

OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A - Justification

March 2022

Submitted By:
Office of Refugee Resettlement
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Project Officers:

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A1. Necessity for the Data Collection

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) seeks approval for the Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) Survey of Resettled Afghans.

This proposed information collection meets the following goals of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for program support (0970-0531):

- Delivery of targeted assistance related to program implementation or the development or refinement of program and grantee processes.
- Planning for provision of programmatic or evaluation-related training or technical assistance (T/TA).

Background

As part of the OAW, a significant number of Afghan arrivals are being resettled, including humanitarian parolees. The nature and scale of rapid influx of Afghan evacuees is unprecedented and is made more challenging by the reduction in resettlement capacity over the past several years. As a result, states may need additional resources and T/TA to adequately meet the needs of these arrivals. The ACF Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) needs relevant, timely, and up-to-date information to inform appropriate and targeted T/TA and to inform refinement of programs and grantee process. The information collected through the proposed OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans would help ORR to identify service needs and gaps in resettlement services, and grantee processes (such as case management follow-up frequency).

Legal or Administrative Requirements that Necessitate the Collection

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency.

A2. Purpose of Survey and Data Collection Procedures

Overview of Purpose and Approach

The OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans is designed to collect data from Afghan families who were resettled under OAW and are receiving ORR services and assistance. The purpose of the data collection is to inform refinement and improvements to ORR's programs and services (in the areas such as case management process refinement on client follow-up frequency). The data collected will help ORR identify targeted T/TA needs by geolocation, service providers, and professional assistance. Information collected will also inform ORR to address the service gaps through program improvements and development where ORR currently does not have designated program, service component, or service referral networks. Limited and aggregated tabulations and descriptive summaries might be shared with states, resettlement agencies, service providers, and partnering federal resettlement agencies upon request and approval to facilitate bilateral discussions and inform ORR decisions on specific targeted assistance related to program implementation, refinement of current grantee process, and provision of programmatic or

evaluation-related T/TA to these stakeholders. The information collection may inform a full information collection request in the future if a need is identified for more information.

Key Questions

The key learning questions this survey aims to answer are:

- Do ORR's employment and language training programs facilitate employment in the household and providing language learning opportunities?
- Do ORR's cash assistance, medical and mental health assistance program, school enrollment program, and other assistance programs support the needs of Afghan households and family members?
- How does the housing assistance program support short-term and long-term housing for Afghan arrivals?
- How can ORR improve resettlement placement and assurance process (such as initial resettlement location designation) and case management practice?
- What underlying needs of Afghans are not met with existing ORR programs?
- What types of training, technical assistance, and resources are needed by grantee and service providers?

Study Design

The OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans will be conducted using an online survey. Unique online survey links will be distributed to Principal Applicants (PA), age 18 and older, of resettled Afghan families through SMS, email, and WhatsApp in their preferred languages (Pashto, Dari, or English). PAs can submit online survey response after their consent is received by ORR. This survey is voluntary and should take around 10 minutes to complete.

As of March 1, 2022, there are 25,483 Afghan families who have been resettled into local communities under OAW since August 2021. There are 20,150 PAs who are 18 years and older and have contact information in Refugee Arrival Data System (RADS) (either phone number or email address), representing 80% of resettled Afghan families. We will send the survey to all PAs (see Supporting Statement B for more information about the universe of respondents).

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

This information collection utilizes improved information technology and self-administered online survey mode. Respondents will submit survey responses through the newly developed ORR survey data collection website system. The survey data submission website allows ORR to verify receipt of the consent from respondents, verify receipt of survey response, provide the survey in preferred languages selected by respondents, and perform front-end verification to immediately reject duplicate survey responses from the same PA. This process ensures data privacy protection, maximizes data quality and accuracy, improves the efficiency of survey administrative, and reduces the burden on respondents.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

ORR is sensitive to the time and resource constraints of service providers during the surge and influx of Afghan arrivals. ORR believes that no information collection currently available can be used as a sole resource, nor is sufficient to meet the goals and purpose described in section A1 and A2 above. The OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans instrument was developed in coordination with other ORR data collection and reporting activities to avoid duplicative efforts.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

No small organizations will be involved in the proposed OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

Respondents will be asked to complete the survey once. Information is intended to provide ORR with timely information related to services provided for Afghan evacuees. If the data collection is not conducted or not conducted in a timely manner, it will result in little to no data on whether Afghan evacuees' needs are met during the critical and vulnerable initial resettlement phase. It will also jeopardize ORR's timely program development and refinement and risk ORR's ability to appropriately provide T/TA to states and service providers.

A7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances for the proposed data collection efforts.

A8. Federal Register Notice and Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of the overarching generic clearance for formative information collection. This notice was published on October 13, 2020, Volume 85, Number 198, page 64480, and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. During the notice and comment periods, no substantive comments were received.

Consultation with Experts Outside of the Study

ORR convened and consulted with Afghan experts outside of the study who shared their expertise and feedback on the survey questionnaire and survey design during an Afghan Survey Expert Roundtable.

Experts Consulted

- Mr. Farhad Sharifi, MSW (New Afghan arrival and resettled through OAW with his family. He recently joined the staff of Boston College's Research Program on Children and Adversity after working with Jesuit Refugee Service in Afghanistan.)
- Dr. Nadia Hashimi, MD (An Afghan American pediatrician and author. She is a member of the US Afghan Women's Council, Afghan American Foundation, Welcome.US, and serves on the boards of several non-profit organizations. Subject matter expert for USCRI's Behavioral Health program for OAW.)
- Dr. Rosalind Rogers, PhD, LMHC (An Afghan American psychologist. Subject matter expert and mental health consultant from USCRI for Mental Health Program for OAW.)
- Dr. Mustafa Babak (Co-founder and board member of the Afghan-American Foundation.)
- Mr. Hamid Khan (Senior Advisor at ORR, a first-generation ethnic Pashtun and familiar with both language and cultural issues, frontline civilian in Afghanistan and running USG funded programs on gender empowerment, religious discourse, and good governance in DC and implemented in-country, with publications on aspects of Afghan culture and an expert in Islamic religious law.)
- Mr. Zafar Azam (Program coordinator at ORR, coordinating with interagency partners on ORR provision of services to SIV recipients and other eligible Afghans.)

A9. Incentives for Respondents

No incentives for respondents are proposed for this information collection.

A10. Privacy of Respondents

Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

As specified in the contract, the Contractor shall protect respondent privacy to the extent permitted by law and will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information. The Contractor has developed a Data Safety and Monitoring Plan that assesses all protections of respondents' personally identifiable information. The Contractor shall ensure that all of its employees, subcontractors (at all tiers), and employees of each subcontractor, who perform work under this contract/subcontract, are trained on data privacy issues and comply with the above requirements.

As specified in the evaluator's contract, the Contractor shall use Federal Information Processing Standard compliant encryption (Security Requirements for Cryptographic Module, as amended) to protect all instances of sensitive information during storage and transmission. The Contractor shall securely generate and manage encryption keys to prevent unauthorized decryption of information, in accordance with the Federal Processing Standard. The Contractor shall: ensure

that this standard is incorporated into the Contractor’s property management/control system; and establish a procedure to account for all laptop computers, desktop computers, and other mobile devices and portable media that store or process sensitive information. Any data stored electronically will be secured in accordance with the most current National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) requirements and other applicable Federal and Departmental regulations. This survey does not collect personally identifiable information and survey response submitted by respondents is automatically entered and stored on the secured survey data system.

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

Total Burden Requested Under this Information Collection

Estimated Burden and Costs

The estimated burden to respondents is 340 burden hours. Respondents will be asked to participate in one survey that is estimated to take an average of 10 minutes to complete. We plan to collect information from about 2,000 PAs.

The estimated annual cost to respondents to the OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans is calculated using the U.S. Department of Labor federal minimum wage of \$7.25.¹ To account for fringe benefits and overhead, the rate was multiplied by two, totaling \$14.50 per hour. The estimated cost to respondents per hour is \$14.50, times 340 hours, for a total annual cost of \$4,930.

| Instrument | Total Number of Respondents | Number of Responses Per Respondent | Average Burden Hours Per Response | Annual Burden Hours | Average Hourly Wage | Total Annual Cost |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| OAW Survey of Resettled Afghans Questionnaire | 2,000 | 1 | 0.17 | 340 | \$14.50 | 4,930 |
| Estimated Annual Burden Total | | | | 340 | | 4,930 |

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no additional costs to respondents.

¹ U.S. Department of Labor, *Minimum Wage*, <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/wages/minimumwage> (last visited February 24, 2022).

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost for the data collection activities under this current request will be \$135,310.

A15. Change in Burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for program support (0970-053).

A16. Plan and Time Schedule for Information Collection, Tabulation and Publication

Survey and data collection will begin following OMB approval. Data collected will be tabulated and analyzed soon after the data collection is completed. Limited and aggregated tabulations and descriptive summaries might be shared with states, resettlement agencies, service providers, and partnering federal resettlement agencies upon request and approval to facilitate bilateral discussions and inform ORR decisions on specific targeted assistance related to program implementation, refinement of current grantee process, and provision of programmatic or evaluation-related T/TA to these stakeholders.

A17. Reasons Not to Display OMB Expiration Date

All instruments will display the expiration date for OMB approval.

A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.