

RSTP Bulletin

September 08, 2014

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESOURCES TO WELCOME BURUNDIAN REFUGEES

The US Committee for Refugees, a reputed refugee agency, has produced various life skills tools that support the settlement and integration of Burundian refugees. Even though the materials were mainly created for US NGOs from 2008-2010, their contents could be adapted or used with some modification by Canadian sponsors. Given that Canada has agreed to resettle protracted Burundian refugees from Tanzania, and 20 Burundian cases (**78 refugees**) have already been referred to the Blended VOR program, private sponsors may find these tools handy when they sponsor Burundian refugees through the BVOR program.

The tools, which are available in multimedia (Kirundi language) and print (Kirundi and English languages) formats, were created in consultation with refugees and service providers and use “culturally and linguistically” appropriate language. The tools are:

- ✓ [Life Skills for Burundian Refugees, Volume 1](#) covers “the role of the resettlement agency, personal care, nutrition, health, adjusting to a new home, safety and emergencies, housing and employment”
- ✓ [Life Skills for Burundian Refugees, Volume 2](#) deals with “laws and rights, managing money, using a bank, education for children and adults, parenting in the united states, family, communication skills, domestic violence and the use and abuse of alcohol”
- ✓ [Life Skills for Burundian Refugees, Volume 3](#) talks about “becoming a US citizen, buying and owning a car, bullying and discrimination, mental health issues, prenatal and maternal health care”
- ✓ [Educational Outreach Materials](#) includes “presentations and fact sheets about Burundian refugees, along with recent media coverage about their resettlement and personal stories they've shared. “

THE GROUP OF FIVE SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL IN FRENCH

The [interactive self-assessment tool](#) that allows Group of Five members to assess their individual and collective ability to participate in refugee sponsorship is now available in French language. By entering their personal data, G5 members can gauge if they qualify to join of a sponsoring group and are able to contribute finance to a G5 sponsorship.

Upcoming Webinar

Topic: [Sponsoring Syrian Refugees](#)

Date: Thursday, September 18, 2014

Time: 1:00 - 2:30 PM EDT

The topics that we will be discussed include: refugee eligibility and admissibility, an explanation of Ministerial priority spaces for Syrian refugees, and the criteria to sponsor Syrian refugees out of Turkey.

To register, go to this [link](#).

Upcoming Workshops

Topic: [Workshop on Private Sponsorship of refugees and Blended VOR Program](#)

Date: September 27, 2014

Time: TBC

Location: Winnipeg, MB

Venue: 521 Bannatyne Ave

Winnipeg, Manitoba. MB

For more information, please contact Nadine Nasir nnasir@rstp.ca

Topic: [Southern Ontario Sponsorship Group Meeting](#)

Date: September 25, 2014

Time: 9:30 am - 3:00 pm

Location: Toronto, Ontario

Venue: Christian and Missionary

Alliance in Canada, 30 Carrier Drive, Suite 100, Toronto, ON

AVAILABLE BVORs

VOR 124

The PA is a 33 year old Burundian male accompanied by his 30 year old wife, their 11 year old daughter and 8 and 5 year old sons. The PA had to flee his village after members of the authorities arrived at the PA's family's village asking for contributions of money and food, or to surrender their young men. The PA's father refused to give both money and his sons since his parents were farmers and did not want to get involved with politics. The family's house was attacked and burned and the PA's parents and siblings were all killed in this incident. Fearing for his life, the PA fled to Tanzania. The family has experience farming and can be resettled anywhere in Canada.

VOR 128

The PA is 52 year old Burundian male accompanied by his 41 year old wife, their 17, 13, 11 and 9 year old sons and their 15 year old daughter. The PA speaks French and has experience as a pastor and shoe repairman. The PA's three brothers were killed for refusing to join the rebels in Burundi, and the PA believes that his mother was killed by soldiers looking for him. This family cannot return to Burundi for fear of being targeted by those who killed the PA's family members for not joining the rebel group. They look forward to being resettled anywhere in Canada and having the support of a sponsoring group.

VOR 118

The PA is a 35 year old Iranian male accompanied by his wife, 31, and 4 year old son. The couple speaks Farsi and have experience working as salespersons and hairdresser/beautician. The PA & his wife converted to Christianity and began attending a house church together. When their family members found out about their conversion, the couple was questioned and ostracized, as both of their families did not approve of this new religion. While working at his shop, the PA was arrested, detained and physically abused because of their conversion religion. They fear further persecution if they return to Iran. They can be resettled anywhere in Canada.

INQUIRIES & RESPONSES

YOU ASKED... I would like to get your advice regarding this unique case of Burmese refugees residing in Thailand. Following a successful interview in January 2013, their application was provisionally approved. However, since they were not registered with the UNHCR, the visa office could not issue their visas; as a result, their resettlement was put on hold. Is there any way out of this limbo? How long will the visa office wait for them?

CIC REPLY... "The visa office will wait for the applicants indefinitely since they have been provisionally approved but just unable to get exit permits. We had received previous guidance from the mission indicating that Burmese refugees without full registration with the Thai authorities and UNHCR cannot obtain exit permission. They had recommended that those sponsoring refugees living in Thailand ensure they have a UNHCR household registration document on which there is a registration number that starts with the code for the camp where they reside (e.g. MRM for Mae Ra Ma Luang). If their number starts with PRE or PAB, or if they have no household registration document at all, they are not registered and cannot get exit permits."

YOU ASKED... To learn more about the situation on the ground of Syrian and Iraqi refugees what resources would you suggest that I review?

OUR REPLY... The following resources may be of interest: UNHCR's Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal – Syria Regional Refugee Response. *This website contains up-to-date statistics on the situation on the ground.* <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

The UNHCR's Press Release on 29 August 2014, entitled: "Refugee Total Hits 3 Million as Syrians Flee Growing Insecurity and Worsening Conditions." <http://www.unhcr.org/53ff78ac9.html>

- ✓ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s website about the Syrian situation: <http://www.unocha.org/syria>
- ✓ UN OCHA's website about Iraq: <http://www.unocha.org/aggregator/sources/20>
- ✓ The UNHCR's International Protection Considerations with regard to people fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic, Update 2. *Please note that this document is from October 2013 and may be outdated.* <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5265184f4.html>

You can also consult the following databases for more information:

- ✓ European Country of Origin Information Network - <https://www.ecoi.net/>
(You can choose the country you are researching in the field in the middle of the page)
- ✓ UNHCR Refworld - <http://www.refworld.org/>
(You can choose the country you are researching in the field on the right hand side of the page)