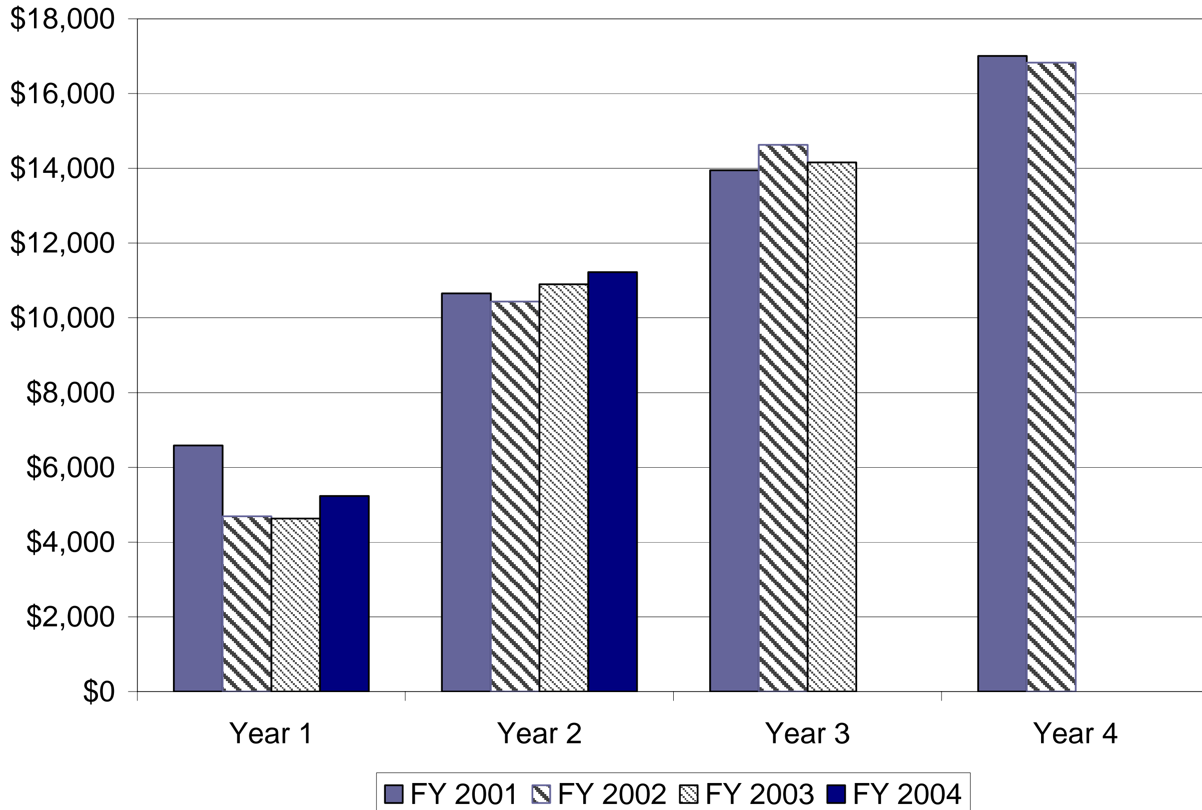
Statistical analysis of survey data find that, when controlling for other factors, individuals were more likely to be employed at the time of the survey if they had received supportive services such as child care or transportation support; if they were male; if they had fewer children; and if they had a high school degree when they arrived.

Among those working, earnings and wages are low but show improvement. As seen in ***Figure ES.1***, earnings improve over time, with average annual earnings increasing for each cohort with each additional year that they spend in the country. However, for most of those working, annual earnings remain low; even by the fourth year, of the refugees with any earnings, only 65 percent earned more than $10,000, and only 14 percent earned more than $30,000.

Survey data also provide some evidence that wages are low but have increased over time. The median wage reported by survey respondents in their current or most recent job was approximately $10 an hour. Assuming a 35 hour week and a full 52 weeks of work, this would equal annual earnings of about $18,000. In comparison, the median wage survey respondents reported having earned in their first job was less than $9 an hour.

The factors that the statistical analysis found associated with higher earnings differ somewhat from the factors associated with a higher likelihood of being employed. All else equal, wages were higher for men, those with more children, those who had received vocational training, and those who report speaking English well. Earnings were lower for East and Southeast Asians (i.e., the Hmong).

Figure ES.1: Average Annual Earnings Among Those Working, by Year After Entry



Source: California unemployment insurance wage records
Sample size: 2,304
Note: Earnings in constant 2006 dollars

Public benefits in Sacramento play an important role in covering several needs of refugees. While only one third of jobs held by survey respondents offer health insurance, only one quarter of refugees reported that they were uninsured. Roughly half reported health insurance coverage through public health plans, while another quarter reported private coverage. About half of survey respondents in Sacramento reported having placed their children in child care at some point; of these, more than four out of five (83 percent) said the child care arrangement was paid for by "a government agency, government program, or government-provided vouchers." Ninety percent of refugees reported having received transportation assistance at some point.

Monthly income is modest, and primarily consists of earnings, but includes substantial amounts of public assistance as well. Survey data show that the monthly incomes of refugees and their spouses (if married) averaged $2,080. This is barely above the poverty threshold for a

family of five.[4] Of the survey sample, 72 percent of respondents had earnings, and on average, earnings represent more than 80 percent of the income that respondents reported on the survey. Thirty-one percent received Food Stamps and 21 percent received cash assistance from CalWORKs or another source. Ten percent reported receiving disability income.

[4] Excluding Food Stamps (not included in the income definition used by the Census Bureau in poverty measurements), total income is $1,958 a month, or approximately $23,500 a year. This is higher than the 2006 federal poverty threshold for a family of four ($20,614), and a little below the federal poverty threshold for a family of five ($24,382). (The average household size for refugees in Sacramento is 4.7 individuals.)

I. INTRODUCTION

This case study is one of several reports presenting the findings of the Evaluation of Refugee Social Service (RSS) and Targeted Assistance Formula Grant (TAG) programs. The RSS and TAG programs provide services to refugees and members of certain other eligible groups with the objective of helping them achieve economic self-sufficiency soon after entering the country. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) administers these programs and sponsored the evaluation, which was conducted by The Lewin Group and its partners, the Urban Institute, Johns Hopkins University, National Opinion Research Center (NORC), and Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC). The evaluation focuses on the delivery of the program's services and outcomes of its participants in three sites: Houston, Texas; Miami, Florida; and Sacramento, California. This report presents the study's findings from Sacramento. Separate reports present findings from the other sites, overall themes from the evaluation, and recommendations for ongoing evaluation of the programs.

A. Background

1. Definition of "Refugee"

A refugee, as defined by the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), is a person who is outside his or her country of nationality or of last habitual residence and faces in his or her own country "persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion."[5] Each year, the United States admits a certain number of refugees from among groups determined by the president, in consultation with members of Congress, public and private groups, and the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), to be of special humanitarian concern. From 2000 to 2004, the average annual number of refugees admitted by the United States was approximately 50,000. The number varies from year to year, with 73,147 refugees admitted in FY 2000 and 27,110 admitted in FY 2002.[6]

In addition to refugees, a number of other humanitarian categories are eligible for the same benefits and services for which refugees are eligible, including those funded through RSS and TAG. These groups include the four listed below:

- ***Asylees:*** Individuals who enter the United States or arrive at a port of entry in any immigration status, undocumented, or unlawfully present (and without refugee status) and who are then determined to meet the definition of a refugee. Refugees and asylees differ in that refugee status is conferred overseas and thus refugees enter the country as refugees, while asylees apply for asylum at a port of entry or after entering the country.

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5 8 USC § 1101(a)(42).

6 Data from table entitled "Cumulative Summary of Refugee Admissions" in U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, *Summary of Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2006*, October 3, 2006. Available at http://www.state.gov/g/prm/refadm/rls/85970.htm, accessed August 22, 2007.

Asylees and refugees must meet the same statutory definition of refugee and requirements in the INA.

- ***Cuban/Haitian entrants:*** (a) Any individual granted parole status as a Cuban/Haitian Entrant (Status Pending) or granted any other special status subsequently established under the immigration laws for nationals of Cuba or Haiti, regardless of the status of the individual at the time assistance or services are provided; and (b) Any other national of Cuba or Haiti (1) Who: (i) Was paroled into the United States and has not acquired any other status under the Immigration and Nationality Act; (ii) Is the subject of exclusion or deportation proceedings under the Immigration and Nationality Act; or (iii) Has an application for asylum pending with the Immigration and Naturalization Service; and (2) With respect to whom a final, nonappealable, and legally enforceable order of deportation or exclusion has not been entered.[7]

- ***Amerasians:*** Certain Amerasians from Vietnam who are admitted to the United States as immigrants pursuant to Sec. 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1988 (as contained in Sec. 101(e) of Public Law 100-202 and amended by the 9th proviso under Migration and Refugee Assistance in title II of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Acts, 1989 (Public Law 100-461 as amended) and "was born in Vietnam after January 1, 1962 and before January 1, 1976 and was fathered by a citizen of the United States." Amerasians are admitted to the United States as immigrants, rather than refugees.

- ***Victims of a severe form of trafficking:*** Individuals who are subjected to (1) sex trafficking, which is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act,[8] in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years; or (2) labor trafficking, which is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

For ease of reference, this document generally uses the term "refugees" to refer to all such groups that qualify for RSS- and TAG-funded services.

2. Services Provided to Refugees

Refugees are offered a myriad of benefits and services to help them successfully transition to life in the United States and gain economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible. These services include the following:

[7] Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980, Pub. L. No. 96-422.

[8] As defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, the term "commercial sex act" means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

- ***Reception and placement (R&P) services:*** [9] Individuals brought into the country as refugees receive help upon their arrival from voluntary resettlement agencies ("Volags") for the first 30 days. The services provided by Volags include help with refugees' immediate food, clothing, and shelter needs, an introduction to the new culture in which they will be living, and help accessing resources and services available to them. Volags receive funding to provide R&P services through the U.S. Department of State.

- ***Cuban Haitian Entrant Program (CHEP):*** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) administers CHEP, a program that ensures the orderly migration of Cubans and Haitians paroled into the United States. Through agreements with national non-governmental organizations, USCIS coordinates the structured reception, processing and community placement of Cubans and Haitians who are paroled into the United States from various ports-of-entry or Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Processing Centers. Cubans are also paroled into the United States directly from Havana through the Cuban Special Migration Program, and Cubans and Haitians have been paroled from Offshore Safe Havens such as the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba Naval Base. Services under CHEP may include family reunification or placement in a free case site for individuals with no family or other ties in the United States. Family reunification cases may receive services for 30 days for adults and 90 days for unaccompanied minors, while free cases may receive services for 180 days.[10]

The Matching Grant Program

The Matching Grant program is an alternative to public cash assistance and is offered through the Voluntary Agency network. The principle goal of the program is to obtain economic self-sufficiency within six months without accessing public cash assistance. Participating Volag affiliates are required to provide employment services, case management, maintenance assistance (which includes provision of food or food subsidies, housing, and transportation) and cash allowance. Enrollment in Matching Grant services must be within the first 31 days of eligibility, with maintenance assistance provided for at least four months, and case management/employment services continuing for 180 days (six months).

Refugees who participate in Matching Grant are eligible for RSS and TAG employability services after the Matching Grant period has expired. In Houston, the Matching Grant program is an integral part of employability services for refugee families. In order to get a complete picture of the services refugees receive, it is included as part of the Houston case study.

- ***Cash and medical assistance:*** Refugees with dependents can receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Medicaid as long as they meet the same eligibility requirements U.S. citizens must meet. Refugees ineligible for TANF or other federal assistance (e.g., those without dependents), and who meet income limits and other program criteria, are eligible to receive Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) for up to eight

[9] R&P services are not available to asylees, entrants, and victims of a severe form of trafficking.
[10] This program affects both Miami and Houston.

months following their entry.[11] Similarly, refugees ineligible for Medicaid can receive Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) over that period.[12]

- ***RSS and TAG programs:*** These state-administered and Wilson/Fish[13] programs provide services to help refugees obtain employment and achieve economic self-sufficiency quickly following their entry into the United States.

- ***Matching Grant program:*** An alternative to the public cash assistance programs, this program also aims at helping refugees achieve self-sufficiency. The Matching Grant program provides matched funds to Volags for intensive case management and employment services during the first four to six months of a refugee's eligibility.

- ***Other:*** A variety of other ORR-funded discretionary programs exist to aid refugees and related populations, such as discretionary grants to communities receiving a large number of refugees or to target specific needs, or special programs to help survivors of torture.

3. Overview of the RSS and TAG Programs

RSS and TAG are primarily employability programs. The Immigration and Nationality Act specifies that in providing refugee assistance, "employable refugees should be placed on jobs as soon as possible after their arrival in the United States." ORR uses RSS and TAG formula funds to fulfill this intent of the law, subject to federal regulations governing the administration of the programs.[14]

a. Types of services provided with RSS and TAG

RSS and TAG services are aimed at addressing barriers to employment and integration into the United States. Refugees are eligible for employability and other services funded through the formula RSS and TAG programs during their first five years of residence in the United States.[15] Employability services are meant to enable refugees to obtain employment within one year of enrollment and to achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. The services that can be provided through these programs include

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[11] For refugees and entrants, this is based on their date of arrival (as recorded on the I-94 record of arrival). For asylees, it is the date of final grant of asylum (recorded on the asylum approval letter). For victims of trafficking, it is the date of certification or eligibility (on the certification or eligibility letter).

[12] General eligibility requirements for RCA are listed under 45 CFR §400.53. General eligibility requirements for RMA are listed under 45 CFR §400.100.

[13] Wilson/Fish programs, funded through RSS and Cash and Medical Assistance (CMA) funding, provide integrated services and cash assistance to refugees. They represent an alternative approach to a publicly-administered program or a public/private partnership. None of the sites studied as part of the evaluation are located in Wilson/Fish states or communities.

[14] ORR makes the text of the relevant legislation and regulations available on its web site at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/legislative.htm and http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/orr_regulations.htm, respectively (accessed August 22, 2007). The legislative citation is Section 412(c)(2)(B)(i) of the INA. The INA also establishes an additional statutory requirement for TAG that funds be used "primarily for the purpose of facilitating refugee employment." (Section 412 (a)(1)(B)(i).) Regulations governing the use of RSS and TAG funds are found in 45 CFR Part 400.

[15] Regulations governing employability services (and support services related to employability services) can be found in 45 CFR §400.154.

- employment services such as the development of a family self-sufficiency plan and individual employability plan, job orientation, job development, job referral, job search, placement, and follow-up;
- employability assessment services, including aptitude and skills testing;
- on-the-job training (expected to result in full-time, permanent, unsubsidized employment with that employer);
- English language training (emphasizing English needed to obtain and retain a job); and
- short-term vocational training, including driver's education and training as part of an employability plan. (RSS and TAG funds cannot be used for long-term training lasting more than one year or for general education not intended to lead to employment within one year.)

A number of employability support services can also be provided to refugees, including

- skills recertification;
- assistance in obtaining work-related documentation (e.g., employment authorization documents);
- day care for children whose parents are participating in employability services or are employed;[16]
- transportation, when necessary for participation in employability services;
- translation or interpreter services related to employment or employability services; and
- employment-focused case management.

In addition, in recognition of the challenges facing refugees in integrating and adjusting to a new country, regulations allow the use of RSS and TAG to provide a number of other services.[17] Examples include

- information, referral, and outreach to facilitate refugees' access to available services;
- social adjustment services such as emergency response to families in crisis, health-related information, referral, and assistance in scheduling appointments, counseling regarding physical and mental health needs, and home management services;
- citizenship and naturalization preparation services;
- day care and transportation to support participation in services other than employability services; and

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[16] Day care can be provided if no other publicly funded child care funding is available. Day care for working refugees is only available for up to one year after the refugee becomes employed.

[17] The regulations governing these other services are in 45 CFR §400.155.

- translation, interpretation, and case management, other than what is provided in support of employability services.

Beyond these services, states can use RSS or TAG funding to provide additional services only if they acquire ORR's approval. Further, the only RSS- or TAG-funded services a refugee can receive 60 months after his or her date of entry are referral, interpreter, and citizenship and naturalization preparation services.

b. Rules, restrictions, and principles

The regulations governing RSS, TAG, and other refugee services establish numerous rules and restrictions that programs must conform to in using the funding to provide services. These rules are important parts of the context in which to understand how programs in different states or counties serve refugees. For example, programs using RSS and TAG funds must develop with the refugee family a coherent family self-sufficiency plan and individual employability plans to address the family's needs from time of arrival until attainment of economic independence.[18] RSS and TAG's primary focus in providing English language training is to reduce the barrier that lack of English proficiency creates to employability, and the rules require that programs using RSS or TAG funds for English language training must provide it concurrently, not sequentially, with employment or employment-related activities.[19] Similarly, employable refugees must participate in employability services as a condition of receiving RCA unless exempt.[20]

Social services must be provided in a manner that is culturally and linguistically compatible with a refugee's language and cultural background, to the maximum extent feasible. States are encouraged to contract services to public or private nonprofit agencies such as resettlement agencies**,** faith-based and community or ethnic service organizations, particularly considering the special strengths of mutual assistance associations (MAAs). (In official documents related to the awarding of TAG grants, ORR states that it "believes it is essential for refugee-serving organizations to form close partnerships in the provision of services to refugees in order to be able to respond adequately to a changing refugee environment."[21])

States must ensure that women have the same access as men to training and instruction and must endeavor to include bilingual/bicultural women on service agency staff to encourage adequate service access by refugee women. RSS and TAG programs must attempt to obtain child care services, preferably subsidized, to assist parents with children to participate in employment services or to accept or retain employment.

The regulations set an order of priority for delivering services. For RSS, this order is as follows:

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[18] 45 CFR 400.79 and 400.156(g).

[19] 45CFR400.156(c).

[20] 45CFR400.76

[21] See, for example, Office of Refugee Resettlement, "Final Notice of Fiscal Year 2006 Final Formula Allocations for Targeted Assistance Grants to States for Services to Refugees," September 15, 2006, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/HHS-2006-ACF-ORR-TA-0116.html (accessed August 22, 2007).

a) newly arriving refugees during their first year in the United States;

b) refugees receiving cash assistance;

c) unemployed refugees not receiving cash assistance; then

d) employed refugees in need of services to retain employment or to attain economic independence.

TAG services target refugees with difficulty in securing employment beyond their initial resettlement, and therefore the services use a slightly different order of priority that does not include newly arriving refugees. TAG priorities specify that providers first serve long-term cash assistance recipients.[22]

c. Determination of RSS and TAG grant amounts

ORR awards RSS and TAG formula funds to publicly-administered programs, public/private partnerships (PPPs), and Wilson/Fish alternative programs. RSS provides funding to states with allocations based on the most recent three years of refugee arrivals. In federal fiscal year (FY) 2005, about half the funding went to the four states with the largest service populations: Florida, California, New York, and Minnesota. In contrast, TAG assists counties "highly impacted" by large numbers of refugees. Allocations are based on the most recent five years of refugee arrivals. TAG was enacted to address very high rates of cash welfare use by refugees in the early 1980s, especially in California. The states receiving the most TAG funding in FY 2005 were Florida, California, New York, and Texas.

B. The Evaluation of the Refugee Social Service and Targeted Assistance Formula Grants Programs

1. Overview of the Evaluation

This evaluation of the RSS and TAG programs examines the programs' effectiveness in improving refugees' employment and income over time. Its key research questions include these three:

- How are RSS- and TAG-funded services delivered to refugees? To what extent do refugees receive these services?
- What are the employment and income outcomes of refugees served by the RSS and TAG programs?
- Do different refugee groups have different outcomes? If so, what factors are associated with this variation?

There are three components to the evaluation:

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[22] The order of priority for TAG is established at 45 CFR §400.314. The order for RSS is established at 45 CFR §400.147.

- ***An implementation study*** examining how the programs operate in different settings and what types of services are provided to refugees. This analysis relies on information obtained from site visits, including interviews with program staff and refugees, and analysis of program data.
- ***An outcome study*** examining refugees' receipt of services and employment and public benefit outcomes over time. This component of the study relies on administrative data and a survey of refugees.
- ***A continuous evaluation design study*** that presents to ORR a range of options it might consider to complement its existing performance and evaluation strategies.

The study began in October 2004. Stages in the study included preliminary visits to various communities to identify the sites on which the evaluation would focus, collection of program and administrative data, visits to the three sites, focus group discussions with refugees who had received RSS or TAG services, and a survey of more than 900 refugees in the three sites.

This and the other case study reports describe the findings of the implementation and outcome studies, and a synthesis report analyzes overarching themes from the three sites. A separate, stand-alone report to ORR addresses potential plans for continuous evaluation.

2. Research Methodologies

a. Site selection

ORR, in consultation with the project team, identified several potential communities that could serve as the focus of the study. Based on the project team findings from preliminary phone conversations and site visits, ORR selected Houston, Miami, and Sacramento based on the following criteria:

- caseload size;
- high levels of RSS and TAG support;
- the availability of complete and accessible program data for research purposes;
- the cooperativeness of the local resettlement agencies and of the state and local administrators; and
- diversity among the sites, including diversity of service delivery strategies, geography, and population served (e.g., variation in the countries of origin; native languages and English language speaking abilities; education levels; family structure; age at entry; and entry as refugees, Cuban-Haitian entrants, or asylees).

b. Implementation study

The purpose of the implementation study is to understand how the RSS and TAG programs operate in different settings and how RSS and TAG funds are used to provide services to help refugees achieve economic success and social adjustment. The study examines what factors influence the structure, organization, and management of the programs in each site.

Two types of information collection were conducted for the implementation study: interviews with program administrators, partners, and employers at each of the three sites; and focus groups with program participants in each site. In addition, analysis of program data and the client survey —discussed in the section on the outcome study—help inform the analysis performed as part of the implementation study.

i) Site visits

The team conducted intensive site visits at each site. During the visits, project team members met with program staff at the agency coordinating RSS and TAG funding, RSS and TAG service providers, local welfare offices, employers of refugees, and staff of other organizations providing services to refugees. Topics covered included program goals, organization, staffing, services provided, population served, community and economic context, coordination among agencies and other organizations, and data systems. The team asked employers about their experiences employing refugees and the employers' involvement with refugee service providers.

During the visits, the project team members also reviewed documents provided by the agencies and organizations they were interviewing, such as client flow charts and memoranda of understanding (MOUs), and conducted case review discussions. During the case review discussions, service providers walked through selected individual case files, discussing the process the client went through, the services provided, the case management involved, and the client's progress toward achieving participant goals.

The site visits occurred in spring 2006.

ii) Focus groups

SEARAC conducted three focus groups in each site with recipients of RSS- and TAG-funded services. Seven to 20 individuals participated in each group. Participants were recruited with the help of local service providers; some had entered the country as recently as 2006. Questions were open-ended and designed to elicit detailed responses, including anecdotal material. Key topics included services received, agencies visited, satisfaction with services and providers, employment experiences, other service needs or gaps in services, and the refugee's adjustment to his or her new community. Within the basic format and topical areas, focus group questions were tailored to the circumstances of each site and of particular refugee groups, and moderators allowed the direction of the conversation in each particular group to develop flexibly within the framework set by these questions.

The focus group discussions occurred in June and July 2006.

c. Outcome study

The outcome study includes two components: (1) a descriptive analysis of services refugees received and employment and other economic outcomes since coming to the United States, and (2) a statistical analysis that shows associations between refugee characteristics and services and their outcomes.

i) Research sample and period of focus

The evaluation focuses on working-age adult recipients of RSS and TAG services who entered the country in federal fiscal years 2000 through 2004 (or, for asylees, who were granted asylum status during that period). The research sample was identified using service data from the providers of RSS- and TAG-funded services in each site, and included working-age adults, defined for the purposes of the sample as those between the ages 18 and 55 at the time of entry.

The period over which outcomes are analyzed varies by data source. NORC administered the survey between September 2006 and March 2007; it measured outcomes at the time of the survey, as well as earlier periods for selected outcomes. The outcome study uses unemployment insurance (UI) wage data to measure employment outcomes through the end of FY 2006. The period over which there is administrative data on public assistance receipt varies by site.

ii) Data sources

Data for the outcome study come from various sources:

- ***Refugee entry data.*** ORR provided the project team with data from the Refugee Arrival Data System (RADS) database. It includes basic demographic information on all refugees and somewhat more limited information on entrants. RADS data provided to the research team did not include information on asylees due to restrictions contained in an Attorney General Waiver of 8 CFR 208.6(a) that allows ORR to receive asylee information from USCIS and the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), but prevents ORR from sharing these data except as aggregate statistics.
- ***Program data.*** At each site, the agency administering RSS and TAG services provided data on recipients of RSS and TAG services. The data kept by each site differs, but each data set contains at least some demographic information on the recipients and data on which RSS and TAG services the refugee received.
- ***Matching Grant data.*** In Houston, most families with children in the research sample are first placed into the Matching Grant program instead of immediately receiving RSS and TAG services. (Some later receive RSS and TAG services when their eligibility for Matching Grant ends.) National and local Volags provided enrollment data and basic demographic information on Matching Grant participants in Houston.
- ***Welfare administrative data.*** State welfare departments provided data recorded in the welfare system on individuals in the research sample. Information provided include various demographic characteristics, TANF and RCA cash benefits received, and Food Stamp benefits received.
- ***Unemployment insurance wage records.*** State labor departments provided administrative data on wages earned in each quarter by individuals in the research sample. The data come from UI wage records.[23]

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[23] UI wage records do not capture work in a small number of sectors. Overall, it is estimated that about 98 percent of non-farm wage and salary employment is covered by unemployment insurance. Certain occupations and wages, however, are not captured by these data. Many employees not covered are agricultural workers, state and local governmental employees, domestic workers, and those in the Armed Forces.

- ***Survey of refugees.*** As part of this study, NORC conducted a survey of RSS and TAG clients in each site randomly selected from the research sample. The project team designed the survey instrument, which asked respondents about their receipt of the services provided through the RSS and TAG programs, their income, their employment histories, their program participation, and other characteristics that could influence their ability to achieve self-sufficiency through employment such as education level, English language skills, and their health status.

  When the respondent spoke English sufficiently well, interviews were conducted in English. For other respondents, the interviews were conducted in the respondent's own language. This was done using a translated version of the instrument and bilingual reviewers for five languages: Arabic, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. Interviewers in other languages used interpreters provided through an over-the-phone interpretation service.

  The survey was administered through a "mixed mode" method that involved both telephone and in-person interviews. NORC began by attempting to interview each respondent by phone; if that was not successful within a reasonable period, NORC later attempted to interview the respondent in the field. Interviews were attempted with a total sample of 1,488 refugees, and 955 were completed. Sample sizes, completed interviews, and response rates for each site are shown in ***Table I.1.***

Table I.1: Sample Sizes and Response Rates in the Survey of Refugees

Size	Houston	Miami	Sacramento
Total sample	509	537	402
Number of interviews completed	315	334	306
Response rate (%)	62	62	76

Note: Total sample excludes "out-of-scope" cases such as deceased individuals or individuals found not to fit the criteria that defined the research sample (e.g., were not working-age adults).

The survey was fielded between July 2006 and March 2007. Analysis of the data for each site began when sufficient data were received and continued through the summer of 2007.

C. Environmental Context in Sacramento

1. Overview

Sacramento has historically been among the metropolitan areas in the United States where the largest numbers of refugees are resettled. Between October 1982 and June 2004, more than 37,000 refugees were resettled in Sacramento, positioning it as the tenth largest receiver of

See Bureau of Labor Statistics, BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 5, "Employment and Wages Covered by Unemployment Insurance," April 1997, available on the BLS web site at http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch5.pdf. Informal or "off-the-books" employment will not be captured in the UI wage records.

refugees in the United States over that period.[24] In recent years, the biggest groups of refugees resettled in Sacramento have come from Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, and other Eastern European and former Soviet countries. More recently, Hmong refugees have entered Sacramento in large numbers. Other groups have come from Iran, Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, and Vietnam.

Refugees who arrived in earlier periods serve as supports for new refugees in Sacramento in several ways. Currently, Volags only resettle family reunification cases in Sacramento, and there are only a small number of asylees. Consequently, refugees who arrive in Sacramento have a sponsor family that is able to help them adjust to their new country and community. Some of the responsibility for R&P services lies with the family.

In addition, because Sacramento has received refugees over a number of years, there are some existing refugee communities within the county. There are a number of MAAs in Sacramento that serve as resources to refugees. MAAs are nonprofit organizations with at least 51 percent of the governing board consisting of refugees or former refugees, and operate on the model of refugees helping other refugees. Six of the ten providers of RSS and TAG services in Sacramento are MAAs. As the populations of refugees resettled in Sacramento have changed, some of these MAAs have adapted by changing the population on which they focus. For example, one organization visited during the site visits was founded during a period with an influx of Vietnamese into the area, but now largely serves refugees of Eastern European origin. Some organizations have offices in more than one neighborhood in order to serve groups from multiple backgrounds, as refugees from particular groups tend to live in particular neighborhoods. Many within the Slavic community in Sacramento are Evangelical Christians, and churches provide another important source of support for refugees.

RSS and TAG services in Sacramento are county-administered. Funding is provided to the Sacramento Employment & Training Agency (SETA), which contracts services out to local MAAs and other community based organizations, including one Volag. Volags provide R&P assistance for the first 30 days; afterwards, cash and medical assistance is provided through the county Department of Human Assistance (DHA) and employment services and other RSS and TAG services are provided through SETA contractors.

California offers some of the highest TANF cash assistance payments in the country. For example, in 2003 the maximum TANF benefit for a family of three in California was higher than in any state other than Alaska.[25]

2. The Sacramento Economy

During the period of time that the study focuses on, Sacramento County's unemployment rate tracked that of the national economy fairly closely. (See ***Figure I.1***) Unemployment increased in

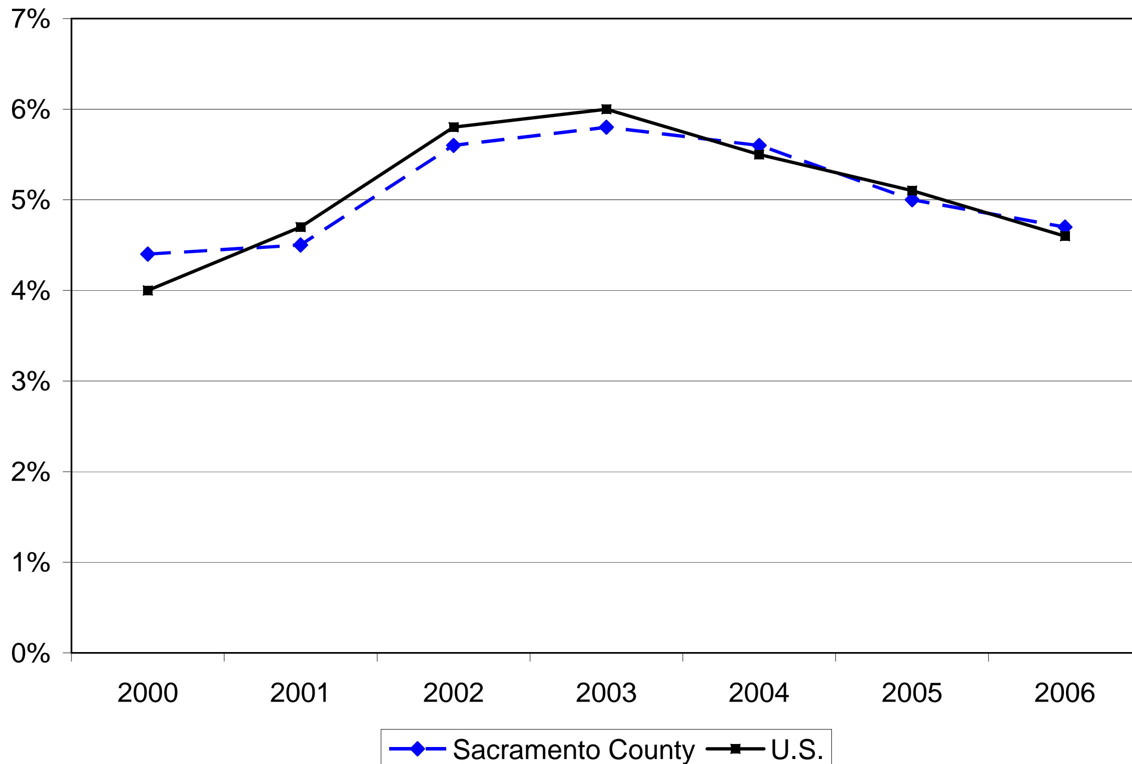
[24] See Audrey Singer and Jill H. Wilson, "From 'There' to Here': Refugee Resettlement in Metropolitan America," The Brookings Institution Living Cities Census Series, September 2006, Table 3.

[25] See Gretchen Rowe and Jeffrey Versteeg, "Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2003," The Urban Institute, Assessing the New Federalism, April 2005, Table II.A.4. As the title implies, the data are for July 2003. A more recent version of the Databook shows that California still had the second-highest maximum benefits for a family of three n 2005.

the early 2000s, reaching 5.9 percent in 2003, but by 2006 – when site visits were conducted, it had fallen to 4.7 percent. This was consistent with accounts given by interviewees, who said there was a positive jobs situation at the time and that the local economy had many entry-level jobs.

Average wages and a high number of jobs in Sacramento also support the view that there was a positive job economy in the city. In May 2006, the Sacramento—Arden-Arcade—Roseville metropolitan area had over 895,000 jobs. The mean hourly wage was $20.98, almost three times the minimum wage for California, which is $7.50. The three largest industries in 2006 were all service industries; they include Office and Administrative Support (174,690 jobs), Sales and Related (89,730 jobs), and Food Preparation and Serving Related (72,240 jobs). Conversely, the three smallest industries were Farming, Fishing, and Forestry (3,950 jobs), Legal Occupations (8,000 jobs) and Life, Physical, and Social Science (10,730 jobs). [26]

Figure I.1: Unemployment Rate in Sacramento, 2000 to 2006



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

[26] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Occupational Employment Statistics." Available at http://www.bls.gov/oes/home.htm.

D. Organization of This Report

Chapter II of this report describes the major groups of refugees served in Sacramento and presents findings from the survey and other data on their characteristics. Chapter III describes how refugee services are delivered in Sacramento and presents data on which services program participants receive. Chapter IV presents descriptive statistics on outcomes of program participants in the research sample, including receipt of public assistance, employment outcomes, and income. Chapter V presents the results of statistical analysis of associations between services received, programs outcomes, and participant characteristics.

II. POPULATION SERVED

A. Major Refugee Populations

1. Region of Origin

Arrivals data provided by the California Department of Social Services show that in federal fiscal years 2001 to 2004, more than 7,500 refugees arrived in Sacramento. ***Table II.1*** shows their countries of origin.[27] Refugees entering in the period covered by this study largely fall into two groups: those from countries that had been part of the Soviet Union, and in FY 2004, the Hmong, who originally came from Laos.

Table II.1 Annual Arrivals by Region of Origin and Entry Cohort (All Ages)

Country of Origin (%)	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Ukraine	56.0	60.1	57.4	29.6	49.4
Moldova	15.1	14.3	11.8	17.2	14.8
Russia	8.7	11.6	8.1	8.5	9.2
Laos	0.0	1.0	0.0	27.7	8.5
Belarus	5.5	6.4	9.9	4.9	6.5
Kazakhstan	1.0	2.3	1.7	4.0	2.4
Iran	3.2	1.2	2.7	1.5	2.1
Armenia	1.3	0.5	2.6	3.1	1.9
Uzbekistan	2.8	0.7	1.1	2.0	1.7
Vietnam	2.2	0.9	1.1	0.7	1.2
Other	4.3	1.0	3.4	0.8	2.3
Total	1,926	1,803	1,569	2,247	7,545

Source: Arrival by country information supplied by the California Department of Social Services.

a. The Former Soviet Union

Over the four year period that is the focus of this study, refugees arriving in Sacramento overwhelmingly came from the former Soviet Union; 86 percent of adult arrivals were from this region. Of these, more than half were from Ukraine, with notable numbers also from Moldova, Russia, and Belarus. During the site visits, interviewees said that generally, those who come

[27] Percentages shown in "Total" column of ***Table II.1*** differ from those shown in ***Figure II.2*** of the evaluation's *Synthesis of Findings from Three Sites* report. This is because they cover slightly different time periods. The evaluation of RSS and TAG was designed to examine refugees arriving between federal fiscal years 2000 through 2004, and the figure in the *Synthesis* covers that period to be consistent with the arrival data shown for Houston and Miami. However, data on RSS- and TAG-funded services in Sacramento are not available for 2000, and this case study therefore focuses only on fiscal years 2001 through 2004.

from Russia were financially better off than the Ukrainians and Moldovans before they came to the United States.

The county has one of the largest Slavic communities in the United States. Estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that about 26,000 individuals living in the Sacramento metropolitan area were born in Russia or Ukraine, which is the fifth highest of any metropolitan areas for which data is reported by the Census Bureau. As this figure contains only two countries, it is an underestimate of the number of individuals in the metropolitan area who had been born in countries from the Former Soviet Union.[28]

b. Hmong

After the Vietnam War ended, the Hmong population in Laos faced persecution because of their support for the United States in the war. Many fled to Thailand and spent time in refugee camps there. Most of these individuals and families were resettled in other countries. Hmong refugees began arriving in the United States, including Sacramento, in the mid-1970s. Others, who were not resettled, sought refuge at the Wat Tham Krabok Buddhist temple when Thailand closed the largest refugee camp in 1992. In 2003, as the Thai government moved towards closing the Wat, which had been serving as a *de facto* refugee camp, the United States agreed to resettle more than 15,000 Hmong living in the Wat.[29]

Substantial numbers of Hmong already lived in the United States from prior waves of resettlement. According to the 2000 Decennial Census, in 2000 there were nearly 170,000 Hmong living in the United States, 65,000 (38 percent) of whom were living in California. Close to 16,000 (24 percent of those in California) were in Sacramento.[30] California received about one-third of the arrivals from the Wat closing, with the majority going to Sacramento and Fresno.[31]

The arrival data presented in ***Table II.1*** do not specifically identify the number of Hmong refugee arrivals in Sacramento, but based on conversations with refugee service providers it can be assumed that arrivals with Laos as the country of origin predominantly (if not entirely)

[28] Calculations from data from the 2006 American Community Survey. Data available at factfinder.census.gov. Service providers interviewed suggested the number of immigrants from the Former Soviet Union may be higher. One interviewee said that there are about 100,000 Slavic immigrants in the area. This is a commonly cited figure – for example, a recent editorial in the Sacramento Bee said that "Sacramento is home to an estimated 100,000 Russian-speaking residents." ("Editorial: A time to help calm waters, not to fan flames," *Sacramento Bee*, July 21, 2007.) However, this figure is generally cited without attribution, and the authors of this report did not independently confirm it through a primary source.

[29] See Doua Thor, "The Resettlement of the Hmong Refugees from Wat Thamkrabok — A National Perspective," Prepared for "Joint Informational Hearing on Hmong Refugee Resettlement in California," November 16, 2004, available online at http://www.searac.org/tst-searefwattham04-29-05.pdf (accessed June 24, 2007); and Refugees International, "Resettlement Processing Begins for the Hmong refugees at Wat Tham Krabok, Thailand," March 10, 2004, available online at http://www.refugeesinternational.org/content/article/detail/1569/ (accessed June 24, 2007).

[30] Census 2000 Summary File 1. Numbers reported are for "Hmong alone." Numbers for "Hmong alone or in combination" with other Asian subcategories are 3 to 4 percent higher, and when including "in combination with one or more other races," figures are 10 to 11 percent higher. Some researchers and members of the Hmong community believe that the Census undercounts the Hmong; see, for example, the introduction to Mark. E. Pfeiffer and Serge Lee, "Hmong Population, Demographic, Socioeconomic, and Educational Trends in the 2000 Census", 2004; available online at http://www.hmongstudies.org/HmongCensusReport.pdf (accessed June 24, 2007).

[31] Hmong Resettlement Task Force, "History of the Hmong Resettlement Task Force," available online at http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/hrtf/history/index.html (accessed June 24, 2007).

represent the Hmong population, particularly in 2004. The table shows that there were very few arrivals from Laos resettled in Sacramento in 2001 through 2003, but that as the Hmong from the Wat Tham Krabok began to arrive, the numbers increased. In 2004, 28 percent of all arrivals were from Laos, and the Hmong made up a large portion of refugees resettled in Sacramento after 2004 as well. Many of the clients being served by service providers interviewed during the site visit in 2006 were Hmong.

Survey data show that while few refugees in Sacramento who entered in FY 2001 through FY 2003 had spent any time in a refugee camp, about 20 percent of survey respondents who entered in FY 2004 reported having spent time in a camp, and most of these reported that they had spent more than five years in a camp. This increase reflects the wave of Hmong resettlement that began in FY 2004. (These data are not shown in a table because of small cell sizes in years before 2004.)

In general, service providers interviewed said that the Hmong have lower levels of formal education and transferable job skills than refugees from the former Soviet Union. However, during the site visits, some service providers who worked with the Hmong reported that since they had no financial support from the Thai government, this group has learned to pick up odd jobs and often are eager to work when they arrive in the United States.

c. Other

Historically, Sacramento County had resettled large numbers of Vietnamese and as a result, Sacramento has a fairly large Vietnamese community. During the sample period, however, less than 2 percent of all adult refugee arrivals were from Vietnam. About 2 percent of arrivals were from Iran. Service providers discussed working with a small number of refugees from former Yugoslavian countries, though it was not clear the extent to which this was through services funded through RSS or TAG.

2. Demographic Characteristics

Table II.2 shows some basic characteristics of working-age individuals served by programs in Sacramento funded with RSS and TAG. The figures in the table are derived from program intake data and administrative data provided by SETA, supplemented with information from the RADS system. It shows that approximately half of working-age refugees served by RSS and TAG service providers were men and half were women. Somewhat more fell into the 18-35 age range when they entered the program than into the 36-55 age range. This was particularly true among refugees who entered the United States in FY 2004; 58 percent were between 18 and 35 years old when they entered the program compared with 34 percent who were between 36 and 55. This is in part due to the Hmong, who from survey data appear to be on the whole younger than the other groups.

The table also shows that secondary migration accounts for at least a small share of refugees served in Sacramento. Around 7 percent were initially resettled outside California. The share

may be increasing; of refugees who entered in 2003 and 2004 and who were served in Sacramento, between 10 and 11 percent had been resettled outside California.[32]

Table II.2 Characteristics by Entry Cohort

	Year of Entry				
Characteristic	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Gender (%)					
Female	49.6	49.5	48.9	47.8	49.0
Male	50.4	50.5	51.1	52.2	51.0
Age at entry[a] (%)					
18 to 25	20.7	21.9	27.1	34.7	25.8
26 to 35	32.5	28.0	27.6	27.8	29.2
36 to 45	31.8	30.2	26.4	21.0	27.6
46 to 55	15.1	19.9	18.9	16.6	17.4
Marital status (%)					
Married	74.5	81.5	83.6	70.1	75.0
Single	23.5	16.0	12.7	23.1	21.7
Divorced	0.5	2.5	1.8	4.2	1.6
Widowed	1.3	0.0	1.8	2.3	1.5
Separated	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2
English ability (%)					
None	19.7	35.4	35.1	37.3	31.9
Poor	29.7	41.4	27.4	32.2	33.1
Some	24.3	12.4	18.6	19.3	18.5
Fair	16.5	6.7	13.6	7.6	10.9
Good	4.8	2.3	3.6	2.7	3.3
Excellent	5.0	1.8	1.8	1.0	2.4
Language (%)					
Armenian	0.0	0.0	5.0	1.6	1.5
Hmong	0.0	0.3	0.0	22.9	5.4
Russian	63.6	68.1	62.1	55.5	62.5
Vietnamese	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.9
Other	33.7	31.6	32.9	19.4	29.7
State of resettlement (%)					
California	97.4	93.3	88.5	89.5	92.8
Other state	2.6	6.7	11.5	10.5	7.2
Sample size	1,077	763	624	732	3,196

Sources: RSS and TAG program data provided by the state, Refugee Arrival Data System
[a] For asylees, "entry" refers to the date of final grant of asylum.

[32] The data do not allow identification of secondary migration into Sacramento from other parts of California, which may be a factor as Sacramento has been considered more affordable than coastal areas.

While the program data provided for this study contained intake information on English language ability for many individuals, these data were missing for too many individuals to be considered reliable. Nonetheless, the available data suggest that most participants entered the program with limited or no English ability.[33]

B. Household Composition

Refugees in Sacramento have relatively large families. Among the refugees surveyed for this study, the average household size is 4.7 individuals. (See ***Table II.3.***) This compares to an average household size in the United States of 2.6 (2.7 in Sacramento County).[34] The large majority of these households – close to 90 percent – contain more than one adult, and more than 70 percent contain at least one child 18 or under. Half of the households with children contain three or more children 18 or under.

Most refugees surveyed are married and have children, and their households largely consist of their nuclear families. In 74 percent of cases, the refugee is living with a husband or wife. (This is somewhat lower in the FY 2004 entry cohort, where only 60 percent are living with a husband or wife.[35]) Similarly, 70 percent of the individuals sampled are living with one or more son or daughter. Smaller shares are living with a parent or a sibling, though these shares are higher for those who entered in 2003 and 2004 (of which 24 percent live with a parent and 22 percent live with a sibling) than they had been among those who entered in 2001 and 2002 (11 percent living with a parent and 10 percent living with a sibling). In only a small number of cases are the refugees living in households with other relatives or with non-relatives.

[33] 2,159 of the 3,518 working-age individuals served in Sacramento in FY 2001 through FY 2004 were reported as having "none", "poor", or "some" English ability at program entry, as compared with 408 who were reported as having "fair", "good", or "excellent" English ability. However, data were missing for 951individuals (27 percent), and their level of English ability is unclear.

[34] U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 American Community Survey

[35] The difference in the FY 2004 cohort is not related to the Hmong; a large majority of the modest number of Hmong in the sample are married.

Table II.3 Household Characteristics by Entry Cohort

Characteristic	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Average number of individuals in household	4.3	4.9	4.7	5.1	4.7
Average number of working individuals in household	1.6	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.7
Number of adults (%)					
1 adult	9.5	8.4	15.5	11.4	10.8
2 adult	65.3	57.8	55.2	48.6	57.5
3 or more	25.3	33.7	29.3	40.0	31.7
Number of minors (%)					
1-2	43.2	31.3	34.5	31.4	35.6
3-5	26.3	32.5	27.6	27.1	28.4
6 or more	*	9.6	10.3	*	7.2
Percentage of respondents living with:					
Spouse	76.8	81.9	74.1	61.4	74.2
Parent(s)	12.6	9.6	22.4	25.7	16.7
Son/Daughter(s)	72.6	75.9	63.8	65.7	70.3
Grandparent(s)	*	0.0	*	*	*
Grandchild(ren)	0.0	*	*	*	2.6
Sibling(s)	8.4	10.8	20.7	22.9	14.7
Other relative(s)	*	*	*	*	3.3
Non-relative(s)	*	*	0.0	*	2.0
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category that contains fewer than five individuals

C. Education and Language Skills

Service providers interviewed during the site visit to Sacramento reported that most of the Slavic refugees they work with arrive with some education. The results from the survey confirm this; ***Table II.4*** shows that 86 percent of respondents arrived with at least a high school diploma, and 12 percent had a college, university, or professional degree when they arrived.[36]

While Slavic refugees arrived with some education, the Hmong on the whole arrived with much less. Individuals arriving as part of the resettlement of Hmong living in the Wat Tham Krabok may have received some basic education at the Wat or at camps in Thailand where they were

[36] The percentage reported here with at least a high school diploma includes the 11 percent who arrived with some "Other degree or certificate." Review of verbatim descriptions of these degrees or certificates show that they generally represented completion of high school-level education or more.

located before, and may have learned some English.[37] A few service providers said that the Hmong from the Wat arrived with more education than previous waves of Hmong arrivals. Nonetheless, they largely arrived with limited formal education and transferable job skills. Indeed, none of the Hmong in the survey sample had a high school degree, and several reported having no education at all. This largely explains the lower education levels seen among the 2004 cohort.

During the site visits, interviewees reported that learning English is one of the biggest barriers facing refugees in the county. As discussed in footnote 33, administrative data show that most have low English skills when they enter; later in this report administrative and survey data are presented confirming that a large majority of refugees in Sacramento receive ESL or other English language training.

[37] Doua Thor, "The Resettlement of the Hmong Refugees from Wat Thamkrabok — A National Perspective," Statement for the "Joint Informational Hearing on Hmong Refugee Resettlement in California," November 16, 2004. Available at http://www.searac.org/tst-searefwattham04-29-05.pdf, accessed July 18, 2007.

Table II.4 English Ability and Education by Entry Cohort

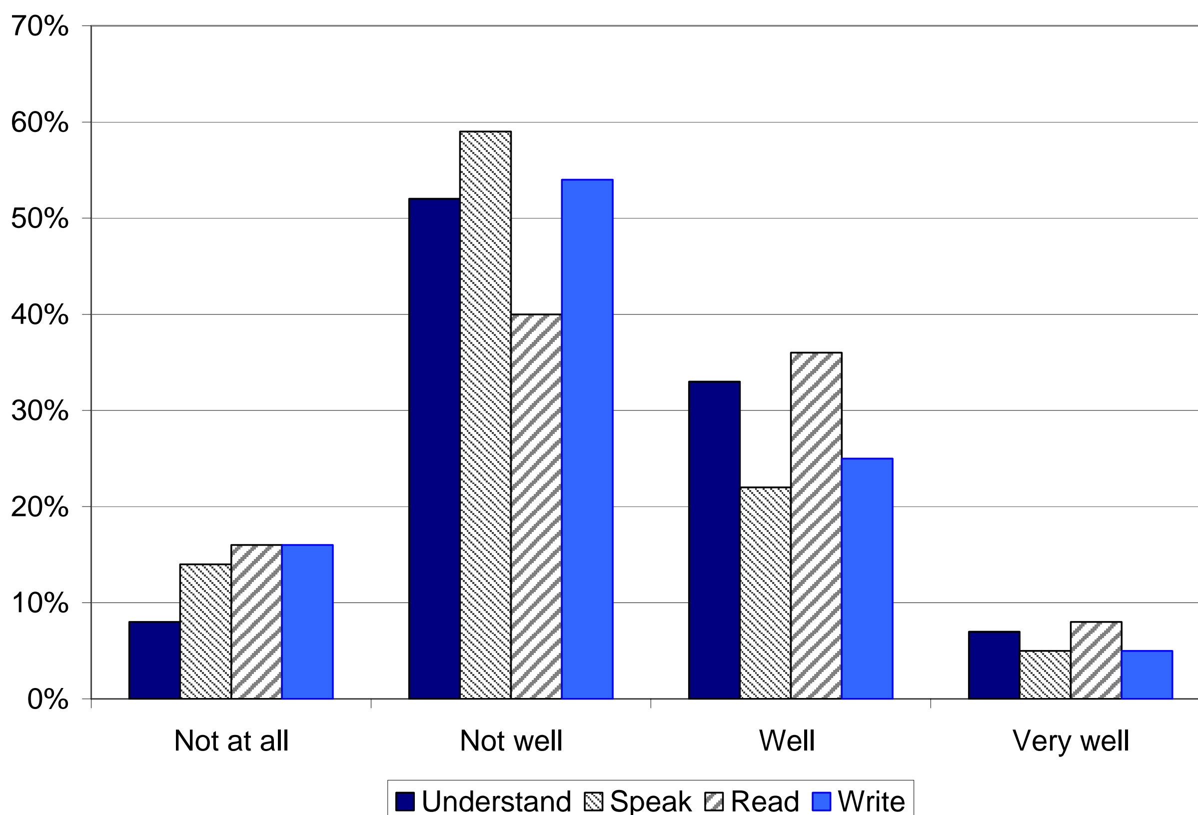
Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Education					
Education level on arrival (%)					
None	*	*	0.0	14.3	3.9
Primary	*	*	*	*	3.6
Some secondary school	7.4	*	*	11.4	6.6
High school diploma	44.2	56.6	57.9	35.7	48.2
Some college or university	17.9	12.0	15.8	10.0	14.1
College or university degree	13.7	*	15.8	12.9	11.1
Professional degree	*	*	*	0.0	*
Other degree or certificate	13.7	15.7	*	8.6	11.1
English Language Skills					
Understand English (%)					
Very well	10.8	*	8.6	8.6	7.2
Well	34.4	34.9	32.8	28.6	32.9
Not well	49.5	55.4	56.9	48.6	52.3
Not at all	5.4	8.4	*	14.3	7.6
Speak in English (%)					
Very well	7.5	*	*	*	4.9
Well	25.8	15.7	27.6	20.0	22.0
Not well	55.9	67.5	60.3	50.0	58.6
Not at all	10.8	15.7	*	24.3	14.5
Read English materials (%)					
Very well	11.8	*	8.6	*	7.6
Well	32.3	34.9	46.6	35.3	36.4
Not well	40.9	45.8	34.5	36.8	40.1
Not at all	15.1	15.7	10.3	22.1	15.9
Write in English (%)					
Very well	7.5	*	*	*	4.9
Well	21.5	25.3	29.3	25.7	25.0
Not well	53.8	57.8	55.2	48.6	53.9
Not at all	17.2	15.7	12.1	18.6	16.1
Native Language Skills					
Read and write in native language (%)					
Very well	67.7	54.2	74.1	61.4	63.8
Well	28.0	44.6	24.1	28.6	31.9
Not well	*	*	*	*	2.6
Not at all	*	*	0.0	*	1.6
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category that contains fewer than five individuals

Focus group respondents discussed a number of barriers to learning English. One was the difficulty of focusing on learning the language when there were a number of competing issues with which refugees must deal. The Hmong focus group in particular mentioned that when they were taking care of so many children – the median number of children among the focus group participants was 3.5 – it was difficult to focus on practicing English. Another barrier to learning English mentioned by Russian-speaking refugees was that given the size of the Russian-speaking community in Sacramento, there was not much opportunity to speak English. As one commented, "You ask somebody, 'Do you speak English?' and they ask back 'Do you speak Russian?'"

On the survey, respondents were asked to self-report their current English abilities on a number of dimensions. The results, presented in ***Figure II.1***, show that while many rate themselves as having good English abilities, the majority still face difficulties with English: about three-quarters say that they speak English "not well" (59 percent) or "not at all" (14 percent); only one quarter say they speak "well" (22 percent) or "very well" (5 percent). Respondents feel more positively about their ability to understand or read English, with 40 percent and 44 percent, respectively rating their abilities in these areas as "well" or "very well". Writing abilities were somewhat weaker than reading abilities; 30 percent rated their writing ability "well" or "very well". The statistical analysis in Chapter V finds that higher English abilities are associated with higher wages, suggesting that raising English abilities may help achieve better wage outcomes for refugees. However, as discussed in Chapter III, the Sacramento system already emphasizes ESL as part of employment services, and more than 90 percent of the survey sample had received some sort of English language training. The data used in this analysis do not allow a determination of whether the training has been effective at improving English skills.

Figure II.1: Self-Reported English Ability



Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
Sample size: 306

The survey asked respondents to report how well they read and write in their native languages. Responses gave little indication that illiteracy is a major problem. Only 4 percent of survey respondents said they could not read well or at all in their native language. (***Table II.4***.) Those who did were disproportionately Hmong, though the sample size is too small to indicate how widespread a problem illiteracy in their native language is among Hmong refugees.

D. Health Conditions

Several health issues among the Hmong were mentioned during the site visits. Interviewees reported that diabetes is a large problem among elderly Hmong and that obesity is a major problem with Hmong children in the community. One provider of social adjustment services reported seeing many medical problems and individuals with disabilities, including children, among the Hmong. Tuberculosis has been a problem for the community as well, as there had

been high rates of tuberculosis infection at the Wat Tham Krabok.[38] Indeed, there was a temporary interruption in the process of bringing residents of the Wat into the United States because of tuberculosis concerns.[39] Fewer health problems among working-age refugees from the former Soviet Union were mentioned during site visit interviews.

Service providers reported that mental health issues were important among all populations of refugees. Some refugees suffer from symptoms of post-traumatic stress. One interviewee noted that there is a reluctance among many Slavic refugees to seek help with mental health issues because of a perception that those with mental health problems are "crazy." (The interviewee said that for some, the reluctance was also in part because mental health institutions had been used for punishment purposes in the Soviet Union.)

Table II.5 Self-Reported Health and Disability Status by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Respondent's health status (%)					
Excellent	18.3	12.5	21.1	24.6	18.7
Very good	11.8	12.5	12.3	14.5	12.7
Good	36.6	38.8	35.1	30.4	35.5
Fair	28.0	25.0	21.1	23.2	24.7
Poor	*	11.3	10.5	*	8.4
Disability (%)					
Has work-preventing disability	8.6	10.0	*	*	7.7
Has disabled family member (adult)	*	*	0.0	*	2.0
Has disabled family member (minor)	*	*	8.6	*	5.0
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category that contains fewer than five individuals

On the survey, Sacramento's refugees reported higher rates of fair or poor health than the general population. One third (33 percent) of the survey respondents reported fair or poor health (***Table II.5***.), nearly three times the national average for adults 18 and older (12 percent) as reported in the 2005 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS).[40] Only about one third (31 percent) reported very good or excellent health, half the national average shown on the NHIS. However, the survey data reveal only limited instances of severe problems; few respondents (only 8 percent) rated their health as poor. The survey did not find a high rate of disability among the working-age

[38] See Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis in Hmong Refugees Resettling from Thailand into the United States, 2004—2005," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, August 5, 2005. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5430a1.htm, (accessed August 23, 2007).

[39] See Southeast Asian Resource Action Center, "Resettlement of Hmong Refugees From Wat Tham Krabok, Thailand Will Resume After Enhanced Health Screenings," February 3, 2005, available at http://www.searac.org/ca-health020305.html/, accessed July 23, 2007.

[40] National Center for Health Statistics. "Summary Health Statistics for U.S. Adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2005." *Vital and Health Statistics* Series 10, Number 232. Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Centers for Disease Control. December 2006. Page 9. Unlike the Refugee Assistance Survey, the NHIS figure includes the elderly.

refugees in the sample or among their family members. No separate question was asked about mental health, and it is unclear whether respondents took into account any mental health problems when answering the question.

E. Plans to Apply for Citizenship

The vast majority of individuals surveyed – 94 percent – plan to apply for citizenship. (***Table II.6.***) Participants in the focus groups were positive about their lives in the United States. One group of Slavic refugees said they feel at home in the United States; a second said it is too early to feel at home but that they feel "liberated" and feel that possibilities are open to them in this country. Participants in the Hmong group said they feel healthier in the United States, although they noted the limitations of not being able to speak English, and expressed some concerns about their children, such as their inability to help their children with homework, and the influence of other youth who smoke or steal.

Table II.6 Plans to Apply for Citizenship

Characteristic	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Planning to apply for citizenship (%)	93.3	94.4	94.1	95.3	94.2
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey

III. SERVICE DELIVERY

A. Client Flow: From Entry to RSS and TAG

1. Reception and Placement

Reception and placement (R&P) refers to the services provided to refugees upon their arrival to address their immediate needs.[41] In Sacramento they include meeting the refugees at the airport, helping to provide housing and furnishings, providing transportation for appointments, providing $50 in pocket cash to help with other immediate needs, helping the refugees apply for a Social Security card, enrolling the children in school, and other services. In general, the responsibility for R&P services lies with the Volags. However, only family reunification cases are resettled in Sacramento County, and the sponsor families agree to take on some of the responsibilities of R&P. The resettlement counselor/case manager at the Volag provides orientation for the sponsor family so that the family knows what is required of them.

In the first five days after arrival, the resettlement counselor arranges for an appointment at the refugee health clinic and arranges for a home visit to confirm that the residence is suitable (e.g., that there is a proper bed). In most cases, the sponsor family will take the refugee to the welfare office, doctors' offices for medical appointments, and the Social Security office, although Volag staff will do this if the sponsor family is unable to do so. Focus group participants reported this stage of services going smoothly; most said they had received services immediately, and the longest any had to wait for services was three to four days.

The Volag case manager prepares a family self-sufficiency plan either during the home visit or at the Volag office. The plan includes an individual employability plan for each recipient of RCA unless exempt and information on when to apply for a green card, how to repay airline bills, arrangements for children's immunizations, and school registration for children. For employable adults, they discuss employment goals. One interviewee said that English is emphasized in the early months for recipients of RCA during the limited period that they are receiving assistance so they can get a better job, and they refer them to ESL classes near where they live. The Volag case manager calls the family weekly for the first month. At 30 days and at 90 days, the Volag confirms that the refugee has taken certain steps such as getting a Social Security number and registering for ESL and welfare. The Volag continues to provide services (such as making referrals to DHA and ESL classes; providing donated items; etc.) if the refugee comes into the office, and the Volag checks on employment at 90 days (as required for family reunification cases by the Department of State) and 180 days.

[41] R&P services are funded by Department of State. They are provided to individuals who arrive as refugees; asylees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and victims of a severe form of trafficking are not eligible for these services.

2. *Cash Assistance, Food Stamps, and Medical Assistance*

As mentioned in the introduction, refugees are eligible for federal public assistance such as TANF, Food Stamps, and Medicaid as long as they meet the same eligibility requirements that apply to citizens. In addition, refugees without dependents who are consequently ineligible for TANF and Medicaid are eligible for cash and medical assistance for up to eight months following their dates of entry under the RCA and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) programs.

Refugees are generally referred to DHA by their resettlement agency shortly after they enter the country for eligibility determination for CalWORKS (California's TANF program) or RCA, Food Stamps, and Medicaid or RMA. The sponsor family members or the Volag bring the refugees into the local DHA office that serves their zip code. Although CalWORKs refugees are served with the general CalWORKs population, some offices have special skills social workers who speak one of the languages spoken by refugees and will serve a caseload of speakers of that language. (Particular refugee groups tend to be sent to certain offices because the different groups are centralized in different areas of the city; generally, the Russian and Ukrainian communities are in the northern area of the city, while the Hmong and other Asian refugees live in the southern area of the city.)

As a general procedure, after approving refugees for CalWORKS, DHA intake staff send a referral sheet to SETA so that SETA can arrange RSS and TAG services for the individual. SETA will generally recommend assigning the client to the closest service provider based on zip code, though the determination of which provider to recommend is done on a case by case basis and a number of other factors are considered, including whether a particular provider is thought to serve a particular population well and provider capacities. As is the case with CalWORKs offices, because refugee populations tend to concentrate within particular parts of the county, geographical recommendations based on zip codes tend to lead refugees of similar backgrounds to the same providers. SETA sends back the referral sheet to DHA, and DHA is responsible for informing the client to meet with the SETA contractor. DHA usually chooses to follow SETA's recommendation, though a caseworker can choose to send the client to a different provider than recommended. DHA may also refer refugees to programs other than those funded through RSS or TAG.

Unlike with CalWORKs, a client cannot be approved for RCA until the client has provided proof he or she is enrolled with a service provider. As a result, DHA will call SETA to get RCA cases an immediate referral to one of SETA's contractors.

While these are the general procedures followed by DHA and SETA, in many cases, if not most, clients find their way to a particular employment service provider independent of DHA's or SETA's referral through word of mouth or through outreach efforts by the providers.

CalWORKs eligibility is renewed annually. During this renewal there is a self appraisal in which the CalWORKs worker asks clients how they are doing, how their services are going, and what their future plans are. When a case is closed because the client no longer qualifies for RCA or CalWORKs, the client can apply for benefits from California's General Assistance program (which provides assistance to residents not eligible for other public benefits).

Based on interviews during the site visits, it appears that the CalWORKs program in Sacramento is not strict in imposing work requirements. Both senior staff and caseworkers interviewed agreed that there was little sanctioning of cases for noncompliance (which in California, involves removing the adult from the case but continuing to provide cash assistance for the children). One SETA contractor interviewed said she wanted DHA to be more forceful in enforcing the work requirement, to help her have leverage in convincing clients to take jobs available to them (and therefore to help her meet performance benchmarks and economic self-sufficiency). Interviews during the site visits suggest that refugee clients often want to focus on English during their first year in the United States, and on obtaining employment later. One focus group participant said the welfare office had pressured her to find work immediately and she took a job before speaking any English, which ended up being very challenging.

While employment services are generally provided by the SETA contractors, DHA does run job clubs (i.e., training in pre-employment skills such as life skills, grooming, and employment preparation, given in a class- or group-based setting). Indeed, DHA has contracted with two of the SETA contractors, Asian Resources and Grant Skills Center, to conduct job clubs. The clubs are open to limited English speakers, regardless of their language or immigration status. Refugees might be referred to these job clubs by either DHA or SETA; their participation is funded through CalWORKs. Clients typically attend job club for 4 weeks.

3. RSS and TAG General Client Flow/Case Management

In California, RSS and TAG are referred to as Refugee Employment Social Services (RESS) and Targeted Assistance (TA). Providers of services funded through these sources fall into two categories: providers of employment services, including on-the-job training (OJT), work experience placements, and work-related English-language training, and providers of "Social Adjustment and Cultural Orientation" (SA & CO) services such as translation and interpretation services (for purposes other than employment and employment services), crisis intervention, and help accessing other services. SETA recently established a policy of not funding both employment services and SA & CO services at the same provider; contractors provide either one type of service or the other to ensure that the two categories were properly targeted at the sometimes distinct populations who could best benefit from them.[42]

SETA contracts with a mix of refugee service organizations, including two school districts, several MAAs, community-based organizations, and a Volag (Opening Doors, an affiliate of Church World Service and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service). (***Appendix A*** shows a list of SETA contractors operating during the site visits.) Contracts with SETA are performance-based cost reimbursement contracts. Currently, SETA releases requests for proposals for employment providers every three years, issues contracts for the first year, and renews them for the second and third year contingent on performance. Goals are established for the number of

[42] The separation of the services aimed to encourage the use of SA & CO funding to provide specialized services such as support groups and help obtaining health or mental health services, and to target these services at refugees who can best benefit from them. Prior to the establishment of this policy, providers largely enrolled individuals already receiving employment services into SA & CO programs, and there was some suspicion that SA & CO funds were being used to provide services that could have been covered as part of employment services (e.g., translation for employment-related purposes).

participants served, as well as the number of successful cases (e.g., the number that are placed in an OJT, the number retaining their job for more than 90 days). Providers are reimbursed for actual costs and are evaluated based on participant performance outcomes—they propose the number of individuals they will serve and the services they will provide. The contractors are required to send monthly reports to SETA. A monitor reviews the program's files twice a year.

As noted above, DHA refers refugees to the SETA contractors when the refugees are approved for TANF or apply for RCA. However, most contractors interviewed said that most of the refugees they see do not come from a DHA referral, but instead, find their way to the contractor through word-of-mouth information or from outreach efforts conducted by the contractor. Many organizations are well known among the specific ethnic group they tend to serve. (For example, there are MAAs that focus on the Hmong and others that focus on Ukrainians.) Some organizations are located in the One-Stop Career Centers or in schools and get referrals from individuals seeking out specific services, such as ESL classes, training, or employment services. They also get referrals from the local Volags, since many refugees will first seek out assistance from the agency that resettled them.

The SETA contractors use the local media in their outreach efforts. Sacramento has Russian and Hmong radio stations and service providers advertise on these stations. The Slavic Assistance Center, an MAA, which serves Ukrainians in the community, publishes a weekly newspaper. Other outreach efforts described include distributing flyers in schools, agencies, churches, and grocery stores catering to particular populations, and attending cultural events. Members of one focus group noted that it was easy to learn about their service provider through the welfare agency, through newspaper ads, or through ads at the bus stop.

One client cannot be enrolled with two employment service providers at once, but some clients shop around for a service provider, and moving from provider to provider is not uncommon. Usually, if the client wants to switch (or if double enrollment is discovered), the current provider has to agree to sign a release. In general, a release is negotiated in one of two ways. The two providers may negotiate an agreement with each other, for example where the original provider agrees to release the client to a new provider that already has an appropriate job lined up and in exchange the new provider agrees to give the original provider a client with a job lined up in the future. Alternatively, under a process developed to promote partnership among providers, a provider that has a job lined up but no one appropriate enrolled to fill it can ask other providers to release an appropriate candidate to them and both the original and the new provider will be credited by SETA for the placement. The policy to credit both organizations is a relatively new one.[43]

Changes in providers can also occur when mandated by DHA. For example, a DHA caseworker may write into a CalWORKs "welfare-to-work" plan that there should be a transfer. In such cases, the service provider often authorizes the release before DHA mandates it.

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[43] At least one respondent attributed an improvement in the relationships among providers to this policy; before, the relationships could be "petty" and "competitive". This double crediting applies only to SETA's internal contracts with providers, and the duplication does not enter SETA's reporting of program outcomes to the California Department of Social Services.

While one service provider staff member interviewed reported that there is generally not very much collaboration with other providers, the site visit revealed several examples of collaboration among providers. Once a year, early in the fiscal year, the providers get together for a meeting, where they share forms and processes. There are other meetings among them when there are new issues that arise within the refugee program. One agency that serves the Hmong reported that they collaborate with all the other agencies in the community that serve the Hmong population, including having monthly meetings and referring clients to one another. However, one complaint raised by a focus group participant was that service providers did not sufficiently share information when he changed providers.

The recent separation between providers of employment services and SA & CO services has necessitated collaboration between agencies that provide different types of services. However, one administrator at an employment agency said they find this separation between employment and SA & CO services to be inefficient and frustrating. Clients ask the employment services providers for help with a range of problems inherent in being a refugee that fall within the auspices of SA & CO. The administrator said her organization either ends up helping the clients with these requests without being funded to do so, or else does not help the client with these problems, so that the client must visit an additional service provider to receive these services.

Employment/Education service providers have a set of steps they take when they first receive a referral:

- Make copies of relevant documents (e.g., I-94s, work papers, Social Security card, or verification that the refugee has applied for a Social Security card). They confirm from the documents that the applicant is eligible for services (i.e., is a refugee, asylee, etc.).

- Send verification request to SETA. SETA verifies the client is eligible and is not already enrolled with another provider. If the client is enrolled in another agency, the provider will request a release from the other provider.

- Discuss options with client for English language training, employment services, on-the-job training, or other services

- If the client is placed in a job, the provider will follow up at 90 days.

The provider is required to send SETA information on enrollment and placements every month.

B. RSS and TAG Services Provided

Table III.1 presents an analysis of the program data provided by SETA to show which RSS- and TAG-funded services were received by the individuals in the research sample and how quickly they received them. Since the research sample was defined as those adult individuals entering the country between federal fiscal years 2001 through 2004 who received RSS or TAG services, everyone in the sample received at least one type of service. Services funded through other sources (e.g., if DHA referred a refugee to a vocational training class funded through the Workforce Investment Act) do not appear in this table; similarly, refugees who only received

services funded through other sources and did not receive any RSS- or TAG-funded services are not part of the research sample.

Table III.1 Receipt of RSS and TAG Services by Entry Date

Service Type (% of Caseload receiving any RSS or TAG service)	Within 30 days after entry	Within 60 days after entry	Within 90 days after entry	Within 120 days after entry	Within 365 days after entry	Ever received service
Employment services, including VESL/ES	19.5	46.7	53.0	56.8	71.0	82.8
Stand alone employment services	0.4	1.3	1.9	2.6	10.3	23.3
VESL / Employment services	19.2	45.6	51.6	55.0	67.1	75.3
Vocational ESL	21.0	50.0	56.8	60.6	74.9	83.9
Social adjustment and cultural orientation	3.5	6.9	9.1	11.4	24.8	43.2
OJT or work experience	1.8	4.5	5.7	6.7	12.4	16.7
OJT	1.4	3.1	3.7	4.5	9.4	13.7
Work experience	0.4	1.4	2.0	2.2	3.4	3.6
Vocational training	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.7	3.3	5.1
Any service	23.0	53.7	61.5	66.3	84.4	100.0
Sample size	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196	3,196

Source: RSS and TAG program data provided by the state

1. *ESL and Vocational ESL*

All the SETA contractors who provide employment services also offer Vocational ESL (VESL) classes. In all cases, the classes are open-entry/open-exit. Some of the larger programs offer many different levels of classes and at different times during the day. The smaller programs provide instruction to multiple levels in one class. VESL classes provide English instruction but also focus on employment issues. For example, the class might also include employment etiquette, conducting mock interviews, developing professional resumes, and conducting job searches. However, they also cover a broader range of topics; areas covered by one or more programs visited during the site visits include how to request and find help, ask for directions, talking about money, buying food, hygiene/health, banking, how to secure a job, pre-job preparation, and how to obtain housing, etc. One provider noted that most clients receive VESL for about three months, although many receive it for six to 12 months or longer before being placed in a job. Some clients who find work still choose to attend VESL classes; they usually take the classes at night.

Throughout the site visit to Sacramento, there were several indications of the strong emphasis placed on learning English at an early stage by service providers, case managers, and the refugees themselves. English language training is coordinated with the various employment services and training; indeed, in most cases enrollment in SETA's employment-related services is combined with enrollment in VESL, and SETA records treat the services as combined, such as VESL/OJT, VESL/Employment Services, or VESL/Vocational Training. Conversations with the service providers indicated that in such cases, the English language training is delivered before or simultaneous with services aimed at near-term employment. Some providers said that they provided employment services and training after a refugee had learned enough English to benefit from it. Of one services provider, a focus group respondent said the provider puts a great emphasis on learning English, but as soon as one feels ready, the staff begin working with him or her on employment.

It is a requirement of RSS and TAG that English training funded through the programs must be provided concurrently with employment or with employment services, and while some of the providers described employment services as following VESL, there were also signs that refugees were receiving basic employment preparation services at an early stage. For example, one provider that did not appear to emphasize employment while individuals were receiving English training nonetheless reported helping all clients enroll in employment services at a One-Stop Career Center. Similarly, another provider that said that English training precedes employment services described how to secure a job and pre-job preparations as among the areas covered by the English classes.

In contrast, another provider said they emphasized English for clients receiving cash assistance but not for clients no longer eligible for RCA or TANF. Under SETA policy, such individuals receive "Employment Services Stand Alone," which emphasizes immediate employment and does not contain a VESL component. A provider of OJT services said that individuals also learning English would work in the OJT placement by day and take English classes at night.

Several programs described a process whereby instructors will notify the job developers when a refugee is "job ready." Most classes have monthly tests (e.g., the Comprehensive Adult Student

Assessment Systems, or CASAS, which assesses various competencies of adults) and weekly quizzes to determine whether the student is ready for employment.

Because under SETA's system, employment and English are integrated, program records show English and employment services together. It is impossible to separate out the data to identify individuals that actually attended English classes. The figures in ***Table III.1*** include all services reported as having an English language training component, which represents an upper bound, but, based on conversations with providers, is likely to be fairly accurate. They show that four out of five refugees in the sample (84 percent) receive ESL/Vocational ESL services at some point, and a substantial number of refugees receive such services during their first months in the United States. Half of the sample received ESL/VESL within 60 days after entry. The figures are consistent with the site visit descriptions of the emphasis on English at early stages.

2. Employment Services

All of SETA's employment contractors have staff who are responsible for finding employment opportunities for their refugees. Providers build relationships with employers, act as job counselors and job developers, are responsible for pre-employment training, job search, outreach, client placement, talking to employers, counseling, and general case management. Their job responsibilities include facilitating job search workshops and pre-employment trainings.

Box 1: Example of Employment Services

A Russian female in her 50s arrived in the United States in 2003. She was having a difficult time finding a job and came to the provider for assistance. The employment specialist scheduled an appointment for her to interview for a job at a local bakery that paid $6.75 an hour. She was hired and started two days after the interview. The employment specialist also took her to a store to purchase clothing for work. The worker followed up after 30 days, and learned she was still working. He learned during the 90-day follow-up that she was still working and closed the case.

Clients' job placements depend on both their English abilities and experience. Sometimes refugees get placed in skilled positions even though they have poor English skills if they have an in-demand skill (such as welding).[44] Employment service specialists will often escort clients to the company so the employer can test their skills and they can translate for the client. Placing bilingual clients can be particularly valuable for employment services providers in opening doors with an employer, since often a bilingual placement means that there is someone at that employer who can communicate with future non-English speaking clients.

[44] One focus group member said that their service provider showed that anyone can get a job, even without English.

Box 2: Example of the Relationship Between Providers and a Company

A temp to hire firm has worked with refugee agencies for seven years and has worked directly with at least three of the employment service providers. The types of jobs they direct refugees to depends on the position requirements and testing. The refugee agencies prescreen employees. The agency explains the requirements of the job to the candidates, and calls to see if the employees need translation assistance or coaching on the job. Those with limited English get jobs in production, machine operation, or manual processing. They have call center jobs for those who are bi-lingual. Customers will hire refugees with limited English skills if the skills are not required for the job.

Providers call the company if they have candidates, and the company will also call the providers. Last year the company hired 30 refugees. Some were hired in OJT slots, but most were not. The temp agency respondent said her experiences with the provider she works most with have been "wonderful." She said that refugees tend to stay on the job longer than other hires and are very reliable. The only concerns she expressed is that the providers are often busy, so there is difficulty in reaching staff by phone, and that refugee candidates occasionally just show up at their office because of communication problems.

The job developers/specialists are finding that more employers are requiring job applicants to take and pass a test. This is a problem for refugees with limited English skills. In some cases, the employer administers a computerized test, which requires familiarity with a computer. For example, a large retailer in the area now administers a computerized screening that 90 percent of the refugees cannot pass. A number of fast food restaurants also require a test, but put it on-line which allows the developers to help translate the questions for the refugees.

Providers report monthly to SETA. They verify that people are working and are on RCA or CalWORKS. The employer fills out a form for each placement and this is kept in the client's file. The provider provides the information to SETA. The final required follow-up call with the employer occurs 90-days after placement.

If they lose or quit their job, the clients usually come back in order to request assistance in finding a new job. Clients are eligible to receive support to obtain another job from any of the providers, and some clients shop around between agencies to see which organization can find them the job with the highest wage. This results in some competition with other providers. However, there are also instances of cooperation. SETA has a guideline of one job placement per client per provider a year. ("Placement" is defined as entry into unsubsidized employment.) Sometimes they will refer a client to a second provider if it is thought the client needs another placement to allow another organization to get the placement credit.

As discussed, English language training services incorporate some focus on employment, but the level of employment services delivered as part of the VESL classes varies, from teaching basic English skills relevant to employment and job search to coordination with full employment services. The program data's records, which often combine VESL with employment services, are unclear in that they often do not indicate whether a client has received basic employment preparation or has received job search or other services aimed at finding employment in the near-term. As a result, ***Table III.1*** shows multiple lines for employment services. The broadest

includes all cases where a client received services recorded as either free-standing employment services or services recorded as VESL/Employment Services. This can be thought of as an upper bound. It may overstate the amount of employment services received if there are cases where a client received only vocational English language training particularly in the early periods, since many service providers emphasize learning English in a client's first months of participation before providing them with more intensive employment services. By this measure, as many as 83 percent of individuals who receive RSS or TAG-funded services in Sacramento receive employment services as part of them.

A more restrictive measurement includes only cases recorded as receiving employment services separately from English language training. These are cases where the refugee is no longer eligible for cash assistance (RCA or TANF), and the service provider enrolls him or her in "Employment Services Stand Alone," which emphasizes immediate employment and does not include an English training component. Using this more restrictive definition, only 23 percent of clients in the sample received employment services at some point. Very few received employment services during their first three months in the country, compared to 53 percent of clients in the sample using the broader definition.

Based on conversations with service providers, the lower figures are likely to be closer to an accurate representation of who received services focused on near-term employment, such as job search and placement, within a few months after entry (though most or all recorded within the broader figure may have received basic employment-focused services such as job preparation, resume writing, and interviewing practice). With regards to the number that ever received job search and other services focused on placement, the truth is likely to lie somewhere between the two sets. This is supported by results from the survey, discussed in more detail later, that show that 53 percent of respondents report having received job search services at some point since arriving in the United States – at the midpoint between the two definitions in the program data.

3. On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience

On-the-Job Training placements refer to arrangements where an employer hires a client of one of the service providers and agrees to provide training to the client while the client works; in return, the provider pays 50 percent of the total wages for 240 hours, generally over a period of six to eight weeks.[45] The expectation is that an OJT placement will lead to a permanent job with the employer, although this does not always happen. There is relatively broad use of OJT for refugees in Sacramento. Four of the SETA contractors place refugees in OJT positions, and 14 percent of refugees in the research sample received such a placement. These placements appear to be primarily used for individuals who have already been in the country for a substantial period of time; only one-third of those receiving a placement received it within their first four months in the country.

[45] While SETA uses TAG funds to pay for 240 hours of OJT, a refugee's OJT placement can last up to 480 hours, with the additional 240 hours financed through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program.

Strategies for the use of OJT placements differ among service providers. One provider noted that they use OJT placements for experienced refugees; the provider tries to match these individuals with stable companies as a way to try to ensure longer-lasting employment. In contrast, another provider focuses OJT placements on refugees they feel might not be able to find employment otherwise and use the subsidy to entice employers to hire these individuals. One provider noted that they will only arrange OJT placements with employers who pay at least $8 an hour.

While OJT does not always lead to a permanent job, providers said that they do not continue to offer OJT placements to employers who repeatedly fail to offer permanent employment to OJT participants. Both providers and the employers interviewed said that most OJT placements lead to permanent employment.

Box 3: Example of an Employer Participating in OJT Services

A manufacturing company that produces packaging equipment has been working with one of the employment services providers for over 10 years, and hires refugees into manufacturing jobs. Refugees hired generally start off doing assembly work, for which no training is necessary. Then, based on performance, they may get to do more complex work, such as using equipment, forklifts, or glue machines. There is no English or education requirement for production jobs. When the company has vacancies, they first call the employment service provider, because the company feels the provider sends them very good workers, and because there are additional benefits, such as OJT funds and translation services. Occasionally the provider calls the company to ask about openings too. About 70-80 percent of their workers start in an OJT slot; the company almost always hires these workers for full-time positions after that. In addition, the provider calls the production manager to follow up and make sure everything is working out, and maintains a relationship with the employer regardless of how recently they have sent a worker to them.

A smaller number of refugees in the research sample (4 percent) received Work Experience placements. Like OJT, Work Experience placements were arrangements where the SETA provider subsidized a refugee's work for an employer, but they differed from OJT in several ways. For example, with Work Experience placements, the refugee was not considered an actual employee; the provider reimbursed 100 percent of the wages paid to the refugee; and the employer made no commitment to hire the refugee following the placement. SETA phased out the use of Work Experience placements because of an appraisal that outcomes from OJT placements were superior. This explains the small number during the period covered by this study. The final placements occurred in 2002.

In total, 17 percent of refugees in the sample received either an OJT or a Work Experience placement.

4. *Vocational Training*

RSS-funded vocational training is currently offered by just one provider.[46] They offer several types of vocational training classes, including Building Maintenance Trade (BMT), forklift training and certification, and office skills and training in software such as Microsoft products. Some classes have students with varying levels of English ability and with different employment statuses. These classes are not limited to refugees and therefore include students with different backgrounds. The public school system pays for the teachers, so the programs can use the refugee funding to pay for other aspects of the program.

The service provider received funding to provide training to 30 refugees within a year. About 5 percent of the sample received vocational training. Only a small number received RSS-funded vocational training within a few months of entry; more than 85 percent of those who received vocational training received it after having been in the country for at least four months, and about a third received it after having been in the country for at least a year.

5. *Social Adjustment and Cultural Orientation*

SETA has contracts with four organizations to provide what it calls "Social Adjustment and Cultural Orientation", or SA & CO, services. (On the federal level these are referred to as social adjustment, information and referral, outreach, and other services). Activities covered under the SETA contract include:

- Translation/interpretation
- Crisis intervention (e.g., health crises)
- Individual or Group Counseling
- Information/access to services (e.g., CalWORKs, financial literacy, housing, health services, education, legal services, citizenship)

In SETA's program year 2004-2005, SA & CO services accounted for nine percent of total RSS and TAG funding.[47]

During a site visit interview, one SA & CO provider estimated that at least half of their RSS funding goes for medical interpretation. The rest of it is allocated for helping with immigration problems and with paperwork and accessing services. Another said their services include tracking their clients' stability, making sure that their basic needs are met so they can be more independently stable. Staff at this organization indicated that the new wave of Hmong refugees has needed a lot of assistance in resettling. They describe many medical problems and individuals (including children) with disabilities among this population.[48] They take clients on a

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[46] Through 2003, a second provider offered vocational training. (Services they provided are reflected in the statistics presented here.) In addition, SETA has arrangements with other vendors for vocational training that do not involve refugee-specific services. While some refugees may attend these classes, they were not studied as part of this evaluation, and they were not included in the service data in Table III.1.

[47] SA & CO is funded solely through RSS, and accounts for 15 percent of RSS funding.

[48] While, as noted earlier, the Refugee Assistance Survey did not find high levels of disability among respondents or their family members, the number of Hmong in the survey sample is too low to lead to meaningful conclusions about the prevalence of disabilities in this population.

walk-in basis, and escort clients to appointments to serve as interpreters. They also help refer and escort victims of domestic violence to the proper agencies and help with interpreting.

Other services provided by these organizations include drug and alcohol counseling; a monthly law clinic; and activities to reduce the social isolation of elderly refugees as a way of aiding their mental health. It was not clear from the interviews the extent to which these were funded through RSS and TAG.

Box 4: Example of SA & CO Services

A young Hmong woman who was pregnant was getting prenatal care but had problems accessing health care services with her MediCal card. (MediCal is California's Medicaid program.) The worker worked with DHA and the hospital, which involved many back-and-forth conversations to resolve this issue. She also referred the client to the Health Rights Hotline and translated their services. Once the MediCal card finally worked, the client found out she was Hepatitis B positive and diabetic. The case manager educated the client on what this could mean for her pregnancy. She also advised the client to get more counseling and referred her to a Hepatitis B specialist. After the client gave birth to her child, the case manager escorted her and her baby to services she needed (such as appointments at the hospital).

Of those served by SETA contractors, 43 percent received SA & CO services. Of these, a little more than half receive SA & CO services within their first year in the country, and the rest first receive SA & CO services after having been in the country for more than a year.

6. Other services for refugees provided by SETA contractors

The service providers often receive additional funding, sometimes for a specific initiative affecting refugees, and at other times aimed at the community at large. Some examples include:

- Bach Viet runs the "First 5" program in collaboration with the Slavic Community Center and Safety Center of Sacramento. It is funded through a grant given within California, with tobacco settlement money, and focuses on the impact of drug and alcohol abuse in the household during the first five years of a child's life. The program identifies families with substance abuse issues, sends the substance abuser to treatment, and works with the other parent to make the household better for the children.

- Sacramento Lao Family Community received funding from the California Endowment, a foundation, to aid the new Hmong refugees for one and a half years. This program, which is called the Hmong New Arrival Health Navigation Systems Project, helps refugees make and keep health appointments and provides translation services during the appointments. They also conduct health education workshops on topics such as healthy cooking and nutrition and tuberculosis awareness, and provide assistance with testing and education on diabetes, blood pressure, hypertension, and childhood obesity (which are problems among the Hmong Community). A dietician from the University of California at Davis also teaches classes on nutrition education for families participating in the Women, Infants and Children program.

- The Hmong Women's Heritage Association received a grant from ORR to work with youth. This grant allows them to teach a survival skills class to youth. Another grant from ORR, the Healthy Family project, is being used to improve child/parent relationships.

- Asian Resources receives funding from the California Endowment and Rockefeller Foundation for the Sacramento Works for Better Health initiative. This initiative aims to improve the health and well-being of people who live in low-income neighborhoods by improving their access to higher quality employment.

- The Slavic Assistance Center runs a Marriage Enrichment program, funded by Lao Family Community Development Corporation using pass-through funding from ORR, to run workshops and provide education to reduce the number of divorces among refugee communities.

C. Service Receipt Among Refugees

Table III.2 shows the results of survey questions regarding services received by refugees. The survey asked about types of services received but did not ask respondents to identify whether the services were delivered under RSS and TAG or under some other program. As a result, the figures shown in Table III.2 may not necessarily reflect RSS and TAG services in particular.

The findings in Table III.2 are quite consistent with the findings from the program data. The service most commonly received was English language training. More than 90 percent of the sample received English training at some point after they entered the United States. This is also consistent both with what was reported in interviews during the site visits and with program data that showed that few refugees had good or excellent English ability upon entry into the United States. (See footnote 26.)

About half of respondents report having received job search services, midway between the upper- and lower-bound estimates from the program data (i.e., higher than the percentage shown in the program data as having received stand-alone employment services without ESL, and lower than the percentage shown in the program data when including integrated VESL and employment services). The fact that the share having received job search services is lower among more recent cohorts may mean that some refugees access job search services for the first time several years after arriving.

Close to 10 percent report having worked in a subsidized job, a little less than the 17 percent of those receiving RSS and TAG services shown in the program data to have received an OJT or work experience placement. Somewhat more report that they received vocational skills training than shown in the program data (12 percent, compared to 5 percent); while respondents may be receiving vocational training through other sources, the difference is fairly small and could also reflect other factors such as how the survey respondents interpreted the question.

A substantial number of refugees access services beyond English language training and employment services. More than half of the sample – 59 percent – reported receiving legal services, which as defined in the survey referred to "help in getting documentation for employment, help with citizenship and naturalization preparation, help getting a Green Card, or

other legal help". Of the types of services asked about on the survey, this was the second most commonly received. A smaller, but still substantial share (43 percent) reported receiving translation services, which may have been used when applying for immigration status, getting public assistance, finding a place to live, communicating with an employer, or for any other purpose.

Six percent of respondents report receiving adult basic education or GED services; Table II.4 shows that 14 percent reported that they had less than a high school degree.

The survey asked a single "customer satisfaction" question, asking the respondent to rate how he or she felt about all services, received from all sources, together. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, with more than a third of the Sacramento survey sample (38 percent) saying they found the services "excellent" and another 50 percent saying they found the services "good". Very few found the services "poor." Earlier cohorts were more likely to give positive ratings to the services they received, with 96 percent of members of the sample who entered the country in FY 2001 rating the services they received as excellent or good, compared with 88 percent in the FY 2002 cohort; 86 percent in the FY 2003 cohort; and only 78 percent in the FY 2004 cohort. It is unclear whether this reflects the different lengths of time each cohort has spent in the country, a change in the quality of services received, different characteristics of the different cohorts, or some other factor.

Table III.2 Receipt of Any Services by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Ever received services (%)					
Job search	61.3	51.3	53.4	45.7	53.5
Subsidized employment	12.8	*	10.3	7.4	8.6
Vocational skills training	12.6	12.0	10.5	11.4	11.8
GED/ABE instruction	5.3	6.0	6.9	7.1	6.2
ESL/English language training	89.5	90.4	94.8	91.4	91.2
Legal services	67.0	54.2	65.5	46.4	58.6
Translation/Interpretation services	45.2	42.0	42.1	40.6	42.7
Assessment of services and assistance received to help settle, become adjusted, and support oneself (%)					
Excellent	39.6	27.3	48.3	38.8	37.9
Good	56.0	61.0	37.9	38.8	49.8
Fair	*	9.1	12.1	19.4	10.6
Poor	0.0	0.0	*	*	*
Don't know	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	*
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category that contains fewer than five individuals

Focus group participants were satisfied or happy with the services they had received, though they did voice some particular complaints. In more than one of the groups, participants mentioned

problems they had encountered because they did not know what to ask for. In one case this involved missing bureaucratic deadlines the family did not know about; in another, an individual had not registered a child for a pre-K program of which she was unaware. Other complaints included classes that were too large (45 to 50 people); offices which closed at 5:00 pm, making it difficult to access services while working; and difficulty in changing case managers when dissatisfied with one's current one. Satisfaction with adult school classes depended on whether the way classes were taught matched one's learning style.

D. Education Achieved in the United States

Interviews during the site visit suggested that many refugees in Sacramento are very interested in pursuing further education, and that they often do so while on TANF instead of actively pursuing employment.[49] (See ***Box 5*** for a description of a case like this.) ***Table III.3*** shows that indeed, a notable portion of refugees in Sacramento pursues higher education. One-fifth of the survey sample reported having pursued a degree, diploma, or certificate since arriving in the United States. It is striking that in more than four-fifths of these cases (81 percent), the individuals were pursuing an associate, bachelor's or professional degree, while in less than one fifth of these cases (18 percent) was the individual pursuing a vocational certificate or license. No one in the survey sample had pursued a high school diploma or GED, in part reflecting the small number who did not have a high school degree upon arrival. Of those who had received education in the United States, only a few had obtained a degree or certificate.

Box 5: Example of Client Pursuing Education While Receiving Services

A married woman with two children, who arrived from Ukraine in 2005, came to the office looking for a job. She heard about the service provider through their outreach efforts, knew they had a Russian speaking worker, and called the office. She and her family were receiving CalWORKs. She had a college education. Over the phone, the worker scheduled an appointment and told her what documents to bring with her. The woman was not sure she was ready to work. She spoke some English, although it was not very good. She expressed an interest in getting a job that would be a starting step toward a professional career, such as in the accounting or business field. The worker showed her how to look for a job on the Internet, create a resume, and use the career center. The worker also helped her fill out an application at a store. They met once a month to help put together resumes and applications. After the job search did not produce any viable job offers, the woman decided to go to the local college. She was eligible for financial aid there and signed up for ESL and business classes. The worker referred her to a job counselor who helped her obtain a work-study position doing clerical work at the college.

[49] While not actively pursuing employment may be grounds for a CalWORKs sanction in some cases, as noted earlier it was observed that sanctioning is infrequent in Sacramento.

Table III.3 Education and Training Achieved in the United States

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Have pursued a degree, diploma, or certificate in United States (%)	24.2	16.9	25.9	14.5	20.3
Of those pursuing a degree:					
Type of degree or certificate (%)					
Vocational certificate or license	-	-	-	-	17.7
High school diploma or GED	-	-	-	-	0.0
Associate degree	-	-	-	-	38.7
Bachelor's degree	-	-	-	-	38.7
Master's or Doctorate degree	-	-	-	-	0.0
Professional school degree	-	-	-	-	*
Other degree, diploma, or certificate	-	-	-	-	*
Obtained degree or certificate (%)	-	-	-	-	*
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
- Not calculated due to small sample size
* Indicates a category that contains fewer than five individuals

IV. OUTCOMES

A. Receipt of Cash Assistance and Food Stamps

Relative to other states, California offers comparatively high amounts of TANF benefits. For example in 2003, families in Sacramento consisting of one adult and two children could receive up to $671 gross a month from CalWORKs, more than in any state other than Alaska.[50] RCA benefit levels and eligibility determination in California are aligned with CalWORKS. Families can receive CalWORKs for longer periods of time than in some other states; CalWORKs cases face a 60-month time limit, but upon reaching the time limit, only adults are removed from the case; families can still receive benefits for their children.[51]

Consequently, there are high rates of cash assistance receipt among refugees in Sacramento; the comparatively high benefit amounts, together with earnings disregards, mean that individuals and families can earn modest amounts while still being eligible for CalWORKs benefits. This is particularly true given the large size of Sacramento's refugees' families. Also, recipients appear to be able to subsist at a more reasonable level on public benefits and community supports than they can in some low-benefit states.[52] ***Table IV.1*** shows the percentage of refugees in the research sample who received cash assistance through TANF or RCA. Overall, about 80 percent of refugees served in Sacramento receive cash assistance within their first year after entry. In about three quarters of these cases, the refugee received TANF payments, and in the other quarter of cases the refugee received RCA; this is roughly consistent with the earlier finding that about 70 percent of refugees currently live with minors (Table II.3).[53]

The table also shows that cash assistance receipt extends beyond the first year in the country. Although TANF use drops off as refugees have been in the country for a longer time, there are still 42 percent of refugees who receive TANF in their third year after entry. (As individuals can only receive RCA within eight months of their date of entry, the table does not present receipt of RCA beyond the first year.)

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[50] For the maximum benefit in Sacramento, see California Department of Social Services, All County Letter 03-38, August 19, 2003. Available at http://www.cdss.ca.gov/getinfo/acl03/pdf/03-38.pdf, accessed July 16, 2007. California counties are divided into two regions with different levels of CalWORKs benefits. Sacramento is a "Region II" county, which has a somewhat lower maximum benefit than the other region; the Region I maximum benefit in 2003 was $704. For a comparison to other states, see Gretchen Rowe and Jeffrey Versteeg, "Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2003," The Urban Institute, Assessing the New Federalism, April 2005, Table II.A.4., available at http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411183_WRD_2003.pdf, accessed July 16, 2007.

[51] States can continue to provide TANF assistance payments to cases that have reached the 60-month time limit by using state money instead of money from the federal block grant. California does so, but removes adults from these cases, which results in a reduction in the benefits the family receives because of the smaller case size.

[52] In particular, TANF benefits may be more generous relative to the local cost of living than in the other two sites studied as part of this evaluation. The maximum TANF benefit for a family of three with no income in California in 2006 was more than twice as in Florida, and nearly three times as in Texas. While costs of living may be higher in Sacramento than in Miami or Houston, they are unlikely to be double or triple the costs in those sites.

[53] Survey data (not shown) tell a similar story. One quarter of survey respondents in Sacramento who entered in FY 2003, who would have been in the country for approximately three to four years at the time they were surveyed, reported receiving cash assistance in the previous month. This compared with 4 percent of survey respondents from the same entry cohort in Houston and none in Miami.

Table IV.1 Cash Assistance Receipt

Measure	Total[a]
Received TANF (%)	
In first year after entry	62.5
In second year after entry	57.4
In third year after entry	41.6
Received RCA (%)	
Within first eight months after entry	25.1
Received any cash assistance (TANF or RCA) (%)	
In first year after entry	80.3
Sample size	2,385

Sources: TANF records, Refugee Cash Assistance records
[a] Includes individuals with missing countries of origin

Table IV.2 shows that average monthly benefits among the FY2001 cohort of refugees served in Sacramento were substantially higher than the national average, and roughly average for the state. This cohort received $832 on average, compared with a national per-family benefit averaging $449 in FY 2001 through FY 2003, and a statewide per-family benefit averaging $729.[54] This is in part driven by the large sizes of the refugee families, as larger families can receive higher TANF benefits. Recipients of RCA received smaller benefit amounts averaging $381 a month; this is unsurprising given that RCA recipients do not have children and therefore generally have smaller family sizes.

Refugees who entered in 2001 and who received TANF benefits at some point spent a little more than one half of the months in the four year period from FY 2001 to FY 2004 (27.1 out of 48 months) on TANF on average, and the average length of TANF spell was 20 months. Most – 78 percent – had only one or two spells, but a substantial minority returned to TANF at least two times during this period. (Background analysis, not presented in the table, indicates that the average length of second or third spells was roughly one third the average length of first spells.) About 60 percent of individuals on RCA had one spell and about 40 percent had two. Very few had more than two, which is expected given the short period in which RCA is available to a refugee.

[54] Average monthly benefits for each year are adjusted for inflation into 2006 dollars using the CPI, and then averaged across years. National and state per-family monthly benefits by year from: Office of Family Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) Fifth Annual Report to Congress, Table 2:7:c, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/annualreport5/chap02.pdf, accessed July 16, 2007; Office of Family Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) Sixth Annual Report to Congress, November 2004, Table 1.14, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/annualreport6/chapter01/App01.pdf , accessed July 16, 2007; Office of Family Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) Seventh Annual Report to Congress, December 2006, table 1.12, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/annualreport7/Appendix/TANF_7th_Report_Appendix_chap01.pdf, accessed July 14, 2007.

Table IV.2 Cash and Food Stamp Payments and Spells for FY 2001 Entry Cohort

Measure	TANF	RCA	Food Stamps
Average monthly benefit amount ($)	832	381	372
Average number of months receiving benefit, FY2001-2004	27.1	2.6	19.8
Average number of spells, FY2001-2004	1.8	1.4	1.9
Number of spells (%)			
One spell	51.3	58.6	47.3
Two spells	26.3	39.7	24.8
Three spells	19.6	1.7	19.3
Four spells	2.0	0.0	6.7
Five spells	0.5	0.0	1.2
Six or more spells	0.3	0.0	0.7
Average spell length (in months)	20.0	1.7	13.5
Average length of longest spell (in months)	24.0	1.7	17.2
Sample size	638	116	698

Sources: TANF records, Refugee Cash Assistance records, and Food Stamp records
Note: Benefit amounts in constant 2006 dollars

Food Stamp receipt in the first year is similar to cash assistance, at 75 percent. (***Table IV.3***.) By the third year, the number has dropped, but 45 percent still receive Food Stamps. Benefits for the FY 2001 cohort averaged $372. This is higher than both the national and state averages. (The national average household monthly benefit in FY 2002 through FY 2004 was $211 in 2006 dollars; the average in California was $245.[55]) This may be in part driven by the above-average family size among refugees in Sacramento. On average, individuals who received Food Stamps received them for 19.8 months during the first four years, somewhat less than TANF. Similar to TANF, over 70 percent have only one or two spells, but the average spell length was somewhat shorter, at 13.5 months.

[55] Average monthly per-household benefits from USDA, "Food Stamp Program: Average Monthly Benefit Per Household," June 26, 2007. Available at http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/19fsavghh$.htm, accessed July 18, 2007.

Table IV.3 Food Stamp Receipt by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Received Food Stamps (%)					
In first year after entry	66.7	90.8	78.3	51.2	74.9
In second year after entry	65.0	62.3	37.1	--	62.1
In third year after entry	47.2	19.5	--	--	45.0
Ever received	73.2	93.4	79.0	51.2	78.4
Sample size	954	677	553	201	2,385

Source: Food Stamp records
-- Data not available for second and/or third year after entry for these cohorts

B. Employment Patterns and Job Characteristics

1. *Findings from Unemployment Insurance Wage Records*

Table IV.4 presents the results of analysis of employment and earnings data contained in the UI wage records. The data show that overall about three quarters of individual refugees in the research sample (73 percent of the 2,800 people in the sample) held a job covered by California's UI system at some point within their first four years after entry.[56] About half of those who held a job (that is, 37 percent of those in the research sample) worked at some point in their first year in the country. From quarter to quarter within the first year, there was a steady increase in employment rates; in the third quarter, around one fourth worked, and by the fourth quarter the proportion working reached about a third. Employment rates leveled off after the first year; about half of the refugees in the sample worked in the second, third, and fourth years.

After the first year, average quarters of employment each year range from 1.6 to 2.0. For those working in at least one quarter, the average number of quarters worked is about 3.0 in the second year, and 3.3 and 3.5 in the third and fourth; those working do so for most of the year.

Earnings improve over time, with average annual earnings increasing for each cohort with each additional year that they spend in the country. (See ***Figure IV.1***.)

However, for most of those working, annual earnings remain low. ***Figure IV.2*** demonstrates this. Even by the fourth year, of the half of refugees with any earnings to begin with, only 65 percent earned more than $10,000, and only 14 percent earned more than $30,000.

[56] Individuals for whom there was insufficient identifying information to match to UI records are excluded from this aspect of the analysis. UI records do not capture earnings and employment outside California, so to the extent members of the research sample worked outside of California, it will not be reflected in these data. About 7 percent of the sample was initially resettled outside California.

Table IV.4 Individual Earnings by Entry Cohort

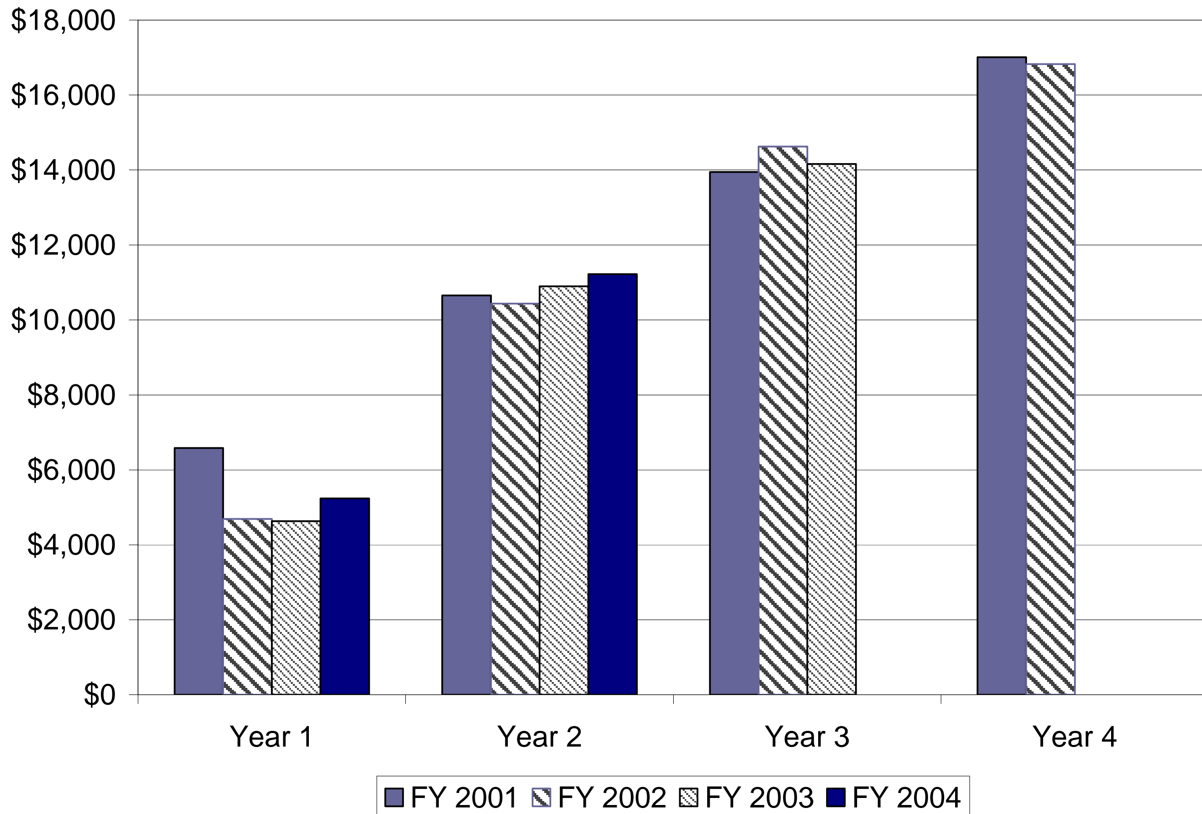
Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Ever employed (%)	74.9	71.4	76.0	67.3	72.6
Quarter of entry	5.2	2.9	*	2.8	3.5
Quarter 2	15.1	10.2	12.5	12.6	12.9
Quarter 3	24.3	23.7	25.0	23.2	24.1
Quarter 4	30.7	31.5	34.7	33.0	32.2
Year 1	35.5	35.1	40.3	36.9	36.7
Year 2	52.6	51.8	58.6	56.7	54.5
Year 3	56.3	51.8	60.1	--	55.9
Year 4	55.3	54.5	--	--	55.0
Average number of quarters employed[a]					
Year 1	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Year 2	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.7
Year 3	1.9	1.8	2.0	--	1.9
Year 4	1.9	1.9	--	--	1.9
Average earnings[b] ($)					
Quarter of entry	4,015	2,578	3,863	3,203	3,567
Quarter 2	2,725	1,809	1,690	1,579	2,103
Quarter 3	2,945	2,178	2,437	2,519	2,567
Quarter 4	3,265	2,766	2,773	3,215	3,031
Year 1	6,587	4,691	4,635	5,235	5,424
Year 2	10,654	10,435	10,900	11,219	10,783
Year 3	13,951	14,627	14,162	--	14,204
Year 4	17,007	16,829	--	--	16,933
Annual earnings Year 1 (%)					
None	64.5	64.9	59.7	63.1	63.3
$1 - 4,999	20.2	23.3	26.7	22.4	22.7
$5,000 - 9,999	8.6	8.8	9.6	9.6	9.1
$10,000 - 19,999	4.9	2.5	3.4	3.9	3.8
$20,000 - 29,999	*	*	*	*	0.5
$30,000 or more	*	*	*	*	0.5
Annual earnings Year 2 (%)					
None	47.4	48.2	41.4	43.3	45.5
$1 - 4,999	17.9	16.3	17.8	17.1	17.3
$5,000 - 9,999	12.5	11.6	13.6	11.8	12.3
$10,000 - 19,999	14.5	17.6	17.8	19.5	17.0
$20,000 - 29,999	*	5.4	7.8	5.6	6.1
$30,000 or more	*	*	*	2.6	1.7

Table IV.4 (continued)

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Annual earnings Year 3 (%)					
None	43.7	48.2	39.9	--	44.1
$1 - 4,999	13.8	10.2	14.2	--	12.8
$5,000 - 9,999	11.7	8.6	11.3	--	10.6
$10,000 - 19,999	15.8	19.8	18.9	--	17.8
$20,000 - 29,999	10.5	9.8	11.4	--	10.5
$30,000 or more	4.4	3.4	4.4	--	4.1
Annual earnings Year 4 (%)					
None	44.7	45.5	--	--	45.0
$1 - 4,999	9.9	8.6	--	--	9.3
$5,000 - 9,999	9.0	10.8	--	--	9.8
$10,000 - 19,999	18.1	16.3	--	--	17.3
$20,000 - 29,999	10.9	10.8	--	--	10.9
$30,000 or more	7.4	7.9	--	--	7.6
Sample size	954	683	551	612	2,800

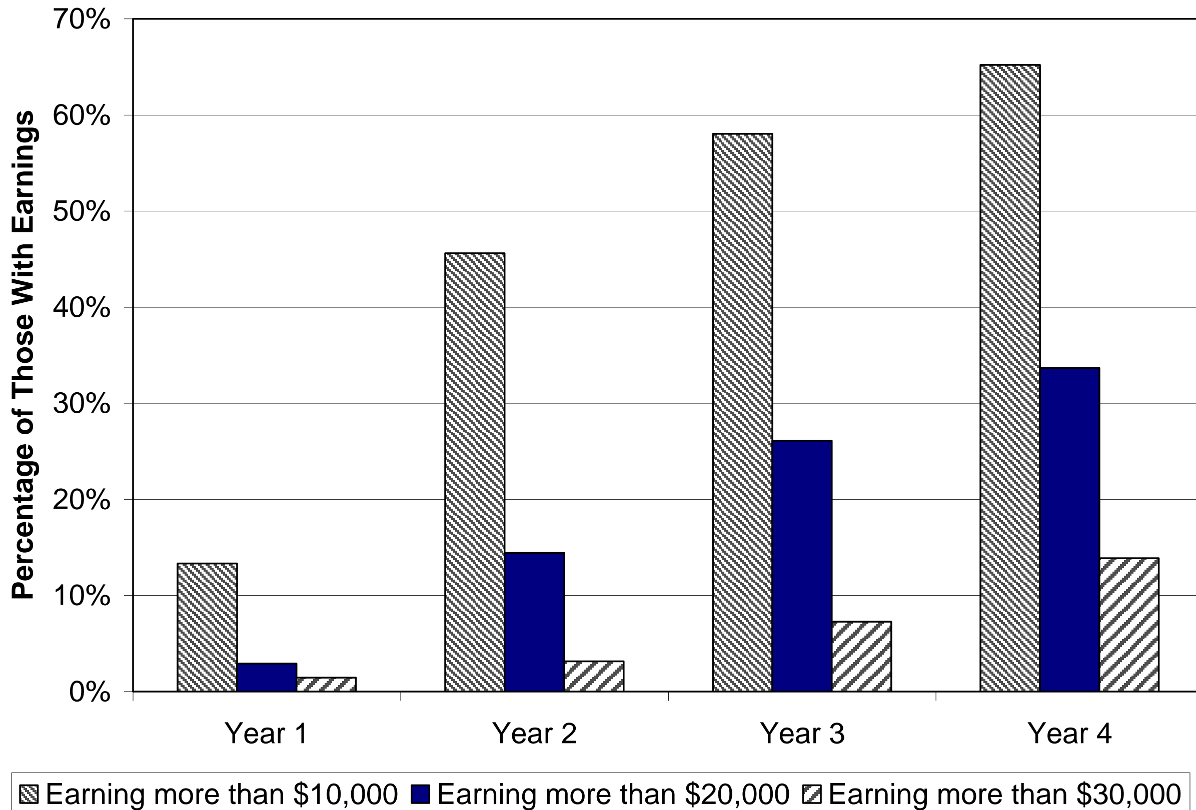
Source: California unemployment insurance wage records
-- Data not available for third and/or fourth year after entry for these cohorts
* Indicates a category containing fewer than fifteen individuals
[a] Includes individuals who were never employed
[b] Includes only individuals who were employed during the given time period
Note: Earnings in constant 2006 dollars Includes individuals who were never employed

Figure IV.1: Average Annual Earnings Among Those Working, by Year After Entry



Source: California unemployment insurance wage records
Sample size: 2,304
Note: Earnings in constant 2006 dollars

Figure IV.2: Shares of Working Refugees With Earnings Exceeding Various Thresholds, by Year After Entry



Source: California unemployment insurance wage records
Sample size: 2,304

Additional analysis of UI wage data (not shown in the table above) shows employment rates in the research sample for women were consistently lower than the rates for men by between 8 and 17 percentage points. For example, 47 percent of women in the sample had wages in their fourth year, compared with 63 percent of men. Annual earnings for women who worked were between 34 and 43 percent lower than those of men who worked.

2. *Findings from the Survey*

a. *Current or most recent jobs*

The survey data present a somewhat more positive picture of the employment outcomes of refugees in Sacramento than presented by the UI wage records. As ***Table IV.5*** shows, 84 percent of the survey sample reported having been employed at some point after arriving in the United States, as compared with 74 percent in the UI wage records. This could reflect a number of factors: jobs not covered by the UI system, such as informal or "off-the-books" jobs or certain agricultural, governmental, or domestic work; the more recent time period covered by the survey; measurement error in the survey, or characteristics of the survey sample. There may also be a small effect from secondary migration; refugees who lived and worked in other states before

moving to California do not appear in the California UI wage data. On average, survey respondents report working 34 weeks over the previous 12 months, and those working reported on average 37 hours a week, suggesting that most of those currently working worked for most or all of the past year and that many were working full time. Those working were on average working 1.1 jobs, so few were working multiple jobs.

The median wage in the current or most recent job held by survey respondents was approximately $10 an hour. Assuming a 35 hour week and a full 52 weeks of work, this would equal annual earnings of about $18,000. Assuming instead the reported average of 34 weeks worked in a year, it would total about $12,000. Consistent with the UI wage records, earnings among most working refugees are fairly low.

Though not presented in a table here, three quarters of survey respondents (76 percent) answered questions related to the industry and occupation they worked in prior to coming to the United States. It is not clear whether the remainder had not worked before coming to the United States or simply did not respond to the questions, but three-quarters represents a lower-bound estimate of the number of survey respondents with a pre-United States work history. The industries in which refugees worked before coming to the U.S were varied. Similar percentages of refugees (11 percent to 15 percent) reported having worked in education and health services; manufacturing; natural resources and mining; construction; wholesale and retail trade; and transportation and utilities. These industries accounted for 80 percent of those reporting the industries in which they worked before arriving; other industries were reported less frequently. Occupationally, 10 percent or more reported working in production; construction trade; transportation and material moving; and professional occupations.

Table IV.5 Employment Outcomes in Current or Most Recent Job for Survey Respondents by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Ever employed (%)	88.4	88.0	84.5	72.9	84.0
Average number of jobs had since coming to United States	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.3	1.7
Average weeks worked in last 12 months	38.6	36.4	32.2	28.5	34.4
Currently employed (%)	75.8	72.0	69.0	60.9	70.1
Of those currently working:					
Average number of jobs working	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Average months at current job	29.3	24.8	19.3	13.7	23.2
Average number of hours working a week	36.5	36.4	39.8	37.0	37.1
Hourly wage in current or most recent job (%)					
$0 - $5.14	*	*	0.0	*	4
$5.15 - $7.74	16.0	17.7	31.6	11.6	18.3
$7.75 - $10.29	21.3	22.6	36.8	37.2	27.5
$10.30 - $15	32.0	25.8	13.2	27.9	26.1
$15.01 - $25	26.7	22.6	18.4	18.6	22.5
More than $25	*	*	0.0	0.0	1.8
Median ($)	12	11	9	10	10
Average ($)	13	14	11	11	13
Business or Industry of current or most recent job (%)					
Construction	18.3	22.5	12.8	18.8	18.5
Education and Health Services	18.3	15.5	19.1	12.5	16.5
Financial Activities	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Government	7.3	*	*	0.0	4.4
Information	*	*	0.0	*	3.2
Leisure and Hospitality	12.2	*	12.8	12.5	10.1
Manufacturing	7.3	*	*	14.6	6.0
Natural Resources and Mining	*	0	*	0.0	*
Other Services	6.1	9.9	*	8.3	7.7
Professional and Business Services	*	*	10.6	*	5.6
Transportation and Utilities	8.5	11.3	12.8	*	9.7
Wholesale and Retail Trade	13.4	21.1	14.9	16.7	16.5

Table IV.5 (Continued)

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Occupation of current or most recent job (%)					
Management and business operations occupations	*	*	8.5	*	4
Professional and related occupations	9.6	9.9	8.5	8.2	9.2
Service occupations	33.7	33.8	36.2	30.6	33.6
Sales and related occupations	*	7	*	10.2	6.8
Office and administrative support occupations	8.4	*	0	0	3.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0	0	*	0	*
Construction trades and related workers	6	12.7	*	10.2	8.4
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	14.5	9.9	10.6	12.2	12
Production occupations	*	*	8.5	12.2	7.2
Transportation and material moving occupations	13.3	16.9	12.8	12.2	14
Job Opportunities in the Armed Forces	0	0	0	0	0
How found current or most recent job (%)					
Refugee service agency, mutual assistance association or voluntary resettlement agency	7.2	11.3	18.4	20	13
Welfare or public employment agency	10.8	12.7	*	12	11.1
Private employment agency	6	*	*	*	5.5
Newspapers or other advertisements	16.9	11.3	12.2	10	13
A religious institution	*	*	*	*	2.8
A college or job training program	9.6	8.5	*	*	7.5
A friend, relative or sponsor	51.8	59.2	59.2	68	58.5
Other	8.4	9.9	*	*	6.7
Sample size	91	77	57	67	292

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category that contains fewer than five individuals

Table IV.5 also shows that in the United States about half of the jobs the refugees currently work in (or most recently worked in) fall within three industry groups: construction, education and health services, and wholesale and retail trade. In addition, at least 10 percent work in the leisure and hospitality and the transportation and utilities industries. Very few report currently working in each of the financial activities, government, information, or natural resources and mining industries. The last is notable, as 14 percent of respondents worked in the natural resources/mining industry before coming to the United States. Jobs held by refugees in Sacramento are somewhat in line with the jobs held by the general population of Sacramento, with some major differences: working refugees are more likely to be employed in the construction industry (19 percent of jobs held by refugees compared with 8 percent among the general population of the county), and less likely to be employed in financial activities (less than

1 percent versus 10 percent) or professional and business services (6 percent versus 12 percent).[57]

In terms of occupation, about one-third of the jobs in which refugees are working are service jobs. This compares to 16 percent among the general population, and is a marked change from the jobs held by refugees before coming to the United States; only 8 percent of respondents said they worked in service occupations before coming to the United States. Installation, maintenance, and repair jobs and transportation and material moving jobs are the next most common occupations. Very few report working in the following occupations: management and business operations; office and administrative support; and farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.

Of the focus group participants who were working, none said that they were working in a job that was similar to what they had done prior to coming to the United States. Participants in one of the groups said that they would have liked to have received more help from the service provider in translating degrees or certifications they had obtained in their country of origin or with obtaining comparable professional degrees.

Jobs were most commonly found through a friend, relative or sponsor; 58 percent report finding a job through these sources. About one quarter report finding a job through a refugee-related agency (13 percent) or a welfare or public employment agency (11 percent). Another notable source was newspapers and other advertisements, which helped 13 percent find their job.

3. First Jobs in the United States and Advancement

For those refugees who reported having worked more than one job since arrival in the United States, the survey asked a virtually identical set of questions about the refugee's first job in the United States as it asked about the respondent's current (or most recent) job. ***Table IV.6*** shows characteristics of the first job worked in the United States. Note that 84 percent of refugees reported having worked at least one job, and 47 percent of survey respondent reported having had multiple jobs in the United States. Consequently, for 37 percent of the sample the refugee's current or most recent job was also their first in the United States; these jobs are included in the characteristics shown in Table IV.6**,** meaning there is substantial overlap between the jobs described in it and in Table IV.5 and Table IV.6.

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[57] U.S. Census Bureau. "Sacramento County, CA: Selected Economic Characteristics: 2005." *American Community Survey* 2005. Available at http://factfinder.census.gov.

Table IV.6 Employment Outcomes in First Job worked in the United States from Survey by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Had Multiple Jobs in United States (%)	52.6	49.4	41.4	42.9	47.4
Of those ever working:					
Average months spent at first job	25.7	22.9	17.3	11.4	20.6
Average number of hours working a week at first job	33.0	31.6	35.3	34.5	33.3
Hourly wage in first United States job (%)					
$0 - $5.14	*	10.4	*	*	6.9
$5.15 - $7.74	32.9	29.9	29.3	20.5	29.0
$7.75 - $10.29	32.9	28.4	43.9	45.5	35.9
$10.30 - $15	19.0	25.4	9.8	20.5	19.5
$15.01 - $25	11.4	*	*	*	8
More than $25	*	*	0.0	0.0	*
Median ($)	9	8	8	9	9
Average ($)	11	10	9	9	10
Business or Industry of first job (%)					
Construction	20.7	14.7	13.0	27.1	18.9
Education and Health Services	13.4	11.8	13.0	10.4	12.3
Financial Activities	*	*	*	0.0	1.6
Government	*	*	*	0.0	3.3
Information	*	7.4	*	*	3.7
Leisure and Hospitality	15.9	10.3	23.9	*	14.3
Manufacturing	7.3	*	*	16.7	8.6
Natural Resources and Mining	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.4
Other Services	*	7.4	*	*	6.1
Professional and Business Services	11.0	13.2	13.0	14.6	12.7
Transportation and Utilities	*	*	*	*	4.1
Wholesale and Retail Trade	14.6	19.1	10.9	*	13.9

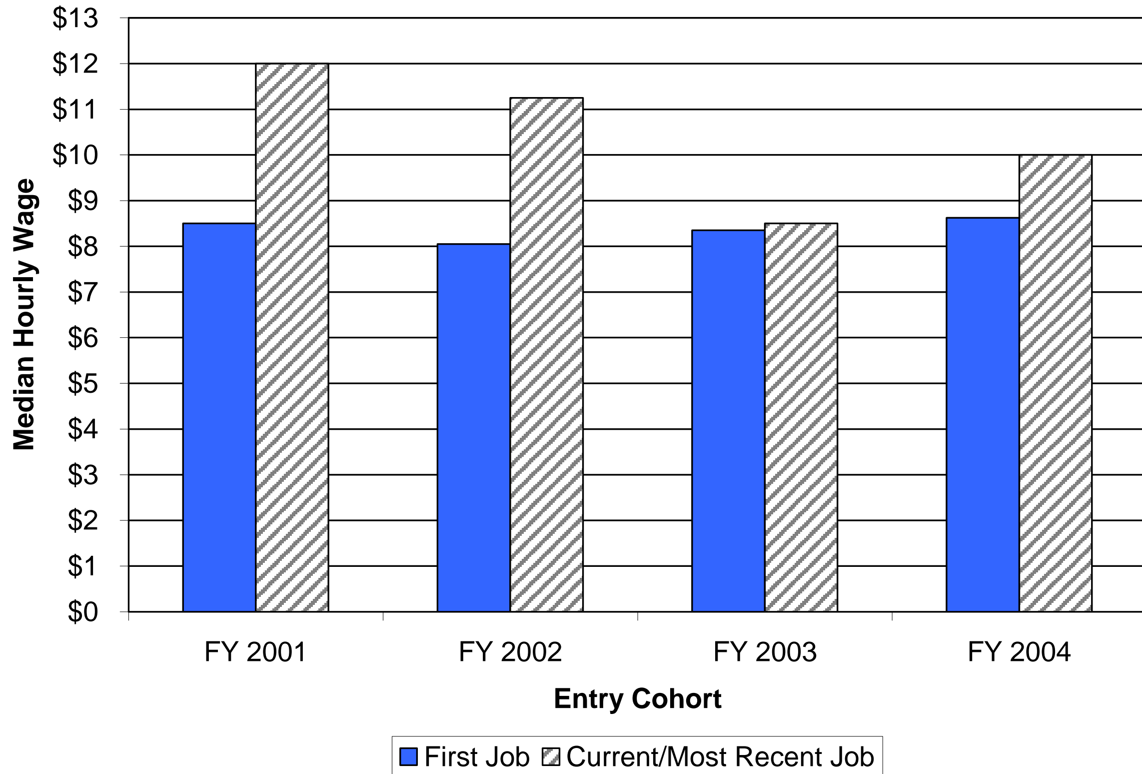
Table IV.6 (continued)

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Occupation of first job (%)					
Management and business operations occupations	*	*	*	*	2.4
Professional and related occupations	8.4	7.4	*	*	6.5
Service occupations	39.8	44.1	48.9	38.8	42.5
Sales and related occupations	7.2	*	*	*	5.7
Office and administrative support occupations	*	0.0	*	0.0	*
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.4
Construction trades and related workers	15.7	7.4	*	18.4	12.1
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	7.2	8.8	*	14.3	9.3
Production occupations	*	8.8	12.8	10.2	8.9
Transportation and material moving occupations	9.6	14.7	*	*	10.1
Job Opportunities in the Armed Forces	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
How found first United States job (%)					
Refugee service agency, mutual assistance association or voluntary resettlement agency	17.9	16.7	24.5	21.6	19.5
Welfare or public employment agency	16.7	22.2	14.3	15.7	17.6
Private employment agency	9.5	*	*	*	6.3
Newspapers or other advertisements	*	*	18.4	*	8.2
A religious institution	*	*	*	*	4.3
A college or job training program	9.5	*	*	*	6.3
A friend, relative or sponsor	45.2	50.0	49.0	64.7	51.2
Other	*	*	0.0	0.0	3.1
Sample size	79	74	46	55	254

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category containing fewer than five individuals

The data provide some evidence that the jobs held by refugees improve over time. Median hourly wages in the current job are nearly two dollars higher than in the first job. Further, as ***Figure IV.3*** shows, the difference in median wages between the first and current wages is larger for those refugees who have been in the United States for a longer period of time. For the FY 2001 entry cohort, median wages in the current job are $3.50 higher than median wages in the first job; for the FY 2002 cohort, the difference is $3.20.

Figure IV.3: Median Hourly Wages in First and Most Recent Jobs, By Entry Cohort



Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
Sample size: 254

The distribution of hourly wages underscores this picture. Only 9 percent of respondents report having earned more than $15 an hour in their first job. In the current or most recent job, 24 percent earn more than $15 an hour. Increases in the number earning more than $15 an hour are present in each cohort. There is not, however, much increase in the share earning more than $25 an hour, which is small for both the first and the most recent jobs.

The industrial and occupational distributions of refugees' first jobs are largely similar to the distributions of the most recent jobs. There are a few changes, however. First jobs were more likely to fall within the professional and business service and leisure and hospitality industries. Twenty-seven percent of first jobs fell in these two industries, compared with 16 percent of most recent jobs. Another notable change is that service occupations were more common among first jobs than among most recent jobs. (See ***Box 6*** for an example of service jobs held by refugees in Sacramento.)

Box 6: Example of Employer of Refugees in Service Jobs

A chain of bakeries and restaurants located throughout the greater Sacramento area has a history of employing refugees. The owner of the company is Vietnamese. The company has over 600 employees in total. Depending on their communications skills, refugees are first placed into positions washing dishes, as cashiers, as cooks, as bussers, or as bakers. Food service positions usually require English (though it depends on the location) and reading skills sufficient to read an order ticket. Customer service positions also require English. For baking, it is not necessary to speak English well, though it is helpful. Many employees are bilingual and so, when necessary, someone can usually translate for the employees who do not speak English. The employer finds that for the most part the agencies understand the skills needed, but they also act as advocates for their clients, so sometimes the skills of the candidates are not quite sufficient. Often it is language that is the barrier. There is less frequent turnover in the positions where language is less important.

These patterns are relatively consistent with the descriptions from service providers during the site visits. According to them, entry level jobs being obtained by refugees were largely in the construction, food service, and manufacturing industries. Many of these were labor jobs, involving work on an assembly line or in a warehouse. They said that fewer jobs were available to refugees in the retail and customer service area because of English skills requirements; it is possible that as refugees spend more time in the United States and as their English skills improve, they are better able to get jobs in service occupations and less likely to take manufacturing jobs.

Another interesting pattern can be seen in how refugees find jobs. They were more likely to find their first job with the aid of a refugee service provider or welfare agency than their current job (37 percent versus 24 percent). This change is more pronounced in the earlier cohorts than later ones. Similarly earlier cohorts were more likely to find their current job through newspaper or other advertisement than their first job, suggesting that at least those who have been in the country the longest may be becoming more independent in their job search abilities. It should be noted that some individuals who reported finding jobs through friends, newspaper advertisements, and other independent sources may have done so using skills obtained through employment services.

4. Employment Benefits and Health Insurance Coverage

On the whole, survey responses indicate that jobs held by refugees did not offer many benefits. For each type of benefit the survey asked about, only one-fifth to one-third of employers offered the benefit. The most common was health insurance, which 33 percent of jobs offered. (See ***Table IV.7***.) Least common was paid sick days, offered by only 22 percent of employers. However, only one quarter of refugees reported that they were uninsured. Roughly half reported coverage through public health plans, while another quarter reported private coverage.

While the survey responses show that employer-provided benefits are limited, two employers interviewed during the site visits offered their employees benefits. In one, the only benefit described in the interview for which workers are eligible at first is the 401(k) (after one quarter),

but after a year, medical and dental benefits are offered. The other provides employees with vacation pay, sick pay, medical insurance for themselves, and if they opt for family medical insurance, the company will pay for half of it. They also have long-term disability, life insurance, and a 401k that includes an employer match. Both companies said the benefits help support retention of their refugee employees.

Table IV.7 Employment Benefits and Healthcare Coverage by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Benefits offered from current or most recent job (%)					
Sick days with full pay	29.3	17.4	16.7	19.1	21.5
Paid vacation	33.3	24.6	31.3	27.7	29.4
Dental benefits	28.0	24.6	21.3	23.4	24.9
Retirement plan	32.5	27.5	29.2	17.4	27.6
Health plan or medical insurance	40.2	30.9	31.3	25.5	33.1
Health insurance in prior month (%)					
Private health insurance coverage	36.2	28.4	24.1	14.3	26.7
Public health insurance coverage	42.6	58.0	53.4	54.3	51.5
Other insurance coverage	*	0.0	*	*	1.6
Uninsured	25.3	20.5	25.9	35.7	26.5
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category containing fewer than five individuals

5. *Child Care and Transportation*

To address two common barriers to work, the survey asked respondents about their use of child care and their access to transportation. (***Table IV.8***.) In both of these areas, government programs played an important role in providing supports to families.

Child care: About half of survey respondents in Sacramento reported having placed their children in child care at some point and most who had done so said they used child care on a regular basis (defined in the survey as "at least once a week for a month or more"). On average, among those who used child care, the child had spent 34 hours in child care in a week. More than four out of five (83 percent) said the child care arrangement was paid for by "a government agency, government program, or government-provided vouchers." About 10 percent said they paid for child care themselves, and about 10 percent reported that a friend or family member provided their childcare for free.

Transportation: Interviewees during the site visits mentioned transportation difficulties as one of the biggest barriers to work for refugees other than language barriers, and 90 percent reported having received transportation assistance at some point. (Transportation assistance was described in the survey as a van service, help paying for gas or for repairs to a vehicle, or tokens, passes or vouchers for public transportation.) Participants in two of the three focus groups (who tended to be more recent arrivals) mentioned that it was difficult to get to ESL or other classes.

However, at the time of the survey 90 percent of respondents reported having access to a car or other vehicle they could use to get to work, and while it was reported during the site visits that some refugees arrive never having used a car before, close to 90 percent of survey respondents had a valid driver's license at the time they were surveyed.

Table IV.8 Child Care and Transportation by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Use of child care					
Families with children under age 13 (%)	65.3	57.8	55.2	47.1	65.3
Of families with children under age 13:					
Ever placed children in child care (%)	41.9	47.9	57.6	52.9	48.6
Ever used child care on a regular basis (i.e., at least once a week for at least a month) (%)	40.3	41.7	56.3	45.5	44.6
Among those with child care:					
Child care paid for by[a] (%):					
Self	-	-	-	-	11.9
Government program	-	-	-	-	83.1
Employer	-	-	-	-	0.0
Community or nonprofit org	-	-	-	-	*
Provided free by friend or family member	-	-	-	-	10.8
Hours a week in child care	-	-	-	-	33.7
Transportation					
With valid driver's license (%)	85.3	88.0	93.1	84.3	87.3
Access to car or truck to get to work (%)	89.5	86.7	98.3	87.1	89.9
Ever received transportation assistance (%)	90.4	86.7	98.3	88.4	90.5
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
- Not calculated due to small sample size
* Indicates a category containing less than five individuals
[a] Categories are not mutually exclusive

C. Monthly Income

Taken together, survey data show that the monthly incomes of refugees in Sacramento averaged $2,080 in the month before they were surveyed, including their own income and income of their spouse if married and living with the spouse. Without Food Stamp benefits (a noncash benefit not included in Census's definition of "money income" used in the poverty calculation[58]), the total income is $1,958 a month, or approximately $23,500 a year. This is above the 2006 federal

[58] U.S. Census Bureau, "How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty (Official Measure)," July 24, 2007. Available at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/povdef.html (accessed August 23, 2007).

poverty threshold for a family of four ($20,614) and a little below the federal poverty threshold for a family of five ($24,382). (The average household size for refugees in Sacramento is 4.7 individuals.) The total income is well under half the median income of a five-person family in California (approximately $61,000 in 2005).[59]

Earnings are by far the most significant income source; 72 percent of the sample have earnings, and earnings represent more than 80 percent of the income (including Food Stamps) reported by the survey sample. The share with earnings was highest among the earliest cohort (79 percent) and lowest among the most recent cohort (63 percent). However, those with earnings in the FY 2001 cohort did not have substantially more than the FY 2002 and FY 2003 cohorts; the changes in the shares with earnings almost entirely accounts for the differences in average earning amounts. Both the proportion of refugees and their average earnings are substantially lower in the FY 2004 cohort, which likely reflects both the shorter period of time they have spent in the country and characteristics of the sample such as education.

While earnings are the most important income source, public assistance represents a source of income for a large minority of the survey sample. Thirty-one percent receive Food Stamps, and 21 percent receive cash assistance from CalWORKs or another source. For both Food Stamps and cash assistance, the percentage receiving income from these sources is lower in earlier cohorts than later ones, which suggest that receipt declines as refugees have spent more time in the country. On average, those with Food Stamp income reported receiving $392 in the prior month and those with cash assistance reported receiving $709.[60] Unsurprisingly, both cash assistance and Food Stamps are more substantial sources of income for parents living with children than for individuals not living with their own children.(***Table IV.9.***)

Most individuals receiving Food Stamps or cash assistance were working. About two-thirds of individuals receiving cash assistance, and about two-thirds receiving Food Stamps, also reported earnings in the month.

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[59] U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty Thresholds 2006", available at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld/thresh06.html, and U.S. Census Bureau, table B19119. Median Family Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2005 inflation-adjusted dollars) by Family Size http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/medincsizeandstate.html). This should be seen as a rough benchmark rather than a precise comparison, as the survey data only include income from two household members while the American Community Survey data include incomes from all family members. On the other hand, the comparison of mean income of refugees from the survey to median family income from the ACS may understate differences somewhat as median incomes are generally lower than means given income distributions.

[60] While the data are not strictly comparable as they cover different time periods, these findings are roughly comparable with the administrative data reported in section A, which found average TANF benefits of $732 and average Food Stamp benefits of $345.

Table IV.9 Average Monthly Income by Family Type[a]

Measure ($)	Family Type: Survey respondent was single or spouse was not living in same household — Respondent does not have any children living in household	Survey respondent was single or spouse was not living in same household — Respondent's child/children live in household	Survey respondent was married and spouse was living in same household — Respondent does not have any children living in household	Survey respondent was married and spouse was living in same household — Respondent's child/children live in household	Total
Earnings	1,066	856	1,780	1,915	1,695
Cash assistance	0	94	43	211	148
Food Stamps	2	153	14	171	122
Disability income	42	188	155	88	90
Unemployment compensation	0	0	15	9	8
Other income	17	0	0	21	17
Total income	1,128	1,292	2,007	2,416	2,080
Sample size	58	13	33	202	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
[a] Income includes income of survey respondent and respondent's spouse if spouse lived in the respondent's household

Ten percent of respondents report receiving disability income (slightly higher than the 8 percent of respondents who reported that they or someone in their family had a work-preventing disability). Benefits for these individuals averaged $893, and two-thirds of them reported having no earnings. Very few respondents reported receiving unemployment compensation or "other" income. The survey did not ask about the Earned Income Tax Credit, but the focus group facilitators asked participants about their familiarity with it. Only one of the 30 participants had heard of the credit, and while the focus groups were not statistically representative samples and tended to include more recent arrivals, this suggests that at least in their early years in the country few refugees in Sacramento claim the credit.

For many refugees in Sacramento, some income is sent back to friends or family outside the country in the form of remittances. About half of the survey respondents (49 percent) reported having sent remittances at some point since arriving in the country. Among the earliest cohort, who have spent the most time in the country (five or more years at the time of the interview), 63 percent said they had sent remittances at some point. Of those in the earliest cohort who had, 44 percent had sent more than $1,000 to friends and relatives since arriving in the United States, and the high average ($2,347) implies that some were sending substantially more.

D. Housing

Housing costs in Sacramento are more expensive than in the country as a whole, but are relatively cheap for California (which has a higher median rent than any other state except for Hawaii). The 2005 American Community Survey shows that median gross rent in Sacramento is $866 a month, compared with $728 for the United States and $973 for California. The median value of owner-occupied housing in Sacramento is $365,500, compared with $167,500 in the United States and $477,700 in California.

Participants in one of the focus groups noted that housing is one area where they feel more help is needed. This group (which consisted primarily of arrivals in FY 2005 and FY 2006) said that paying rent is hard as the assistance money is not enough to cover it. In addition, without a rental history or a credit history in the United States it is difficult to have someone co-sign with them. They described buying a house as virtually impossible.

The survey data, however, suggest that ownership may eventually become within the reach of many refugees. Sixty percent of survey respondents rent their residence, and 39 percent own their home. (***Table IV.10***.) Ownership rates are higher in earlier cohorts, suggesting that more and more refugees buy homes as they are in the country for a longer period of time. In the FY 2001 cohort, half of refugees own their own homes.

As seen earlier, refugees in Sacramento have fairly large families, and accordingly most live in fairly large residences. Most live in residences with two or three bedrooms, and a substantial minority (22 percent) live in residences with four or more bedrooms. This is not out of line with the general housing stock in Sacramento; the median number of bedrooms in Sacramento

housing units is three.[61] Crowding, defined as two or more household members per bedroom, was found among 12 percent of respondents, but was substantially lower among the earliest cohort than among more recent ones.

Table IV.10 Housing by Entry Cohort

Measure	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Housing (%)					
Own with mortgage or loan	54.3	42.7	33.9	13.0	37.9
Own without mortgage or loan	0.0	0.0	*	*	*
Rent	44.7	57.3	64.3	82.6	60.5
Occupy without payment of cash rent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public programs (%)					
Public housing	*	*	12.2	15.3	8.5
Section 8 housing	14.0	6.4	8.8	10.4	10.2
Receipt of energy assistance	42.5	38.3	47.3	39.7	41.6
Number of bedrooms in home (%)					
No bedrooms	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1 bedroom	5.3	8.5	8.8	11.6	8.3
2-3 bedrooms	71.3	67.1	71.9	66.7	69.2
4 or more bedrooms	22.3	23.2	19.3	21.7	21.9
Crowded Housing (%)					
2 or more household members per room	*	11.1	17.5	17.4	11.7
Average monthly housing expenses[a] ($)	1,225	1,138	1,006	828	1,068
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category containing less than five individuals
[a] Housing expenses include rent and mortgage payments

Monthly housing expenses (rent or mortgage) reported by survey respondents averaged $1,068. Expenses were higher among the earlier cohorts than the more recent ones, although the survey did not indicate any notable difference in housing size. Ten percent of respondents reported receiving government assistance paying for housing (such as Section 8 vouchers). Nine percent reported living in public housing; this was lower in the FY 2001 and FY 2002 cohorts than the FY 2003 and FY 2004 cohorts (14 percent). Forty-two percent reported receiving energy assistance.

[61] U.S. Census Bureau. "Sacramento County, CA: Selected Housing Characteristics: 2005." *American Community Survey* 2005. Available at http://factfinder.census.gov.

V. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

A. Introduction

This section outlines the methodology and findings from the statistical analyses performed to analyze data from the survey of refugees. The statistical analysis expands on the descriptive analysis discussed earlier in this report through presenting the findings from the multivariate regression analysis. While descriptive analysis illustrates how outcomes vary by participant characteristics and services received, it does not establish clear relationships between participant characteristics, services received and outcomes as the approach controls for only one factor at a time. Regression analysis, on the other hand, examines the partial effect of each parameter on an outcome while holding all other variables constant.[62] The results of the analysis demonstrate which client characteristics or conditions are statistically associated to various client outcomes, and also how strongly they are related. (See Section 3 below for limitations of regression analysis.)

1. Data Used

The regression analysis utilizes data from the survey of refugees. Regression analysis was not performed on Sacramento's administrative data because of high missing rates for certain socio-demographic variables.

The socio-demographic variables used in this analysis include:

- year of entry cohort dummies
- age at entry and age at entry squared
- country or region of origin
- sex
- marital status
- education upon arrival
- number of minors in the household
- English ability (at time of survey in the survey data)

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[62] Technically, this analysis estimates an equation of the form $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \ldots + \beta_n X_{ni} + \varepsilon_i$. where Y_i is the value of the outcome for person i, the variables X_{1i} through X_{ni} are the explanatory variables for person i in the model that are hypothesized to affect the outcome, ε_i is the error term of the equation accounting for unexplained variation in outcome Y_i across the sample, and the β terms are the coefficients for each explanatory variable which estimate the relationships of X_{1i} through X_{ni} to the outcome Y_i.

The service receipt variables used in the analysis include[63]:

- job assistance (job search, subsidized employment)
- education assistance (vocational skills training, adult basic education, GED)
- supportive services (transportation, subsidized childcare, translation)
- English as a Second Language (ESL)

Labor market outcomes variables include:

- current employment status at time of survey
- current or most recent hourly wage

2. Regression Models

Ordinary least squares regression analysis was used to determine the relationships between the participant characteristics, services received and outcomes. This approach permits researchers to determine the partial effect of specific characteristics, such as age, while holding constant other characteristics, such as gender. A "linear probability model" was used to estimate the relationship between either receipt of services or employment and wage outcomes and individual characteristics and services received.[64] The dependent variable is estimated as a linear function of the explanatory variables. An advantage of this model is that the statistical results are easily interpreted; the regression coefficients show what the effect of a one unit change in an explanatory variable has on the outcome variable. The interpretation of coefficients depends on what outcome is being analyzed. If the outcome is binary,[65] such as employment in a year or ever received a service, then the coefficients can be thought of as the percentage point change in the probability of the outcome occurring for a one unit change in the explanatory variable. If the outcome is continuous, as occurs in the case of wages, then the coefficient shows the unit change (dollars in the case of earnings) in the outcome arising from the change in the explanatory variable.[66] If the outcome is the *natural log* of a continuous variable, then the coefficients represent percentage point change in the value of the outcome (e.g., being male increases earning by 15%).

[63] When analyzing survey data, individuals were excluded from the analysis if they were missing service receipt values because of skip pattern errors.

[64] In the cases where values were missing for an explanatory variable, and the missing values for that variable were relatively few, a dummy variable was assigned indicating a missing value for the variable. In cases of missing values for continuous explanatory variables, the individual was assigned the mean value for the variable in addition to including the dummy variable indicating a missing value.

[65] Binary outcomes are those that have two dichotomous possibilities: 1) the event occurs or 2) the event does not occur.

[66] Continuous outcomes are those for which, within the limits the outcome ranges, any value is possible. For instance, in the case of earnings, any value greater than or equal to zero is possible.

It should be noted that the linear probability models can be inefficient and produce biased estimates when looking at binary outcomes.[67] However, recent studies suggest that in some contexts linear probability models still produce reliable estimates even when examining binary outcomes.[68] Given the ease of interpretation of linear probability models, this approach was adopted.[69]

Two different regression models were used to analyze the data. The first model examines services received as a function of the socio-demographic information and other services received. That is, the model predicts participation in either job-related services or language-related services based upon individual socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender) and other types of services received (e.g., education services, supportive services).

The second regression model looks at labor market outcomes as a function of service receipt and socio-demographic information. The regression analysis of the survey data using this model looks at employment status and earnings at the time the survey was administered.

3. Limitations of Analysis

As with all studies using regression analysis, this analysis has some potential limitations. While regression analysis shows the relationship of independent variables to the dependent variables, this does not necessarily imply causality. Two important conditions that must be met to imply causality are: (1) All relevant independent variables must be included in the analysis, and (2) There is no measurement error in the explanatory variables.

Both types of specification error may be present in these analyses. Subjective qualitative variables, such as knowledge of English, are likely to suffer from measurement error. Another example is that personal motivation may play a significant role in determining employment status, but this characteristic is not measured (and would be difficult to quantify), and thus may lead to specification error. In some cases, receipt of a particular service is likely linked to a variable that is missing or available only with error. In such situations, often referred to as "selection bias," the estimated coefficient for a characteristic of interest may be biased and give a false impression on the direction of the true relationship. For example, if assignment to ESL is based on need and the data contain a poorly measured variable on initial English ability, the estimated coefficient for receipt of ESL in an earnings or wage equation may in part reflect the low level of English among the ESL participants rather than the course having a small or negative effect on earnings. Because it is likely that not all of the relevant independent variables are captured in the data, the findings must be interpreted carefully. Although the findings will

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[67] See, for example, William H. Greene (1997) *Econometric Analysis third Edition.* Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, p. 873 and G.S. Maddala (1983) *Limited-Dependent and Qualitative Variables in Econometrics*. New York City, NY: Cambridge University Press, p. 15.

[68] See Joshua D. Angrist and Alan B. Krueger (2001). "Instrumental Variables and the Search for Identification: From Supply and Demand to Natural Experiments." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 15, No. 4 pp. 69-85. Angrist and Krueger consider the use of linear probability models in a different context, but their general point, that such models are not necessarily worse than the logit and probit models, is valid in this case.

[69] Non-linear probability models, specifically probit regressions, were also performed to verify the accuracy of the coefficients obtained from the linear regressions with binary outcome variables. The results were consistent with the coefficients presented in this report, and are available upon request.

shed light on what participant characteristics and services are *associated* with various outcomes, the patterns observed are not necessarily causal. To estimate causal models, more sophisticated statistical models must be estimated or participants must be assigned to activities randomly.

B. Findings

1. Service Receipt

Table V.1 presents the results from the model analyzing factors associated with receipt of job search services or ESL services.

Of the factors included in the regression model, those most strongly associated with the receipt of job search services were other services. Individuals who had received supportive services such as transportation assistance, translation or interpretation services, or childcare paid for by the government or a community group were 21 percentage points more likely to have received job search services, all else equal. Similarly, individuals who received ESL training were 20 percentage points more likely to have received job search services. While the regression model does not reveal the cause of these associations, this is not surprising. As discussed earlier, most employment services programs operated by SETA contractors are integrated with the provision of English language training, so it would be expected that refugees receiving ESL from these providers would also receive job search services. Similarly, supportive services asked about on the survey are generally provided to individuals who are working or accessing employability services, so the fact that many of those who accessed such services also received job search services is logical as well.

Holding other factors constant, men in the survey sample were more likely than women to receive job search services (by 12 percentage points), perhaps reflecting cultural expectations. Given that most refugees in the sample were married and living with a spouse, it may be that men were expected to try to find a job more often than women.

Individuals in the sample who entered in FY 2004 were the least likely to have received job search assistance, holding other factors constant; compared with those who entered in FY 2001, they were 17 percentage points less likely to have received such services. (Comparisons to other cohorts may not be statistically significant.) This perhaps reflects the shorter period of time they had spent in the country at the time they were surveyed.

The set of factors associated with receipt of ESL services differs somewhat from the set associated with job search. Region of birth shows the strongest relationship in the regression model; individuals from the former Soviet Union were much more likely to have received ESL services, holding other variables constant, than individuals from Eastern and Southeastern Asia (by 28 percentage points) or than individuals from other areas (by 23 percentage points). A higher number of children is related to a higher likelihood of having received ESL services, with each additional child in the household associated with a 2 percentage point increase in the likelihood of having received ESL services. Those entering in FY 2004 are more likely to have received ESL services; the reason for this is unclear, and is the opposite of the finding for this cohort with regards to job search services.

Those receiving job assistance services are more likely by 6 percentage points to receive ESL than those who did not receive job assistance services. This is a smaller effect than that found when looking in the other direction (i.e., individuals who received ESL training were 20 percentage points more likely to have received job search services). This is unsurprising given the finding from Table III.2 that overall, 53 percent of survey respondents reported receiving job search services and 91 percent reported receiving ESL services; clearly, many individuals receive English language training whether or not they report receiving job search services. Nonetheless, both findings shed some light on a question of whether ESL services come at the expense of employment services or are complementary to them. The regression results suggest that they are complementary to them in at least one sense: those who have received ESL at some point are more likely to have received job search services, and vice versa. Again, this may largely result from SETA's integration of employment services and English language training.

2. Employment Outcomes

The second model, whose results are presented in ***Table V.2***, looks at factors associated with employment and wages. The factor most strongly associated with employment is receipt of supportive services; all else equal, individuals receiving supportive services were 36 percentage points more likely to be currently employed. It is unsurprising that services like child care, or transportation to work would be correlated with current employment, but it is unclear from the regression results the extent to which these services helped individuals become employed or sustain employment. There was no significant relationship between receipt of supportive services and wages.

Men were more likely to be employed than women (by 21 percentage points, controlling for other factors), and had substantially higher wages (by 36 percent), all else equal. One question this raises is whether married women are less likely to work, relying on their husbands for income. The regression results do not suggest that being married, holding other factors constant, affects the likelihood of being employed. (Additional analysis, looking at the effect of marriage separately for women and men, also did not produce statistically significant findings.) Each child is associated with a 4 percentage point lower probability of current employment, but with a 3 percentage point increase in wages.

No significant relationship was found between country of origin and current employment, but coming from East/Southeast Asia is significantly associated with substantially lower wages (34 percent lower than individuals from the former Soviet Union). More than half of this group in the sample are Hmong from the Wat Tham Krabok; this finding is consistent with descriptions from interviews during the site visit that the Hmong generally arrive with few transferable job skills but willing or eager to work.

Education is related to both the likelihood of being currently employed and to wage amounts, although in different ways. Those refugees who arrived already having achieved at least a high school diploma were 20 percentage points more likely to have been currently employed at the time of the survey. The relationship between education at arrival and wages is also positive, but it is not statistically significant. In contrast, having received education services such as vocational training or GED instruction is significantly associated with higher wages – all else

equal, those receiving such services have wages that are 17 percent higher than those who don't – but not with the likelihood of being currently employed.

Members of the FY 2004 entry cohort are 17 percentage points less likely to have been employed at the time of the survey than members of the FY 2001 cohort, perhaps because of a shorter period of time in the country. No significant difference was found between employment of those in the FY 2001 cohort and those in any of the other cohorts. Lower wages were found among the FY 2003 cohort relative to the FY 2001 cohort; FY 2003 was the only cohort where a significant difference was found.

Finally, no significant relationship was found between English language skills and employment, but higher English language skills were significantly associated with higher wages. Those who said they spoke English well or very well had wages that were 12 percent higher than those who did not, all else equal.

Table V.I Regression Results: Sacramento Service Receipt

	Job Assistance Service Since Arrival	ESL Service Since Arrival
Fiscal Year Cohort [a]		
2002	-0.116 (0.124)	0.008 (0.824)
2003	-0.097 (0.254)	0.027 (0.471)
2004	-0.170 (0.053)*	0.092 (0.033)**
Socio-Demographic Characteristics		
Age at Survey	-0.025 (0.281)	-0.010 (0.497)
Age at Survey Squared	0.000 (0.315)	0.000 (0.563)
Male	0.122 (0.029)**	0.021 (0.488)
Married or Living Together	0.012 (0.886)	0.028 (0.548)
Total Minors in Household	-0.014 (0.382)	0.018 (0.021)**
Completed High School	-0.012 (0.898)	0.096 (0.223)
Country of Birth [b]		
East Asian/Pacific	-0.163 (0.195)	-0.277 (0.015)**
Other, non-Former Soviet Union	-0.147 (0.238)	-0.230 (0.017)**
Service Receipt Since Arrival		
Education	0.095 (0.212)	0.018 (0.645)
Job Assistance		0.059 (0.052)*
Supportive Services	0.214 (0.049)**	0.076 (0.454)

Table V.1 (continued)

	Job Assistance Service Since Arrival	ESL Service Since Arrival
ESL	0.202 (0.036)**	
Constant	0.739 (0.093)*	0.867 (0.001)***
Observations	306	306
R-squared	0.112	0.196

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
Notes: Robust p values in parentheses: * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%

Job Assistance:
Missing age: ß = -0.238, p value = (0.054)*
Missing married or living together status: ß = -0.404, p value = (0.003)***
Missing completed high school: ß = -0.475, p value = (0.000)***

ESL:
Missing age: ß = -0.092, p value = (0.346)
Missing married or living together status: ß = 0.257, p value = (0.021)**
Missing completed high school: ß = 0.121, p value = (0.153)

[a] 2001 is the excluded category
[b] Countries apart of the Former USSR are the excluded category

Table V.2 Regression Results: Sacramento Employment Outcomes

	Currently Employed	Natural Log of Current or Recent Hourly Wage
Fiscal Year Cohort [a]		
2002	-0.006 (0.923)	-0.007 (0.936)
2003	-0.096 (0.202)	-0.163 (0.060)*
2004	-0.170 (0.030)**	-0.089 (0.292)
Socio-Demographic Characteristics		
Age at Survey	-0.000 (0.988)	-0.029 (0.228)
Age at Survey Squared	-0.000 (0.767)	0.000 (0.298)
Male	0.213 (0.000)***	0.358 (0.000)***
Married or Living Together	-0.050 (0.452)	0.073 (0.402)
Currently Employed		0.098 (0.278)
Total Minors in Household	-0.041 (0.004)***	0.032 (0.080)*
Completed High School	0.202 (0.018)**	0.165 (0.135)
Speaks English Well at Survey	0.012 (0.842)	0.119 (0.070)*
Country of Birth [b]		
East Asian/Pacific	0.122 (0.222)	-0.337 (0.035)**
Other, non-Former Soviet Union	-0.026 (0.796)	-0.202 (0.138)
Service Receipt Since Arrival		
Education	-0.036 (0.609)	0.170 (0.074)*

Table V.2 (continued)

	Currently Employed	Natural Log of Current or Recent Hourly Wage
Job Assistance	0.086	-0.087
	(0.108)	(0.199)
Supportive Services	0.361	-0.294
	(0.004)***	(0.428)
ESL	0.048	-0.067
	(0.608)	(0.543)
Constant	0.318	2.879
	(0.422)	(0.000)***
Observations	306	218
R-squared	0.228	0.278

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
Notes: Robust *p* values in parentheses: * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%

Currently Employed:
Missing age: ß = -0.166, p value = (0.131)
Missing married or living together status: ß = 0.366, p value = (0.002)***
Missing completed high school: ß = 0.725, p value = (0.000)***
Missing English speaking ability: ß = 0.028, p value = (0.778)

Natural log of current or most recent hourly wage:
Missing age: ß = 0.160, p value = (0.177)
Missing English speaking ability: ß = 0.033, p value = (0.778)

[a] 2001 is the excluded category
[b] Countries apart of the Former USSR are the excluded category

APPENDIX A: SETA CONTRACTORS

Organization	Type of Organization	Location	Staff Involved	Type of Services	Service Slots, PY 04-05[a]
Asian Resources, Inc.	MAA	One-Stop	• Program manager • 3 Employment specialists • Intake clerk	Employment	195
Bach Viet Association	MAA	Office in office complex	• CFO • 3 job developers • ESL instructor	Employment	211
Grant Skills Center	High School District	School	• Program coordinator • Employment services worker • ESL instructor • Computer instructor • Vocational training instructors	Employment	308
Hmong Women's Heritage Association	MAA	Storefront office in a shopping strip	Total of 16 staff, including : ▪ Program manager ▪ 6 case managers	SA & CO	250
Old Marshall School	City Unified School Dist	School	• 2 job developers • Bilingual teacher assistant • 2 ESL instructors	Employment	159
Opening Doors, Inc.	Volag	Storefront office	▪ 2 case workers assigned to SA & CO (4 others are R & P)	SA & CO	----
Sacramento Lao Family Community	MAA	2 office locations (both storefront offices in shopping strips	▪ 1 Program manager ▪ 3 administrators ▪ 4 job developers ▪ 1 case worker ▪ 1 ESL instructor ▪ 1 citizenship instructor ▪ 1 senior transportation director	SA & CO	561
Sacramento Occupational Advancement Resources (SOAR)	CBO	2 office locations (visited: storefront office in a shopping strip)	8 staff, including: ▪ 1 refugee coordinator ▪ 3 employment service specialists	Employment	429
Slavic Assistance Center	MAA	Church	▪ 4 full-time staff ▪ 2 part-time staff	SA & CO	----
Southeast Asian Assistance Center (SAAC)	MAA	Office adjacent to church	▪ Executive Director ▪ 16-person staff (25% funded by RSS)	SA & CO	436

[a] Includes RESS, TA, and TA Discretionary. Except for number of slots, information is for program year 2005-2006, when the site visits occurred. Some organizations visited in 2006 did not have slots funded through these sources in the 2004-2005 program year. Slots for SOAR in 2004-2005 include some SA & CO slots, while in 2005-2006 the organization offered only employment services.

APPENDIX B: CHARACTERISTICS OF REFUGEE SURVEY SAMPLE BY ENTRY COHORT

Characteristic	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	Total
Gender (%)					
Male	46.3	53.0	43.1	52.9	49.0
Female	52.6	44.6	56.9	47.1	50.0
Age (%)					
18-25	6.0	12.8	19.3	39.1	18.5
26-35	30.1	14.1	22.8	21.7	22.3
36-45	41.0	34.6	38.6	15.9	32.8
46-55	18.1	34.6	17.5	21.7	23.3
Over 55	*	*	*	*	3.1
Marital status (%)					
Married	84.0	84.3	75.9	65.7	78.4
Living together but not married	0.0	*	*	0.0	*
Divorced or separated	*	*	*	*	3.0
Widowed	0.0	0.0	0.0	*	*
Single, never married	11.7	12.0	19.0	30.0	17.4
County of birth (%)					
Armenia	6.3	*	*	*	4.0
Belarus	0.0	*	*	*	2.3
Former Soviet Union (U.S.S.R.)	26.3	43.4	29.3	30.0	32.7
Kazakhstan	*	*	0.0	0.0	1.7
Laos	0.0	*	0.0	12.9	3.3
Moldova	9.5	*	*	17.1	10.2
Russia	10.5	8.4	*	*	7.3
Thailand	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	1.7
Ukraine	33.7	21.7	41.4	12.9	27.4
Vietnam	*	*	0.0	*	*
Other	8.4	6.0	*	11.4	8.3
				22.4	7.3
Spent time in a Refugee Camp (%)	*	*	*	22.4	7.3
Time Spent in a Refugee Camp:					
Up to 6 Months	*	0.0	*	0.0	*
6 Months to 12 Months	*	0.0	*	0.0	*
1 Year to 5 Years	*	0.0	*	*	*
More than 5 Years	0.0	*	*	92.3	65.0
Secondary U.S. Migration (%)	8.4	*	*	*	5.2
Planning to apply for citizenship (%)	93.3	94.4	94.1	95.3	94.2
Sample size	95	83	58	70	306

Source: Refugee Assistance Survey
* Indicates a category that contains fewer than five individuals

GLOSSARY

Amerasian: Certain Amerasians from Vietnam who are admitted to the U.S. as immigrants pursuant to Sec. 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1988 (as contained in Sec. 101(e) of Public Law 100-202 and amended by the 9th proviso under Migration and Refugee Assistance in title II of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Acts, 1989 (Public Law 100-461 as amended) and "was born in Vietnam after January 1, 1962 and before January 1, 1976 and was fathered by a citizen of the United States." Amerasians are admitted to the United States as immigrants, rather than refugees. They and their immediate relatives are entitled to ORR-funded refugee services and benefits to the same extent as refugees.

Asylee: Under Section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, individuals who meet the legal definition of refugee, but who apply for asylum status after they are already present in the U.S. or at a port of entry. Asylum applicants can have any (or no) immigration status when they apply. Asylum status can be granted by either a USCIS asylum officer or by an Immigration Judge with the U.S. Department of Justice's Executive Office of Immigration Review. Asylees are eligible for ORR-funded refugee benefits and assistance beginning on the date of their final grant of asylum.

Cuban/Haitian Entrant: (a) Any individual granted parole status as a Cuban/Haitian Entrant (Status Pending) or granted any other special status subsequently established under the immigration laws for nationals of Cuba or Haiti, regardless of the status of the individual at the time assistance or services are provided; and (b) Any other national of Cuba or Haiti (1) Who: (i) Was paroled into the United States and has not acquired any other status under the Immigration and Nationality Act; (ii) Is the subject of exclusion or deportation proceedings under the Immigration and Nationality Act; or (iii) Has an application for asylum pending with the Immigration and Naturalization Service; and (2) With respect to whom a final, nonappealable, and legally enforceable order of deportation or exclusion has not been entered. (Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980, Pub. L. No. 96-422)

Economic Self-Sufficiency: For the purposes of programs administered by the ORR, earning a total family income through unsubsidized employment at a level that enables a family unit to support itself without receipt of a cash assistance grant.

Date of Entry: An ORR term for the date on which individuals become eligible for ORR benefits and services. For refugees this is their date of arrival in the U.S. (as recorded on the Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record). For Cuban/Haitian entrants this is the date they were granted Cuban/Haitian entrant status, which is typically the date of their parole into the U.S. For asylees this is the date of final grant of asylum (as noted on the approval letter or immigration court order). For victims of a severe form of trafficking it is the date of certification or eligibility (as noted on the certification or eligibility letter), or date they were granted a T visa.

Legal Permanent Resident (LPR): A non-U.S. citizen (i.e., alien) who has been given permission to remain permanently in the U.S., subject to continued compliance with the Immigration and Nationality Act. LPRs are sometimes called "immigrants" and the I-551 which

is evidence of LPR status is commonly known as a "green card". After five years in LPR status and if otherwise not ineligible an LPR is eligible to apply for naturalization to become a U.S. citizen. LPRs who obtained LPR status by marriage to a U.S. citizen are eligible to apply for naturalization in three years.

Matching Grant: The ORR discretionary Matching Grant program is an alternative to public cash assistance offered through the voluntary agency (Volag) network. ORR provides matched funds to participating Volag affiliates that are required to provide employment services, case management, maintenance assistance (which includes provision of food or food subsidies, housing, and transportation) and cash allowance. Enrollment in Matching Grant services must be within the first thirty-one days of eligibility, with maintenance assistance provided for at least four months, and case management/employment services continuing through 180 days (six months). Services are designed to assist refugees enter employment, achieve self-sufficiency, and not access public assistance.

Medicaid: Medicaid is a state administered program, jointly funded by the states and federal government that provides medical coverage to eligible persons based on age, income, and/or disability status. Eligible groups include children, adults with dependent minors, and SSI recipients. Each state sets its own guidelines regarding eligibility and services.

Mutual Assistance Associations (MAA): A non-profit, community-based organization promoting successful refugee resettlement comprised of refugee populations. Generally, MAAs are small grass-roots organizations that work in specific communities and geographic areas. ORR encourages states to give special consideration to MAAs in contracting refugee services.

Parolee: An alien permitted entry to the U.S. for humanitarian reasons or when determined to be for significant public benefit. Parole does not constitute a formal admission to the United States and confers temporary status only. Absent a change in or adjustment of status, parolees must depart the U.S. when the conditions supporting their parole cease to exist. There are several types of parole, including parole authorized as part of an overseas parole program (such as the U.S. has with Cuba), port-of-entry parole, deferred inspection parole, advance parole, humanitarian parole, or public interest parole.

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Program: States have the option of entering into a partnership agreement with local resettlement agencies for the operation of a public/private refugee cash assistance (RCA) program. The partnerships facilitate the successful resettlement of refugee by integrating cash assistance with resettlement services and ongoing case management. Through these public/private RCA programs, States are permitted to include employment incentives that support the refugee program's goal of family self-sufficiency and social adjustment in the shortest possible time after arrival.

Reception and Placement Program: Upon arrival, refugees are provided initial resettlement services through cooperative agreements to voluntary agencies (Volags) by the Department of State. These initial "nesting" services cover basic food, clothing, shelter, orientation, referral, and other services for the first 30 days after the refugee's arrival in the U.S.

Refugee: Any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. The term "refugee" is distinguished from "asylee" in that "refugee" refers to individuals admitted into the U.S. under Section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and determined to be refugees before arriving in the U.S., while asylees are aliens in the U.S. who are determined to meet the legal definition of "refugee" and are granted asylum in the U.S.

In this report, the term "refugee" is often used inclusively to refer to anyone eligible for ORR benefits and services (such as RSS or TAG), including refugees, asylees, Cuban-Haitian entrants, Amerasians, victims of a severe form of trafficking, and Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) who have held one of these statuses in the past.

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA): A short-term need-based cash benefit available to ORR-eligible populations for up to eight months from their date of entry. Refugees who meet the income and resource eligibility standards of TANF or SSI, but are not otherwise eligible for those programs, such as single adults and childless adults, and meet other eligibility requirements may receive benefits under RCA.

Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA): Short-term need-based medical insurance available to ORR eligible populations for up to eight months from their date of entry. Refugees who meet income limits and other eligibility requirements, but are not eligible for Medicaid or the State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), may receive benefits under RMA. All recipients of Refugee Cash Assistance but not Medicaid or SCHIP, are eligible for RMA.

Refugee Social Services (RSS): Intensive social services provided to help refugees obtain employment, achieve economic self-sufficiency, and realize social adjustment. Programs that administer RSS services are funded through the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which provides both state grants and direct-service grants. The programs provide employability and other services which may include employment assistance, job training, English language training, and social adjustment. Refugees and other ORR eligible populations are only eligible for this program for the first 60 months from their date of entry.

Section 8 Vouchers: Federal housing assistance for low-income renters provided under the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Assistance is in the form of direct payments to private landlords and limits the monthly rent payment paid by the tenant.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Federally-administered program that provides assistance for individuals who are aged, blind, or disabled and have limited income and resources as established under title XVI of the Social Security Act.

Targeted Assistance Formula Grant (TAG): The targeted assistance program funds employability and other services for refugees who reside in areas of high need. These localities are defined as counties or contiguous county areas with unusually large refugee populations, high

refugee concentrations in relation to the overall population, or high use of public assistance among refugees. Targeted assistance services are similar to refugee social services except targeted assistance prioritize serving clients who are long term cash assistance recipients compared to newly arrived refugees. Refugees and other ORR eligible populations are only eligible for this program for the first 60 months from their date of entry.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): State-administered program, jointly funded by the states and federal government, that provides cash assistance and work opportunities to needy families with dependent children. States are granted wide flexibility to develop and implement their own welfare programs.

Victims of a Severe Form of Trafficking: Individuals who are subjected to (1) Sex Trafficking, which is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act[70], in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years; or (2) Labor Trafficking, which is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery. Victims of trafficking are eligible for ORR benefits and services and other federal benefits provided they have been certified as a victim of trafficking by ORR.

Voluntary Agency (Volag): Public or private agencies that provide initial reception and placement services to newly-arriving refugees under cooperative agreements with the Department of State. Currently, the Department of State has such agreements with nine national Volags and one state government agency (Iowa). Local affiliates of these national agencies are also referred to as Volags and are responsible for providing initial "nesting" (Reception and Placement) services covering basic food, clothing, shelter, orientation, referral, and other services for the first 30 days after admission for refugees, and often serve as providers of other services, including RSS, TAG or Matching Grant.

Wilson/Fish Alternative Program: Wilson/Fish is an alternative to the traditional publicly administered refugee resettlement program (as outlined in the ORR regulations) for providing integrated assistance (cash and medical) and services (employment, case-management, ESL and other social services) to refugees and others eligible for refugee benefits. The purpose of the Wilson/Fish program is to increase refugee prospects for early employment and self-sufficiency and reduce their level of welfare dependence; promote coordination among voluntary resettlement agencies and service providers; and to ensure that refugee assistance programs exist in every State where refugees are resettled.

States that determine that a public/private RCA program or publicly-administered program modeled after its TANF program is not the best approach for the state may apply to establish an alternative approach under the Wilson/Fish program. If a state withdraws from all or part of the

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[70] Any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

refugee resettlement program, a public or private nonprofit organization may apply to operate refugee programs in the state under the Wilson/Fish program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For definitions of immigration statuses, see USCIS Glossary (http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=b328194d3e88d010VgnVCM10000048f3d6a1RCRD&vgnextchannel=b328194d3e88d010VgnVCM10000048f3d6a1RCRD)

For definitions of services provided to refugees and related populations, see websites of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/) and the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (http://www.state.gov/g/prm/). Particularly useful subpages of these websites include:

- ORR programs page: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/index.htm
- ORR benefits and services page: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/benefits/index.htm
- Most recent ORR annual report: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/data/05arc2.htm#_Ref532867079
- Regulations governing programs administered by ORR: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/orr_regulations.htm
- Most recent PRM report on proposed refugee admissions: http://www.state.gov/g/prm/refadm/rls/rpts/52366.htm