Refugee Outreach and Well-Being Initiative (ROWI)

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A - Justification

March 2026; Revised June 2026

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A1. Necessity for the Data Collection

In March 2026, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) sought approval for the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to conduct brief telephone interviews with newly arrived refugees to obtain formative feedback about early arrival experiences and pre-arrival information. ORR is implementing a new program that is currently serving a population, the Afrikaners, who are prioritized by the White House.

The purpose of this data collection is to inform ORR program support activities, including improvements to pre-arrival orientation content, post-arrival support coordination, and communication with service providers. At the direction of the White House, in June 2026, ACF is updating this information collection to gather additional information on cases currently remaining in South Africa. This information will support the identification of potential resettlement and family reunification opportunities, including assessing whether recently arrived Afrikaners have family members in South Africa who are currently in the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) pipeline or who may seek consideration for resettlement to the United States.

The information collected will help ORR:

- Identify common early arrival challenges (e.g., housing, employment, cost of living).
- Assess whether pre-arrival information sufficiently prepares refugees.
- Identify gaps in information delivery format (e.g., language access, timing, level of detail).
- Inform technical assistance to resettlement agencies and interagency coordination.
- Foster family reunification

The data collection is formative in nature and is not intended to produce generalizable findings.

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 Use

The purpose of the interviews is to gather structured but non-generalizable feedback from newly arrived refugees regarding:

1. Early arrival experiences (housing, employment, school enrollment, medical screening, documentation).
2. Perceived preparedness prior to arrival.
3. Information gaps and expectations mismatch.
4. Improvements to pre-arrival communication content and format.

The findings will be used internally by ORR to:

- Inform program support strategies.

- Identify technical assistance needs for local resettlement agencies.
- Improve coordination with interagency partners.
- Strengthen pre-arrival informational materials.

Results may be summarized in internal briefings or program support documents. Findings will be clearly described as formative and non-generalizable.

Processes for Information Collection

Semi-structured telephone interviews will continue to be conducted with newly arrived refugees resettled in the United States since May 2025. Cases will be based on available contact information. Phone interviews are voluntary and are expected to take about 20 minutes.

The phone interview includes a question: Do you have additional family members in South Africa who are currently seeking or who intend to seek refugee status in the United States?". For those who answer yes to this question, ORR will call to verify an email address and explain the purpose of the follow up, which is to request contact information for family members who are currently seeking or who intend to seek refugee status in the United States. A non-shareable URL to an online form will then be sent; the link will expire after 72 hours to prevent forwarding or reuse. Respondents will complete the contact information form on behalf of their contacts in South Africa; ORR will not contact individuals overseas. This process will also be completed for the subset of respondents who answered yes (n=787) to this question during the initial fielding of the questionnaire. The contact update form is expected to take about 15 minutes.

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

Interviews will be conducted by telephone. Responses will be entered into Smartsheet. No complex technology or web-based survey platform will be required of respondents.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

No existing administrative data captures refugees' perceptions of preparedness or qualitative feedback on pre-arrival information. This collection supplements, but does not duplicate, administrative case records.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

No small businesses are directly involved.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

This is a one-time data collection request.

A7. Special Circumstances

The program is currently serving a population prioritized by the White House. As ORR is implementing a new program for this priority population, and ongoing follow-up and updates are necessary to inform the initiative.

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 this information collection request to extend approval of the umbrella generic with minor changes. The notice was published on April 28, 2025, (90 FR 17603), and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. ACF did not receive any comments on the first notice. A second notice was published, allowing a thirty-day period for public comment (90 FR 42248, in conjunction with submission of the request to OMB. ACF did not receive any comments on the second notice.

Consultation with Outside Experts

No consultations have taken place with experts outside of the project team.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation for Respondents

No tokens of appreciation will be provided.

A10. Privacy of Respondents

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Personally identifiable information (name and case number) will be collected solely for the purpose of confirming cases that were interviewed. Some cases may have multiple adults, so names will also be collected to further confirm. The data will be reported and used in the aggregate. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private.

This data collection is covered under the System of Records Notice (SORN) and Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA):

- 09-80-0325 Refugee Arrivals Data System (RADS) (87 FR 7178; 2/8/22)
    - RADS PIA (P-9629795-369312)
- Enterprise Smartsheet PIA (P-8562144-774328)

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection. While ORR will be collecting information on service provision, it is to understand areas for program improvement and trends.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

Burden Estimates

This information collection consists of a one-time semi-structured telephone interview with newly arrived refugees. For those who already completed the one-time interview and answered "yes" when asked if they had family members in South Africa who are seeking or intend to see refugee status in the United States, a brief contact information form will be sent for completion. Based on experience to date, the interview will take about 20 minutes. The contact information form is estimated to take 15 minutes to complete. This request increases the total number of respondents to the interview to 6,787. Due to uncertainty about how many respondents will need the follow up contact information form, burden estimates are calculated for the full respondent universe.

Cost Estimates

The cost to respondents was calculated using the average reported hourly wage through ORR's Annual Outcome Goal Plans submitted by grantees. The average wage for FY25 was reported at $17.72. To account for fringe benefits and overhead, the rate was multiplied by two which is $35.44.

Instrument	Total Number of Respondents	Total Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Total Burden Hours	Average Hourly Wage	Total Annual Cost
Initial ROWI Questionnaire	787	1	.33	260	$35.44	$9,214.40
Semi-Structured Telephone Interview (ROWI Questionnaire)	6,000	1	.33	1,980	$35.44	$70,171.20
Contact Information follow-up	6,787	1	.25	1,687	$35.44	$59,787.28
Totals:	6,787	1	.58	3,937	$35.44	$139,172.88

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The estimated cost for the data collection activities under this request includes 3,937 hours to conduct the calls, and an additional 191 hours for reporting, performed by GS-13 staff earning approximately $47.77 per hour. The total estimated cost is $197,194.56.

A15. Change in Burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for program support (0970-0531). The request has been updated to include additional respondents and to adjust time per response to reflect experience to date and to add an additional contact information form/question.

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

Data collection will start upon OMB approval and is expected to take place over a couple of months. ORR does not have plans to publish this information. The data will be de-identified and will be aggregated to inform ORR about trends and provide necessary technical assistance to improve program outcomes. Given this population is prioritized by the White House, the data will be used to provide updates on and discussion about the implementation internally, to the White House, and other HHS and ACF leadership.

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.

Attachments

Refugee Outreach and Well-Being Initiative (ROWI) Questionnaire
Refugee Outreach and Well-Being Initiative (ROWI) Contact Information Form