

EvCap Engagement with ORR and ASFR on Performance Measurement: Draft participant discussion guide

Thank you for your willingness to speak with me about the Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) programs and how they matter to people like you. ORR is the federal agency that funds and administers programs for refugees—like the ones you and your family might have participated at [name of local agency or program that supported recruitment].

Your experiences and opinions are very important to our team and will help us to better serve refugees and their families. My name is [name] and I work for Mathematica, an independent research firm.

We are conducting a study for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), which oversees the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and is within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. With this study, we want to help ORR collect better information on the impact of their programs. We are talking with different groups of ORR staff and participants. In our discussion today, we will ask about your goals as you settle in the U.S. and about the challenges you have faced. If we have time, we may also ask for your thoughts about the program(s) you have participated in. This discussion will last approximately 60 minutes.

Participation in this discussion is voluntary. You can choose not to answer or skip any question if you wish. You may choose not to participate in the interview and it will have no negative consequences for you. We can stop the interview at any time. Our internal report will describe your experiences and viewpoints, but comments will not contain your name or the program you work with. We will share transcripts from all discussions with staff at ACF and transcripts may be used by ACF or other researchers in reports about refugee experiences. Before we share transcripts, we will remove all names and other information that would say who you are.

Please keep the information shared by others in the focus group private. Although we ask all participants to keep the discussion private, we cannot guarantee that the information you share here will be kept private by others in this group. I'm going to read a statement for your awareness: An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: 0970-0531, Expiration: 9/30/2025.

During the discussion, my colleague [name] will be taking notes so I can give you my full attention. *[If relevant: Also on today's call are [name(s)] from ACF, who are interested in learning more about your experience.]* With your permission, we would like to audio-record our conversation to help us keep track of your responses to the questions. This information is meant simply to serve as a record of what we discussed, and the recording will not be shared outside of the study team. We will destroy the recording at the end of the project. You can ask to stop the recording at any time.

Is it okay to record? *[Note to interviewer: Start recording if all participants say yes.]*

Is it okay to share transcripts of this conversation with ACF or other researchers?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background Information

1. Let's start by going around the room to learn a little about each of you. For example, where are you from and when did you arrive in the U.S?
 - a. How many people do you live with? What is their relationship to you?
 - b. If you have a job here in the U.S., what kind of work do you do? What kind of work did you do in your home country?

Definition of Success

We would like to hear about your goals for yourself or your family as you settle in the U.S.

2. What do you think are positive outcomes for yourself or your family?
 - a. *[If conversation stalls, prompt with various categories that haven't been addressed]*
 - i. Having access to safe housing or enough food
 - ii. Finding the doctors you (or your children) need
 - iii. Getting a job
 - iv. Getting the education you (or your children) need
 - v. Speaking, reading, or writing in English
 - vi. Getting help from friends or neighbors
3. How will you know that you are on your way to meeting your goals?

Problems and Challenges

We would like to talk about the challenges that you or the people you live with have faced as you settle in the U.S. Understanding the challenges that refugees face can help ORR improve their programs.

4. What have been the hardest things about getting settled in the U.S?
 - a. *[After someone stops talking]* Does this seem familiar to others? Was it different for you?
 - b. *[When a topic comes to an end]* Can people think of other things?
 - c. *[If conversation stalls, prompt with various categories that haven't been addressed]*
 - i. Having access to safe housing or enough food
 - ii. Finding the doctors you (or your children) need
 - iii. Getting a job
 - iv. Getting the education you (or your children) need
 - v. Speaking, reading, or writing in English
 - vi. Getting help from friends or neighbors
 - vii. Finding help in a language you speak that meets your needs

[Optional, if time] Experience with ORR Services

5. What kinds of help or services have you received as you adjust to life in the U.S?
 - a. What support or service has made the biggest difference for you?
 - b. Who provided this help?

- c. When did you receive this help, and for how long?
- d. If you could suggest a program that would help people like you and your family, what would it be?

Closing

- 6. Is there anything else about your experience we should have asked? Anything else you would like to share?

Thanks again for your time and sharing your experiences with us. If you think of anything to add later, you can email me at [email].