State of Texas
Senate Health & Human Services Committee
Review of Refugee Resettlement Program
April 21, 2016
Who We Are

Guided by the principles of human compassion and dignity, **Refugee Services of Texas (RST)** was founded in 1978 and welcomes refugees, immigrants and other displaced people and supports them in integrating and thriving in their new communities.

RST is affiliated with Church World Service (CWS), Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service (LIRS), Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) and is a close and long-standing partner with the State of Texas HHSC, as well as the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants to serve survivors of human trafficking.
Resettled in Dallas, TX, February 2013
RST Clients

Resettled in Austin, TX, May 2009
Who are refugees?

A refugee has been forced to leave his or her country because of a well-founded fear of persecution, based on the person's race, religion, nationality, or participation in a particular social or political group.
There are three possible durable solutions for refugees:

1. Repatriation to home country
2. Local Integration in region
3. Resettlement to third country*

*Resettlement is only considered when the first two options are not possible.
Refugee Facts

• Approximately 60 million people currently displaced from their homes by violence (1 out of every 122 people worldwide)

• 19.5 million classified as refugees

• 38.2 million internally displaced people

• Less than 1% are resettled to third countries (120,000 / year approximately)

• Average wait in a refugee camp is 7 years
U.S. Refugee Admissions Program

Each year the U.S. President sets a target number of refugees to be admitted to the U.S.

In FY2015, that number was 70,000.
# Refugees Arrivals

## Fiscal Year 2015

- **U.S.**: 69,933 Total Refugee Arrivals
- **Texas**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>RST Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bexar</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>1,652</td>
<td>523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td>2,083</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarrant</td>
<td>1,168</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other counties</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,479</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,872</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This figure is ranked #16 among U.S. states proportionate to population.*
# Fiscal Year 2015

- **Total RST Funding** = $12,850,000*

## By Source:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Direct to Client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of State</td>
<td>$3,700,000</td>
<td>$2,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(via nat’l partner)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of HHS</td>
<td>$1,700,000</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(via nat’l partner)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of HHS</td>
<td>$6,500,000</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(via TX-HHSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Justice</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>$140,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Survivors of Trafficking)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private donations</td>
<td>$650,000</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Cash and In-Kind)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,850,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,540,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All of RST’s funding sources originate from federal agencies or private supporters.*
Refugee Status
Post-Arrival to U.S.

• Refugees are legally authorized to work in the U.S. immediately upon arrival and begin paying taxes right away as part of their employment and annual obligations.

• After 12 months refugees must apply to become Permanent Resident Aliens (Green Card).

• After 4 years and 9 months refugees apply for U.S. citizenship.
RST Services

- **Initial Resettlement Services (30-90 days)**
  - Airport reception
  - Culturally-appropriate food
  - Safe and appropriate housing
  - Health assessment
  - Immunizations
  - Cultural orientation
  - Social security card
  - Refugee cash assistance
  - Refugee Medical Assistance enrollment
  - SNAP enrollment
  - Employment services enrollment
  - English language class enrollment
  - School enrollment
  - Any other enrollment or specialized assistance as needed on a case-by-case basis
RST Services

- **Ongoing Services – After initial resettlement period**
  - Employment services
  - English language classes
  - Extended case management
  - Medical case management
  - Mental health counseling
  - Youth programs
  - Immigration services
  - Services for survivors of human trafficking
  - Community gardening
  - Community outreach, liaising and engagement
  - Volunteer coordination
Early Employment

• The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program is founded on a model of early employment. Refugees arriving to the U.S. must go to work and become self-sufficient within a few months.

Refugee Agencies assist by providing:

- Language skills
- Job readiness classes
- Application assistance
- Employer relations
- Community networking
- Recertification support

Refugee Services of Texas consistently maintains an employment placement rate between 82% and 100% for all of its refugee clients.
The refugee program in Texas is founded on a public-private partnership. All refugee agencies must partner, consult and work closely with local communities to discuss the program and provide support to newly arrived refugees through:

- Church co-sponsors
- Volunteers
- Mentors
- Donations
- Community support
- Referral networks
Community Consultation

- All refugees agencies consistently track success rates of their clients including economic self-sufficiency, and monitor community infrastructure and service capacity.

- All refugee agencies consult with local stakeholders in each of their respective communities at a minimum quarterly about the refugee program, which includes other service providers, public agencies, elected officials, the State Refugee Coordinator and State Refugee Health Coordinator.

- All refugee agencies share this information with their national partners who are also monitoring their capacity with the U.S. Department of State and resettlement support centers overseas.
• RST employs a diverse, talented and passionate team to do the hard work every day of helping families start new lives in Texas.