



## Afghan Arrivals Influx Assessment Stakeholder Focus Group Guide<sup>1</sup>

Facilitator(s):	City, State:	Date:
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### Introduction Script

Thank you for agreeing to join this focus group. I'm [NAME] and this is my colleague [NAME], and we work in the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Recently, ORR developed a broad set of learning questions to learn about the Afghan evacuee resettlement effort. To help answer these questions, a key component of this process is obtaining insights from grantees, community providers, and other stakeholders involved in implementing our programs, and tapping into your experience and expertise. Specifically, we are conducting a series of provider focus groups to hear from a range of organizations on the topics of health, education, housing, and employment as they relate to Afghan evacuees. We will also be meeting with clients to get their perspectives.

During this focus group, we encourage you to share your recent experiences serving Afghan evacuees in your organization's service area. We would like to hear your perspectives as clearly and as comprehensively as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. We are simply interested in capturing your views and hearing about your agency's experiences. Our goal is to gather information that can be used to make changes and improvements to ORR's programs and services. The information you share with us today will help ORR identify training and technical assistance needs as well as service gaps and redundancies that can be addressed through program improvements.

Our meeting today will last about 90 minutes. Please know that your involvement in this focus group is voluntary. You may choose to not answer any question and may stop participating in

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<sup>1</sup> PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BURDEN: Through this information collection, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is gathering information to inform the development and provision of targeted training and technical assistance aimed to enhance refugee resettlement program implementation and changes to ORR policies, programs, and services. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hour per grantee, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This is a voluntary collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB # is 0970-0531 and the expiration date is **XX/XX/XXXX**. If you have any comments on this collection of information, please contact [asr@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:asr@acf.hhs.gov).



the focus group at any time. The structure will be rather open-ended, meaning we have a list of specific questions to cover, but we welcome any responses you may have.

I have one final point to make. Your name and other identifying information, such as your stakeholder organization's name, will not be included in any reports. The reports are for internal planning and programmatic purposes and not for any kind of public dissemination, even if deidentified.

We value the time and information you will share with us today and want to make sure we accurately capture all the details. With your permission, we will audio record the session and take notes (written and/or on a laptop computer). Those notes will not include your name. The recording will serve as a back-up tool to ensure we capture all your comments in as close to your words as possible. Once the project is complete, all recordings will be destroyed. During the discussion, if you would like to stop the recording while you make a particular comment, please let us know and we will do so.

#### **Internal only - Facilitator Tips:**

- This focus group is semi-structured and therefore the sequence of the questions might vary as well as the level of probing for information by the facilitator.
- The goal is to collect data on each topic area. Keep in mind that participant responses may cover multiple categories/data points. You may skip a question if you feel the data collection on that topic is sufficient and asking the question would be repetitive.
- Optional questions should be asked only if there is enough time to do so.

## **Health Focus Group Questionnaire**

**Length:** 1.5 hours

**Possible Participants:** 1-2 groups per state, 7-10 participants:

- State agency representatives
- RA staff (e.g. caseworkers)
- Local health partners/service providers
- Community organizations

#### **ORR Internal Learning Questions:**

- How are the health and mental health needs of Afghan evacuees being met?
- Are Afghan evacuees receiving culturally and linguistically appropriate services?

## **Focus Group Questions**

1. **Introductions:** Briefly introduce yourself (name, organization, role, and location)
2. **Health Needs:**



- a. What medical and/or mental health needs have you seen among Afghan evacuees?
  - b. Are these health needs consistent with other refugee populations, or have you seen any notable trends unique to Afghan evacuees? *(If no trends mentioned, then probe whether there are particular or higher needs among certain segments of the Afghan evacuee population.)*
  - c. What long-term medical and mental health needs do you anticipate with this population, and can they be addressed with existing programs/resources/services?
3. **Access to Health Services:**
- a. What have been the main barriers to accessing medical and mental health services for Afghan evacuees?
  - b. What strategies have been used to mitigate these barriers? What can be done to improve access?  
*(If not covered in the participant responses, probe whether Afghan evacuees have been able to obtain health insurance and if they experienced/are experiencing significant delays in accessing health services).*
4. **Community Outreach:**
- a. Please describe your outreach efforts to inform Afghan evacuees about the programs and services available to them.
  - b. How do you engage Afghan evacuees, volunteers and/or stakeholders from the Afghan community to inform service delivery?
  - c. *If not covered in questions above, then ask:* Please describe the feedback mechanism used to assess the needs of Afghan evacuees, evaluate service/program delivery, or solicit other types of input and feedback. *(Probe how feedback is used.)*
5. **Partnerships and Collaboration:**
- a. Please describe how your organization/agency is working with community organizations, providers, or other stakeholder groups in your community (or in the state) to address the mental and medical healthcare needs of Afghan evacuees.
  - b. *(Optional questions)* Please describe any ongoing coordination efforts with Safe Havens on medically fragile cases. *(If active Safe Haven coordination has ceased)* What needs remain for medically fragile cases?
6. **Appropriate Service Provision:**



- a. Please describe how your organization/agency provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services for Afghan evacuees as needed. (*Probe interpretation and translation efforts and how they may be handling increased demand for interpretation/translation.*)
  - b. What have been the main challenges, if any, in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services? How are you addressing these challenges?
  - c. (*Optional question*) Has your organization provided or received training or materials on how to deliver culturally appropriate services to the Afghan evacuee population?
7. **Wrap Up:**
- a. In your opinion, what federal support has been most effective in helping you serve Afghan evacuees? (*Probe funding, policies, programs, etc.*)
  - b. What kind of additional federal support or resources have been or would be most helpful?
  - c. Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations for ORR related to Afghan evacuee health and mental health needs and/or services in [state]?

Thank you for everything that you shared today. We greatly appreciate your time.

## Housing Focus Group Questionnaire

**Length:** 1.5 hours

**Possible Participants:** 1-2 groups per state, 7-10 participants:

- State agency representatives
- RA staff (e.g. caseworkers)
- Local housing partners/service providers
- Community organizations

### ORR Internal Learning Questions:

- What steps have been taken to expand affordable housing options for Afghan evacuees?
- What housing support have grantees provided to date?

## Focus Group Questions

1. **Introductions:** Briefly introduce yourself (name, organization, role, and location)
2. **Housing Needs:**
  - a. What housing needs have you seen among Afghan evacuees?



- b. Are these consistent with other refugee populations, or have you seen any notable unique trends? *(If no trends mentioned, then probe whether there are particular or higher needs among certain segments of the Afghan evacuee population.)*
      - c. What long-term housing needs do you anticipate with this population, and can they be addressed with existing programs/resources/services?
3. **Access to Housing:**
  - a. What barriers do Afghan evacuees face in accessing affordable housing options?
  - b. What strategies have been used to expand affordable housing options for Afghan evacuees?
  - c. How could access to affordable housing options be improved?
4. **Community Outreach:**
  - a. Please describe your outreach efforts to inform Afghan evacuees about the housing programs and services available to them.
  - b. How do you engage Afghan evacuees, volunteers and/or stakeholders from the Afghan community to inform service delivery?
  - c. *If not covered in questions above, then ask:* Please describe the feedback mechanism used to assess the needs of Afghan evacuees, evaluate service/program delivery, or solicit other types of input and feedback. *(Probe how feedback is used.)*
5. **Partnerships and Collaboration:**
  - a. Please describe how your organization/agency is working with community organizations, providers, or other stakeholder groups in your community (or in the state) to address the housing needs/issues of Afghan evacuees.
6. **Appropriate Service Provision:**
  - a. Please describe how your organization/agency provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services for Afghan evacuees as needed. *(Probe interpretation and translation efforts and how they may be handling increased demand for interpretation/translation.)*
  - b. *(Ask follow-up question to 5a)* What have been the main challenges, if any, in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services? How are you addressing these challenges?



- c. (*Optional question*) Has your organization provided or received training or materials on how to deliver culturally appropriate services to the Afghan evacuee population?

7. **Wrap Up:**

- a. In your opinion, what federal support has been most effective in helping you serve Afghan evacuees? (*Probe funding, policies, programs, etc.*)
- b. What kind of additional federal support or resources have been or would be most helpful?
- c. Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations for ORR related to Afghan evacuee housing needs and/or services in [state]?

Thank you for everything that you shared today. We greatly appreciate your time.

## Education Focus Group Questionnaire

**Length:** 1.5 hours

**Possible Participants:** 1-2 groups per state, 7-10 participants:

- State agency representatives
- RA staff (e.g. caseworkers)
- Local education/school partners/service providers
- Community organizations

**ORR Internal Learning Questions:**

- What kind of services and strategies have grantees or sub-grantees implemented to help Afghan evacuee students succeed?

## Focus Group Questions

1. **Introductions:** Briefly introduce yourself (name, organization, role, and location)
2. **Education Needs:**
  - a. What educational/school needs have you seen among school age Afghan evacuees?
  - b. Are these consistent with other refugee populations, or have you seen any notable unique trends? (*If no trends mentioned, then probe whether there are particular or higher needs among certain segments of the Afghan evacuee population.*)
  - c. What long-term education needs do you anticipate with this population, and can they be addressed with existing programs/resources/services?
3. **Access to Education/Educational Services:**



- a. What have been the main challenges enrolling/educating school age Afghan evacuees? What strategies have been used to mitigate these challenges?
  - b. How are schools (and community organizations) in your area supporting the specific needs of school age Afghan evacuees?  
*(If not covered in participant responses, probe the policies/programs schools have implemented to address the needs of Afghan evacuee students and families. Listen for examples such as assigning liaisons, special ESL classes, parent outreach, appropriate grade placement, etc.)*
  - c. How could access to education/education support services be improved for school-age Afghan evacuees? What resources are needed?
4. **Community Outreach:**
- a. Please describe your outreach efforts to inform Afghan evacuees about the education programs and services available to them.
  - b. How do you engage Afghan evacuees, volunteers and/or stakeholders from the Afghan community to inform service delivery?
  - c. *If not covered in questions above, then ask:* Please describe the feedback mechanism used to assess the needs of Afghan evacuees, evaluate service/program delivery, or solicit other types of input and feedback. *(Probe how feedback is used.)*
5. **Partnerships and Collaboration:**
- a. Please describe how your organization/agency is working with community organizations, providers, or other stakeholder groups in your community (or in the state) to address the educational needs of Afghan evacuee students and families.
6. **Appropriate Service Provision:**
- a. Please describe how your organization/agency provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services for Afghan evacuees as needed. *(Probe interpretation and translation efforts and how they may be handling increased demand for interpretation/translation.)*
  - b. *(Ask follow-up question to 5a)* What have been the main challenges, if any, in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services? How are you addressing these challenges?
  - c. *(Optional question)* Has your organization provided or received training or materials on how to deliver culturally appropriate services to the Afghan evacuee population?



7. **Wrap Up:**

- a. In your opinion, what federal support has been most effective in helping you serve Afghan evacuees? (*Probe funding, policies, programs, etc.*)
- b. What kind of additional federal support or resources have been or would be most helpful?
- c. Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations for ORR related to Afghan evacuee educational/school needs and/or services in [state]?

Thank you for everything that you shared today. We greatly appreciate your time.





## Employment Focus Group Questionnaire

**Length:** 1.5 hours

**Possible Participants:** 1-2 groups per state, 7-10 participants:

- State agency representatives
- RA staff (e.g. caseworkers)
- Local employer partners/service providers
- Community organizations

### ORR Internal Learning Questions:

- What types of jobs are available to Afghan evacuees in the community?
- What industries have employed Afghan evacuees?
- What new types of partnerships have been established to facilitate job placement?

## Focus Group Questions

1. **Introductions:** Briefly introduce yourself (name, organization, role, and location)
2. **Employment Needs:**
  - a. What employment/job needs have you seen among Afghan evacuees?
  - b. Are these consistent with other refugee populations, or have you seen any notable unique trends? (*If no trends mentioned, then probe whether there are particular or higher needs among certain segments of the Afghan evacuee population.*)
  - c. What long-term employment needs do you anticipate with this population, and can they be addressed with existing programs/resources/services?
3. **Access to Employment:**
  - a. In general, in what types of jobs/industries are Afghan evacuees placed? (*Potential follow-up: full-time, part-time, shift work, benefits or no benefits*)
  - b. What challenges have you encountered in helping Afghan evacuees obtain and retain employment? What strategies have been used to mitigate these challenges?
    - i. If not covered in questions above, then ask: What has been the educational/professional profile you have seen among the Afghan evacuees? To what extent are you able to place Afghan evacuees in jobs that match their skills and training? What services are available to help Afghan evacuees advance in their careers?
    - ii. If not covered in questions above, then ask: Please describe your experience helping Afghan evacuees recertify or improve employment qualifications in their chosen career path.



iii. What feedback have you received from Afghan evacuees and employers after job placement? Is there continuing support/follow-up?

4. **Community Outreach:**

- a. Please describe your outreach efforts to inform Afghan evacuees about the employment programs and services available to them.
- b. How do you engage Afghan evacuees, volunteers and/or stakeholders from the Afghan community to inform service delivery?
- c. *If not covered in questions above, then ask:* Please describe the feedback mechanism used to assess the needs of Afghan evacuees, evaluate service/program delivery, or solicit other types of input and feedback. (*Probe how feedback is used.*)

5. **Partnerships and Collaboration:**

- a. Please describe how your organization/agency is working with community organizations, providers, or other stakeholder groups in your community (or in the state) to address the employment needs of Afghan evacuees.

6. **Appropriate Service Provision:**

- a. Please describe how your organization/agency provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services for Afghan evacuees as needed. (*Probe interpretation and translation efforts and how they may be handling increased demand for interpretation/translation.*)
- b. (*Ask follow-up question to 5a*) What have been the main challenges, if any, in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services? How are you addressing these challenges?
- c. (*Optional question*) Has your organization provided or received training or materials on how to deliver culturally appropriate services to the Afghan evacuee population?

7. **Wrap Up:**

- a. In your opinion, what federal support has been most effective in helping you serve Afghan evacuees? (*Probe funding, policies, programs, etc.*)
- b. What kind of additional federal support or resources have been or would be most helpful?
- c. Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations for ORR related to Afghan evacuee employment needs and/or services in [state]?



Thank you for everything that you shared today. We greatly appreciate your time.