

# 1281

## **Home Sweet Home?**

A power point presentation to the Sphex Club of Lynchburg

November 10, 2005

**By Ellen G. Nygaard**

Ellen Gebhardt Nygaard grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the oldest of seven children. She attended the University of Wisconsin, Columbia Hospital School of Nursing, and received her BSN from the University of Maryland. She met her husband Tom when they were living and working in Baltimore at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Their careers took them to Charlottesville and finally to Lynchburg in 1987. They have two daughters, Anna and Gretchen, and one son, Erik. While residing in Lynchburg, Ellen has been primarily volunteering for the Lynchburg City Schools, Holy Cross Catholic Church, and the Lynchburg Public Library. She is also a trustee of Lynchburg College. Presently, she is working as a clinical coordinator at the Education and Research Foundation.

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Refugee Resettlement Project  
The Catholic Community of  
Lynchburg 2004

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*"There is no  
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-Euripides 431 BC



Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:  
I lift my lamp  
beside the golden door.

## United Nations High Commission on Refugees Mission

- To lead and coordinate international action for worldwide protection of refugees and resolution of refugee problems.

## United Nations High Commission on Refugees Resettlement Goals

- Lead and coordinate international action for worldwide protection of refugees and resolution of refugee problems
- Repatriation
- Local Integration
- 3rd Country Resettlement

## Who is a refugee?

Any person who is outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution.

☐ persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

☐ must generally be outside their country of last habitual residence to qualify as a refugee.

☐ numbers by geographic area set annually by the President in consultation with Congress.

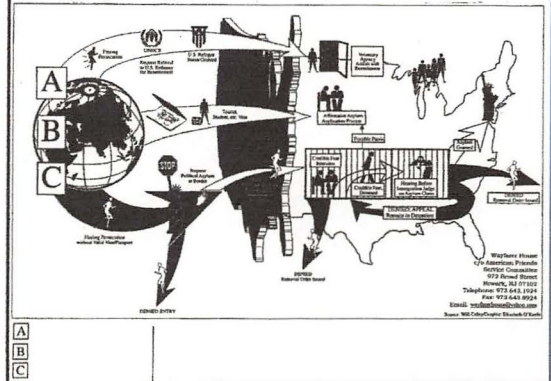
☐ eligible to adjust to lawful permanent resident status after one year of continuous presence in the United States.

## Refugee Act 1980

- Codified our historic policy of aiding individuals fleeing persecution in their homelands
- Formally defined refugees
- Defined the asylum adjudication process
- Established the Office of Refugee Resettlement

US Immigration and Nationality Act

## Applying for Refugee Status/ Political Asylum in the United States



## Office of Refugee Resettlement

- Helps refugees establish a new life that is founded on the dignity of self support that will allow them to encompass full participation in American life.

## 2004 Refugee Arrivals

- Total United States – 73,851
- Total Virginia – 1694
  - Somalia 558
  - Sudan 125
  - Liberia 241
  - Cuba 279
  - Iran 119
  - Afghanistan 73

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/geninfo/index.htm>

## FY 2006 US Refugee Admissions

- 20,000 Africa
- 13,000 East Asia
- 9,500 Central Asia and Europe
- 5,000 Caribbean and Latin America
- 2,500 Near East
- 20,000 Unallocated reserve
- 70,000 Total Admissions

Report to Congress-Proposed Refugee Admissions FY 2006  
US Department of State

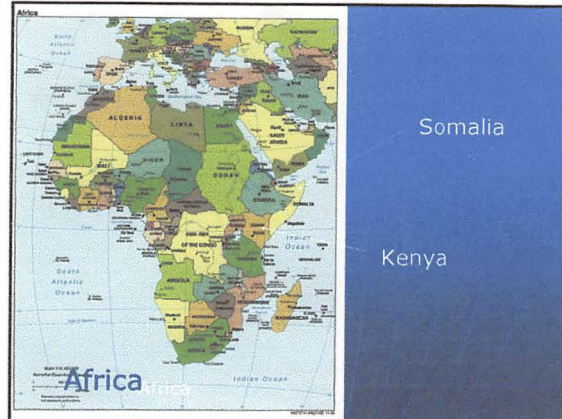
## ORR-PRM Partners

- Church World Service
- Ethiopian Community Development
- Episcopal Migration Ministries
- Hebrew Immigration Aid Society
- International Rescue Committee
- US Committee for Refugees and Immigration
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
- US Conference of Catholic Bishops
- World Relief Corporation
- State of Iowa, Bureau of Refugee Services

## African Refugees

- 3.2 million Africans are refugees
- 30% of the total worldwide refugee population
- 1997- 6069 came to the USA
- 2004 – 25,000 came to the USA

US Department of State-Report to Congress 2005



## Somali Bantu Timeline

Source: Refugee Reports Vol. 23, No. 8  
"After Three Years: Somali Bantus Prepare to Go Home to Paradise"  
Sasha Chandel, IJM

- In 18<sup>th</sup> century ancestors from Malawi, Tanzania, and Mozambique captured by Sultan of Zanzibar and sold into Somalian Slavery
- They settled in Somalia's farmable areas after gaining their independence from slavery
- Unaffiliated with larger clans, they remained a marginalized minority in Somalia
- In 1991, civil war forced them to flee their farms for Kenya
- Militias occupied their farms preventing the Bantus' return

## Somali Bantu Timeline

- Lived in Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya for 10 years
- The Bantu faced persecution and oppression from Somalis in the camp
- In 1997, a chance for resettlement in their ancestral home of Mozambique was cancelled
- In 1999, US government recognized their plight as "twice displaced people" and gave them P-2 group designation
- 2002 – UNHCR began transporting Bantu from Dadaab to Kakuma Refugee Camp for final processing before coming to USA

## Some Quick Facts

- 60% are 17 years old or younger
- The average family has 4 to 6 children
- 5% are formally educated
- Religion: Muslim
- Language: Maimai, Af Maxaa, Kiswahili
- 40% have never lived anywhere other than a refugee camp
- Most have never lived with electricity or used a flush toilet

## Sponsorship Responsibilities

- Sponsors act as guides, friends and advocates
- Supply initial food and clothing
- Supply housing and household needs
- Access community social services and health care
- Assist with securing employment
- Registration for school
- Provide transportation as needed
- English Instruction
- Case Management

## Refugee Benefits

### What services do refugees receive?

- No interest travel loan, Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) for 8 months
- Food stamps
- Housing assistance
- Social security card
- School registration for children
- Referral for medical appointments and other support services
- Employment services
- Case management through community based non-profit organizations
- Adjustment of status from refugee to legal permanent resident (green card) after 1 year

## Refugee Responsibilities

- Refugees must repay the U.S. Government for their travel costs.
- Refugees must report all income to the state and county government.
- Refugees must register for selective service.
- Refugees must pay taxes.

## Estimated Costs of Refugee Processing, Movement and Resettlement

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Department of Homeland Security	\$15.3 million	\$39.6 million
Department of State	\$186 million	\$158.7 million
Department of Health and Human Services	\$447.6 million*	\$473.2 million*
Total \$	\$648.9 million	\$671.5 million

\*The TANF, Medicaid, SSI, state costs or private subsidy included

<http://www.state.gov/nrm/asst/dl/rncs/25692.htm>

## Cultures Clash and Coexist

### Telescoping Centuries

## Issues Faced by Refugees and Sponsors

- Language Barrier
- Illiteracy
- Health status and practices
- Values: religious and cultural
- Values: social and societal
- Isolation
- Prejudices

## Language Barriers and Illiteracy

- African Dialects
- Minimal or no reading and writing skills
- Tutors
- Translators



## Health

- Health status
- No medical history or records available
- Medicaid for 6 months – adults
- Cultural healing practices, superstitions and tribal rituals hinder compliance
- Emotional Trauma – PTS and Depression

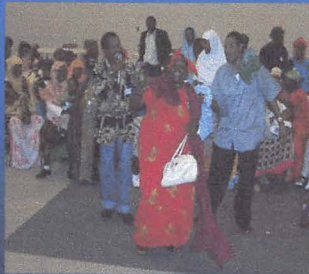
## Isolation

Tribal  
Community  
Social Norms  
Transportation



## Values – Religious and Cultural

- Muslim
- Practices
- Holy Days
- Dietary Regulations



## Values- Social and Societal

Work:



## Values- Social and Societal

- Gender Roles and expectations
- Social Interactions
- Education
- Life Skills – need a modern social understanding of day to day living, housing, rent, utility, telephone, transportation in USA

## The Ladies for Lunch



## Prejudice

- African
- Americans
- Gender
- Religious
- Cultural



## What's Next?

- Mary Robinson
- Pearl S. Buck Award from RMWC
- UN High Commissioner of Human Rights
- President of Ireland
- Founder of Ethical Globalization Initiative
- Member UN designated - Global Commission on International Migration



## Why?

- As population and poverty trends continue to further divide the world into stark divisions, migratory pressures will only intensify, making the need for a policy framework to guide this phenomena even more urgent.

## Global Commission on International Migration GCIM

- Charge: By UN- Kofi Annan
- Analyze gaps in current policy approaches to international migration
- Create a framework for a coherent comprehensive global response
- Report due Fall 2005

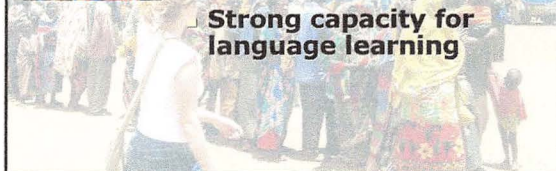
*"There is no greater sorrow on earth than the loss of one's native land."*

-Euripides 431 BC



## They're Gonna Make It!

- Resilient
- Strong & flexible work ethic
- Strong sense of family and community
- Strong capacity for language learning



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