



The Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation (RISE) Study:

**Identifying and Tracking Community Integration Indicators for
Colorado Refugees Served by Wilson-Fish Programs**

Year Three Report



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About This Report

This is the third annual report (October 2012-September 2013) of the four-year, Wilson-Fish evaluation, conducted by Quality Evaluation Designs (QED) for the Colorado Refugee Services Program—CRSP—(PO IHA CRSP1123064) through a grant from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). The purpose of the grant is to create a framework for understanding refugee integration in Colorado, and then assess refugee integration through a survey administered once each year to a population of refugees who will be followed for the duration of the evaluation. The survey is called the Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation (RISE). A summary of RISE can be found on the QED website: www.QualityEvaluationDesigns.com.

QED is grateful to Ms. Nicole Dufour, for her invaluable assistance with data collection and data entry. We are also grateful to CRSP staff, including Mr. Paul Stein and Mr. Joseph Wismann-Horther, for their commitment to the refugee community in Colorado and for their support of and assistance with this project. QED is also deeply grateful to the refugees themselves who have participated in the survey, as well as in focus groups and interviews. We are especially indebted to our magnificent network of Community Connectors, who remain connected to the survey population, serve as interpreters for our qualitative research efforts, and provide us with countless meaningful insights along the way. Without these partners, this project would not be possible.

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Year Three Annual Report is to review project activities from October 2012 through September 2013.

Section I summarizes Year 3 evaluation activities, which included administering the second cycle of the RISE survey—referred to in this report as the 1 Year Follow-Up—to 367 adult refugees from Somalia, Iraq, Bhutan and Burma. This administration was conducted on a rolling basis by the team of Community Connectors, in close collaboration with the RISE project manager. The Community Connectors also recruited participants for focus groups and cognitive interviews, served as interpreters, and even, in some instances, provided transportation for the refugees to those sessions. A survey retention rate of 78.6% was maintained in the study. This unusually high figure was the result of the extraordinary efforts of the project manager and Community Connectors, as described in Section II.

The QED evaluation team conducted three focus groups and nine cognitive interviews with survey participants from three language groups (Bhutanese-Nepali, Karen, and Burmese). The focus groups (Section III) explored refugee experiences during their first year in the United States, clarified ambiguities revealed in Baseline survey data, and suggested refinements in the RISE 2 Year Follow-Up survey instrument. Cognitive interviews (Section IV) focused on how refugees interpreted specific survey items to ensure that responses matched the intention underlying the survey items.

The focus group and cognitive interview data led to minor but important changes in several survey items. Changes in the RISE survey were also based upon analyses of Baseline data, as well as feedback from CRSP professionals and the Community Connectors. Survey refinements are summarized in Section V.

QED performed longitudinal analyses of Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up survey data. Analyses of core domain items, domain-level reliabilities and inter-correlations, and Overall Integration scores are summarized in Section VI. Survey statistics are very promising. An Overall Integration variable can be reliably derived using survey responses in order to identify integration status (low, medium, or high) for each refugee in the sample.

Section VII asks reviews lessons learned about the RISE survey and foreshadows Year 4 (2013-14) activities. Pending continued positive results of the survey itself, QED believes that we can begin to accumulate insights and draw inferences about refugee integration, beginning with 2 Year Follow-Up data.

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I. Summary of Year 3 (2012-13) Activities

The research questions guiding the RISE study in Year Three remain unchanged from what was set out in the Year One Annual Report:

1. Assuming that the term “integration” is operationally defined as a refugee’s progress over time along nine pathways or domains (covering (a) employment, (b) education, (c) children’s education, (d) health care, (e) housing; (f) social bonding within a refugee’s culture/community and (g) social bridging to those outside that culture/community; (h) language and cultural knowledge; (i) safety and stability; and (j) civic engagement), to what extent have refugees become integrated into Colorado during their first four years here?
2. How do demographic factors such as gender, age, and country of origin, relate to integration?
3. How does integration relate to refugees’ level of self-sufficiency by the end of their first four years in Colorado?
4. How does integration relate to refugees’ sense of well-being by the end of their first four years in Colorado?

The primary vehicle for answering these questions has been the RISE survey instrument, asking a series of approximately 100 questions covering ten domains specified in the first research question and the demographic factors of the second question. Administration of the survey instrument to adult refugees from four countries (Somalia, Iraq, Bhutan and Burma) arriving in Denver after February 2011 commenced in June of 2011 – each refugee being given the survey approximately 90 days after arrival.

The October 31, 2011 Year One Annual Report described in detail the processes of arriving upon the research questions, developing both the survey instrument and the plans for its administration, and the actual administration of the survey through the Volag case managers in the initial months. The report also covered issues arising from changes in the survey population from what had been anticipated at the outset of this project. The Year 2 Annual Report (October, 2012) described the means by which the entire population surveyed during the first year would be tracked and resurveyed in each of the subsequent years. The Year 2 Report recounted the administration of the baseline survey by the Volags, the inception of the Community Connectors for tracking refugee participants, and the completion of a Translation Study, to determine if there were translation irregularities in the survey instrument. The report provided analysis of baseline survey data, and refinements made RISE survey instrument as a result.

The purpose of this report is to review project activities from October 2012 to September 2013. These activities—described in subsequent sections of this report—include:

- Administering the second cycle of the RISE survey—referred to in this report as the 1 Year Follow-Up—to 367 adult refugees from Somalia, Iraq, Bhutan and Burma. This administration was conducted on a rolling basis by the team of Community Connectors, in close collaboration with the RISE project manager.
- Continued organizing and managing QED’s network of Community Connectors. During Baseline, the Community Connectors tracked all first year survey participants beginning three months after each took the survey. They continued to do this every three months in the second survey cycle, as well as actually administered the survey. The Community Connectors also recruited participants for focus groups and cognitive interviews, served as interpreters, and even, in some instances, provided transportation for the refugees for those sessions.
- Facilitating three focus groups with survey participants from three language groups (Bhutanese-Nepali, Karen, and Burmese) to explore their experiences during their first year in the United States, clarify ambiguities revealed in Baseline survey data, and to determine further refinements for the RISE instrument in the 2 Year Follow-Up survey instrument.
- Conducting nine cognitive interviews with survey participants from the Bhutanese-Nepali, Karen, and Burmese language groups about specific survey items in order to ensure that responses matched the intention of the survey items.
- Refining the RISE survey the 2 Year Follow-Up cycle (2013-2014) based upon analyses of the extensive qualitative data, as well as feedback from CRSP and the Community Connectors.
- Performing longitudinal analyses using Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up data in order to determine the reliabilities of domain constructs and to create and assess the efficacy of an Overall Integration variable that can be used to determine integration status (low, medium, or high) of each refugee in the sample.
- Reviewing findings from the qualitative and quantitative strands of this year's research activities, and drawing inferences and conclusions therefrom.
- Beginning in August 2013, the Community Connectors commenced the 2 Year Follow-Up survey administration, which takes place on a rolling basis, depending on the timing of the administration of the Baseline survey and 1 Year Follow-Up.

Each of the above activities, as well as an outline of future steps, is explored in the following sections.

II. Cooperation from Refugee Community Members Make Data Collection Possible

Year Three of the study marked the second cycle of administering of the RISE survey. The first cycle was Baseline, so this past year was the 1 Year Follow-Up. Surveys were administered to Baseline participants from July 2012 through June 2013. All administrations were to respondents who completed the survey at Baseline—no new refugees were enrolled in the study. As a result of the sustained efforts of the Community Connectors, in collaboration with the RISE project manager (described in further detail in Part III), 367 of the 467 original adult refugees completed the 1 Year Follow-Up Survey, resulting in a response rate of 78.6%. The process by which refugees are tracked and the survey is administered is a critical piece of the evaluation study. Lessons learned from the process can benefit similar efforts. For that reason, in this section we describe data collection and refugee tracking.

The Amazing Community Connectors

The Baseline survey was administered by the Voluntary Agency (Volag) case managers. Challenges encountered during this process were described in the Year 2 Report. Community Connectors administered the 1 Year Follow-Up. The high response rate for 1 Year Follow-Up is due to the vigorous efforts of the Community Connectors, who maintained periodic contact with respondents and their friends and families. During this period, 171 (46.6%) refugees reported moving one time, and 8 reported moving two or three times—keeping track of refugees' movements and constantly changing cell phone numbers is a significant challenge.

The story of the committed involvement of the Community Connectors in the RISE Study can best be told in three parts: 1) the efforts of the RISE project manager to bring Community Connectors on board and to sustain their participation through periodic meetings, mentoring, and flexibility; 2) the efforts of the Community Connectors to develop and maintain relationships with study participants, and 3) understanding why the Community Connectors have been willing to put in so much time and hard work on this project for what, at first glance, might appear to be so little concrete personal gain. All three of these elements have proved crucial to the continued vibrancy and active engagement of a Community Connector network, without which this project would not be possible.

The Critical Role of the Project Manager

Ms. Maggie Miller is the Wilson-Fish Evaluation Project Manager, and without her extraordinary efforts, QED could not conduct a longitudinal study. Central to her activities is keeping actively engaged with the Community Connectors. At any given time, there are five to six Community Connectors, and over the year Ms. Miller met individually with each of them every four to eight weeks, depending upon the circumstances.

Initial plans to have the Community Connectors linked through spreadsheets on Google Drive, shared folders, and email communication, floundered when it became apparent

that they did not have the technological background or equipment to communicate in these ways. Instead, the project manager had to devise a separate contact routine for each Community Connector—including contacts by texts on cell phones (which they all have), rather than email, face-to-face individual meetings at Subways, Starbucks, or the Aurora Public Library. The project manager created a log that enabled each Community Connector to track their contacts with each of the refugee participants for whom he or she was responsible. Ms. Miller would contact each Community Connector for a meeting when two or three weeks would pass without communication. Given the extraordinarily busy work, school, and family lives of each of the Connectors, the project manager had to be completely flexible about scheduling these meetings. A project manager with a rigid, 9-to-5 work schedule of her own would never have been able to manage the critical scheme of face-to-face meetings with the Community Connectors.

As far as how each such meeting would go and what materials she would hand to them to use, Ms. Miller reports, "every Community Connector is different." Relationships with each Community Connector depend on Ms. Miller's ability to communicate according to Community Connectors' cultural norms. Even though Community Connectors are often themselves successful integrators into US society, they are from cultures in which distinctions between personal and professional are not as distinct as they are in the US. Each meeting reinforced personal ties between Ms. Miller and the Community Connectors, and personal relationships are not often conducted efficiently. Conversations meandered comfortably. Lots of talk of family, work, and the Community Connector's own experiences as a refugee unfolded within each meeting, as the discussion gradually moved towards how the contacts and surveys with the refugee study participants were going—who is was found, who was lost, what problems were encountered, what successes were being enjoyed.

Although the Community Connectors serve the project, they also benefit from Ms. Miller's mentoring and friendship, each in a different way. One Community Connector, a senior in high school, was helped with college application essays and strategies; another received advice about buying his first car and a house; a third was invited to the project manager's synagogue group to see whether some financial resources would be available for her; Ms. Miller provided a job reference for a fourth.

Over the past two years, five Community Connectors have left the project. Ms. Miller takes pains train new Community Connectors on administering the survey, the concrete steps for maintaining contact with the participants and the manner of doing so—the importance of being pleasant but persistent, leaving multiple messages, banging on doors if necessary, talking to their neighbors, etc. The key to success with each Community Connector and with the evaluation as a whole is establishing a unique relationship with each Community Connector. The project manager has had to be able to schedule meetings spontaneously, be interpersonally sensitive and flexible, generous with her time, and a really good listener.

What Motivates Community Connectors

Earlier, we mentioned a retention rate in the study of nearly 80%. This high level is the result Community Connectors' efforts. In this section, we relate the stories that underlie the number.

The Community Connectors' charge is deceptively simple: maintain contact (by phone or in person) with each of their assigned refugee participants three-, six-, and nine-months from the date of their having taken the Baseline survey, and then administer the 1 Year Follow-Up Survey to those same participants. For each contact with the refugees, the Community Connectors receive \$5, and for each survey administered, \$10. The case load of the Community Connectors varies, from a handful to over one hundred and thirty.

To help keep the refugee participants engaged, Community Connectors give gift cards: \$10 cards if they take the survey, and \$15 cards if they notify the RISE team that they have moved. Although refugee communities can be difficult to penetrate for outsiders who do not speak refugees' languages, individuals and families within the community are known, and those who have the language and cultural sensibilities can quite effectively negotiate the social networks. In order for Community Connectors to keep track of survey participants, they exercise ingenuity, creativity, and persistence. A Community Connector sat outside a refugee's apartment for an hour, waiting for him to return. Often, refugees move without leaving a forwarding address or telephone number. The Community Connectors go to neighbors, coworkers, or social gatherings and inquire about the refugee's whereabouts.

We might mention that once refugees are located and are actually administered survey, survey items are completed 100%. Plus, due to Community Connectors' survey training and interpretive skills, the quality of responses is excellent. Not only do we get the data, but the data are extremely valid.

Just as Ms. Miller's success with Community Connectors is based primarily on establishing a warm personal connection and providing assistance that would be outside any formal job description, Community Connectors' success with their refugee case load often depends on the same things. For example, a refugee might ask the Community Connector how to fix a Medicaid problem. The Community Connector listens empathetically, and then passes the query on to the project manager, who in turn contacts the Voluntary Agencies (Volags). In one instance, a Community Connector found a participant and family literally in the process of moving, and then spent three hours helping them move, after which, the refugee completed the survey. Conventional approaches to survey administration and participant tracking would never work with the highly mobile, culturally diverse population engaged with the RISE survey. But as a result of the unusual efforts described above, Community Connectors have managed to maintain contact with 79% of Baseline participants.

In addition to their jobs of contact maintenance and survey administration, three of the Community Connectors accepted additional responsibilities as organizers and interpreters

for the focus groups and cognitive interviews discussed in sections III and IV, below. The Community Connectors for three language groups—Nepali/Bhutanese, Karen, and Burmese—each selected six to twelve of the refugee participants for focus groups, as well as participants to be interviewed. They not only interpreted as the English-speaking RISE team member posed questions and the refugee participants answered in their native tongues, they also ensured the attendance of the participants at the sessions in the first place. That involved both working with the participants' schedules and confirming with each that they would attend, and arranged for their transportation to the sessions. Two of the Community Connectors actually drove to every attendee's house (in a snowstorm, no less), picked them up, and brought them to the sessions—the third, a high school student without a driver's license, managed to persuade his father to do the driving!

While the Connectors did receive remuneration for these substantial efforts, their participation is disproportionately large compared to their compensation. Community Connectors have been profoundly dedicated to this RISE project. We believe that research into the experiences of newly arrived refugees requires the support and participation of community members, and the Community Connectors have been a critical link to the newly arrived refugee community. Why are they so engaged? We suggest that there three factors that contribute to Community Connectors' dedication, which we offer for the benefit of others doing work in refugee communities.

First, there is no question that these Community Connectors want to serve their communities. The RISE project manager has persuaded them of the benefits of collecting data on newly arrived refugees for the community as a whole. For a project like this to succeed, those benefits must be clearly articulated to the community members whose aid the researchers seek to enlist.

Second, the Community Connectors who have stuck with the project have found the different parts of the project to be interesting, and appear to enjoy the challenges of reaching out to and tracking down new refugees, building relationships with them, learning the surveys, administering them, and, for some, interpreting. They have been exercising skills that make them feel competent and proud.

The third factor flows from an observation of the project manager: being a Community Connector has a certain status in the refugee community. It is an overt manifestation of a leadership role that others in the community recognize and admire. In most cases, the leadership qualities and behaviors were probably already recognized within the community—our Community Connectors were connectors within their communities before RISE. But having been engaged to do a government-related project by members the dominant culture may bestow a new level of credibility and recognition.

It so happens that the RISE survey results promise rich insights into refugee integration. Yet a great survey and great evaluation team are useless without data. Community Connectors are a critical link in the success of the project. Organizing and managing the Community Connector network relies upon the wisdom and expertise of a highly skilled,

very flexible project manager. We argue that a longitudinal study of newly arrived refugees depends upon approaching the project from the perspective of community engagement and community-based research. Fundamentally, the project is a grassroots effort, not initiated by the community, but in service of and supported by the community. We conclude this section with a most illustrative anecdote.

The focus group study described in the following section had been long scheduled for a weekend in March. When the time came, blizzard conditions existed in Denver—close to a foot of snow dropped Saturday. The RISE team wondered whether anyone would show up in such terrible weather. Yet, nearly everyone came as scheduled to the focus group interviews. The surprising attendance of so many refugees was due, in part, to the Herculean efforts of the Community Connectors. But also, to the enthusiasm of the refugees for the project. As one refugee from Bhutan put it at the end of the focus group:

Thank you for inviting us to the focus group and letting us speak our mind and sharing our grief and happiness....[we] would love to continue to share [our] experience here.

Without the commitment of Community Connectors, who in turn track and motivate refugee respondents, this project could not be effective.

III. Focus Groups: Exploring Refugee Experiences, Resolving Questions

Focus groups were incorporated into the study for two reasons: first, to explore anomalies or curiosities arising from the survey data; and second, to explore areas of refugee experience that are not being reached through a survey instrument. Three focus groups were conducted in March 2013, after the Baseline survey data had been collected and analyzed. Each group consisted of refugees from a different language group:

1. Nepali—refugees from Bhutan
2. Karen—refugees from Burma (of the Karen ethnic group)
3. Burmese—refugees from Burma (of a variety of ethnic groups, including Burmese, Chin, and Arakanese).

Refugees from other language and country groups (i.e., Karenni from Burma, Iraqi and Somali) also participated in the Baseline survey, but in insufficient numbers to justify conducting separate focus groups.

Method

Participants

The refugees participating in the focus group were recruited from those who completed the Baseline survey.¹

Attendees of the three focus groups broke down as follows:

1. From Bhutan
 - a. Eleven participants, about evenly split male-female
 - b. Ages 26-64
 - c. Lived in refugee camps in Nepal for 18-19 years before coming to US
2. From Burma—Karen-speaking
 - a. Six participants, four male, two female
 - b. Ages 31-45
 - c. Lived in refugee camp in Burma for 12-16 years

¹ Community Connectors, who served as translators, agreed to be interviewed after the focus groups, and their observations and insights are included in this report where germane.

3. From Burma—Burmese-speaking
 - a. Twelve participants, about evenly split male-female
 - b. Ages 26-38 (plus two infants, born since their mothers came to the US, and two small children under age 5)
 - c. Two had lived in Thai refugee camps for 10 years, but most had been refugees in Malaysia, *not* living in camps, for 4-5 years

Data Collection

The focus groups were led by one member of the RISE team, pursuant to a focus group protocol containing a series of questions developed collaboratively by the RISE team (see Appendix A). The questions were used as a guide for discussion rather than as a strictly followed question-and-answer format. The RISE team member posed questions, and the Community Connector translated them; the refugee participants responded, usually in their native tongues, and the Community Connector translated responses into English. A recording was made of all the focus groups and two of the Community Connector interviews,² and a RISE team member simultaneously typed notes. Based on recordings and the notes, transcripts were compiled.³ These transcripts comprise the data for this study.

Transcripts were reviewed multiple times and coded for general thematic categories, of which 29 emerged (see Appendix B). The transcripts were then reviewed again, and quotes were extracted and organized according to the code categories.⁴ These categorized quotes then combined into larger thematic groupings; the discussion that follows reflects this analysis.

Findings

The Journey of the Refugee During the First Year in the US

Arrival

What kinds of things surprised the refugees when they first arrived in the United States? What did they experience that they had not been led to expect?

² The third Community Connector interview occurred later by phone and was not recorded, but extensive verbatim notes were taken by the RISE team.

³ Transcripts of refugees' remarks relied on the contemporaneous translations spoken by the Community Connectors.

⁴ The three most prevalent categories—the ones to which the largest number and volume of quotes pertained—were: *Help* (needing help and how they went about getting it); *Job* (the importance of getting a job and how they went about doing so); and *Language/English* (learning English and language difficulties).

Karen-speaking people from Burma were taken aback by the complete strangeness of the new, urbanized world into which they were entering. It began "when I rode the plane, and I did not know how to get in there and it was amazing for me. In my country we live in the forest and have never seen planes." Another noted "the surprising thing when I came here, the huge buildings that I never have seen in Burma in the forest, and the elevators when I shopping in the buildings." A Burmese-speaker also noted his reaction "when I saw the airport in Los Angeles. I have never been to an airport."

Both Karen and Burmese-speaking participants expressed their astonishment at the Denver climate. A number commented on the surprises of winter (and given the conditions of that weekend, this was not a shock)—"I was surprised to see the snow I have never experienced in my life, it was cold!" and "I was surprised to see how people live in the cold."

Things were very different for refugees arriving from rural and temperate climates. But the refugees' observations of and encounters with Americans themselves gave rise to a more profound set of discoveries: the acknowledgment of how different people in the US are, both from the incoming refugees and from each other. Burmese-speakers noticed that they were surprised "to live with White people and the food was all westernized," "to see how different races can live together and different religious people can live together," and "to see diverse cultures living together." The refugees from Bhutan took their observations of the coexistence of diverse cultures and races and religions to another level—and marveled at the peacefulness of it all. They were surprised that they "found people from all different cultures and places who live in harmony and with no conflict" and "people from different parts of the world living in peace." Another noted that, here, "all the people [are] from different countries and cultures but they all came together; [in] Nepal there were fewer people from around the world and not as many different cultures, and lots of conflict." The comparison with what had been experienced back home was stark—"In Bhutan, there were many political organizations and the people fought with each other; here, despite the big size of the country, the people are living in peace and with no conflict."

Taking this insight one step further, a few of the refugees commented upon their surprise at how this country treats the very diverse elements of its population more or less equally, and according to the rule of law. One noted that "after coming to this country everyone is of equality despite age, size, or background;" another commented that "everyone is safe and of equality;" and third "was surprised to see the law of this country...that everyone is controlled by the law and the system and has never seen that anywhere else, and following the system, streamlined."

The Bhutanese Community Connector commented on the impression that diversity and the rule of law made on the newly arrived refugees, and how that was influenced by the conditions of their life in the refugee camps prior to their arrival:

Refugees are impressed that in US, rules and law bind everyone together. Whether they are rich or poor. Regardless of background. In the camps, there was no law. For example, domestic violence—in the US, there are legal consequences for domestic violence, not in the camps. In Nepal, there was a big difference between treatment of rich and poor.

The Karen-speaking refugees also compared life in the camps with their new life in the US and underscored one big difference: they feel safer here under the rule of law. One noted that "I came from Burma refugee camp...I was very scared of the soldiers, and here everything is safe and perfect for me." Another said that "When I lived in the camp I was not free to go outside, they would arrest us even if we did not do anything wrong. In the US if we don't break the law no one bothers us."

Both the Karen-speakers and the Bhutanese reiterated how appreciative they were when they arrived at the US government's efforts to welcome and help them, as reflected in these comments:

I really appreciate the US government and the people who work with us and our kids being able to go to school. In our country we do not have school or have the chance to go to school.

[There are] different people from different parts of the world and the government is settling them here...thank our government for all of their facilities here....has provided them with Medicare and food stamps.

[There are] different people from different countries and they have been well accepted and taken care of by the government. I have a great life here and am very thankful to the government for my good life here.

When the refugees arrived, they were both overwhelmed by the strangeness of their new world and impressed by its diversity and the promise of equality under the law and government aid. The journey of their first year, however, would not be without some pretty substantial bumps in the road.

Struggles Along the Way

The struggles experienced by the refugees during their first year have not been insubstantial. In the focus group discussions, challenges encountered by these new arrivals seemed to group into three categories: a) the interconnected challenges of language, employment, and transportation; b) the quandary of how to go about obtaining

help grappling with these challenges; and c) anxieties about coping with certain conditions in the US that were different from what they were familiar with in the camps.

a. Learning English, Getting a Job, and Finding a Way to Get There: the First and Foremost Practical Challenges for the Newly Arrived Refugee

The importance of learning English was paramount to all of the participants at the focus groups: "It is very important because everyone in the US speaks English and you can ask people where to go and where to find things." And the main reason for wanting, for needing to learn English, shared by just about every refugee: needing to "learn English so I can get a good job." It is understood that "if we can read and write [in English] we can get a better job here." Conversely, "employment is a problem because of English." One refugee commented that "the lack of English was the biggest reason for not getting a job;" another noted that "I cannot find job because I have had interviews but did not pass the interview because of my English." Without English, the job interview can be an insurmountable barrier to getting through the job application process: "I can do any kind of entry level job, but to do that I have to face the manager and interview and speak English, which I can't do." To even attend some job interviews sometimes "they have to take some who knows English" along to interpret, "but someone who knows English is busy with their own job so there is no one here to help them."⁵

Many within the groups had taken or still were taking English classes, at Emily Griffith school downtown or elsewhere. Doing so seemed to be a matter of pressing concern.⁶ But the path to learning English through classes or otherwise has not been smooth. For some, having a job itself—an absolute must to pay the rent and feed and clothe their families—in and of itself hindered the learning of English. One refugee noted that "we are all working and so the jobs get in the way of taking English classes"—the rest of the focus group participants nodded in agreement. One refugee who did not attend English classes worked watching "the elderly at home. If there is a place where I could have English classes close to home I would love to go." Some refugees engaged in extreme efforts to take English classes despite their hectic work schedules:

⁵ The issues with interpreter vary between the different language groups. While the Burmese speaking refugees did not appear to have problems getting Burmese interpreters when needed (for example, one of the young women who had a baby since arriving noted that she used a Burmese translator at the birth in the hospital and all went well), that has not been the case for the Karen and Bhutanese Nepali speakers. One of the Karen speakers complained about the need for more adequate interpreters for court: "I have had this problem two times. I told them I was Karen, but they gave me a Korean interpreter." For the refugees from Bhutan, they are sometimes given Nepali interpreters, but "our people don't speak a pure Nepali because most of them were born in Bhutan...Things get lost in translation because of the variation in language."

⁶ Refugees also mentioned improving their English through watching television ("especially from TV with the closed caption being on reading it and hearing it") and from their children (who watch English cartoons), and from newspapers."

I am really busy because of my job and working in Greeley right now, but I am still going to the classes on Boston Street. We must learn English for when we go to the hospital and places like that. It is very important to keep learning it.

Some of these refugees found that they "learn more English in my job than in class, from the other employees." But for others, that did not work out: "in my job I don't get any English practice because when I go to work I have to cover my ears and my face because I am working in a meat packing plant."

Another difficulty encountered in trying to learn English through classes is getting transportation to the classes, many of which appeared to be given far from the neighborhoods where the refugees live. One refugee "went to Emily Griffith for five months, and then they stopped issuing bus passes so he had to stop going." That situation was alleviated when "another class started on Boston Street" closer to home, so he has "begun going there to learn English." A number of refugees mentioned that transportation, and their inability to obtain bus passes or afford a car ("it is difficult to get a car without money, as a refugee you have nothing") hampered their efforts to attend English classes; they wished for more English classes to be taught closer to the neighborhoods in which they lived.

A Community Connector from Bhutan flagged two issues, of equal weight in his view, for Nepali speaking Bhutanese refugees in learning English: first, having a teacher from their own community, so that there are no accent problems and the students feel understood (see footnote 5, above), and second, having a class nearby because of transportation difficulties.

The refugees needed to learn English to get a good job, and had difficulty getting the transportation to get to the English classes that will allow such learning to occur so that a good job can be procured. Transportation to and from jobs was proving to be a challenge for refugees as well. For many, their initial job assignments through the Voluntary Agencies (the Volags, or as the refugees referred to them, the Resettlement Offices or the Agency) were "at a place far away from home" and since new refugees "don't have cars or don't know how to use the bus," there was a problem. They felt that the Agency "tried to get job for them but didn't seem to look at the proximity to home" and that "it is difficult to commute anywhere." Finding a job close to home, or obtaining bus passes or access to cars to make it to jobs far away from home (a car "is the most important thing for getting to work"), were pressing concerns for these refugees.

When asked what was most important to get a job, one refugee said, "English is first then transportation second. If you know English you can have a job close by without a car." In other words, the more English they know, the more likely they are to get a job close to home so that transportation difficulties recede. The less English they know, the more likely they are to need affordable transportation to far-away jobs, the only kind they are

likely to get. The more they need to learn English, the more they need transportation to get to the English classes. Thus, the needs (a) to learn English, (b) to get a job, and (c) to find affordable transportation to both English classes and jobs, are ineluctably intertwined for these refugees.⁷

b. Where Do They Go for Help?

The focus group participants expressed the desire, ultimately, to "stand on their own feet;" "to be independent;" to "depend on yourself so your life can be better." In other words, to become self-sufficient. To do so, they recognized that they needed "to learn English, so I can get a good job," and to "get a good job and work hard;" maybe even "to get a diploma, an education." It is clear that newly arrived refugees could not cope with the challenges language, jobs, and transportation (not to mention others mentioned less frequently by them in the course of the focus groups, such as housing, health care, education, and simpler aspects of day-to-day living such as buying groceries and clothing) on their own, all by themselves. They needed help—people to show them the ropes, to show them where to start. As one refugee poignantly put it: "I tried on my own to find the job but needed the help." Two primary sources of help were referenced by the participants over and over again during the focus group discussions: (1) the Resettlement Office or Agency, and (2) friends.

At this early stage in their acclimation to the US, the refugees' source of help of first resort was the Resettlement Agencies—embodied in their minds by their case manager. "The case manager told me where to find things." "The case manager helped a lot with" finding the kids' schools. "Case manager told me where to go [for a] work training class where I learned how to fill out forms, applications, and answer interview questions." "I learned how to mop and clean and do dishes through the Denver Rescue Mission through the case manager." Most of the refugee participants found their first apartments and got their first jobs through referrals from their case managers. One Karen speaking refugee said insistently, "The [resettlement] office has a responsibility to take care of everything, especially in the first few months of being here." Another noted that "we have to go through the office because it is easier." A third commented, during a discussion of independence and self-sufficiency, "I cannot be self sufficient yet because I need to depend on the office." A Burmese speaking refugee underscored that "the case manager has been great."

Yet some of the refugees who landed their first jobs through their case managers found those jobs to be unsatisfactory: either "I didn't get enough hours," or "it was nights, which was hard for me," or the "Agency tries to look for a job at a place far away from home." Others felt that the Agency had been insufficiently responsive to their concerns—there were "things that the case manager was supposed to do [but] didn't always do it."

⁷ The needs for English and for transportation were both referenced by the participants in other contexts as well: buying groceries, dealing with the children's schools,

Such as transportation." A couple had issues with case manager accessibility, for example:

some of the case managers are not very familiar with us. For example my apartment is sometimes very hot and sometimes very cold, and my kids get sick very often. The case manager says some apartments are like that, and did not come to help or fix it. Wish they were more friendly.

and:

I have a problem with the case manager. We went to meet him in the office, but he said you had to make an appointment so we waited in the waiting room and he never came to see us. My husband lost his job and the case manager never helped and talked to him.

These refugees were also bumping up against the limited time period in which the Resettlement case managers have the responsibility to work with them—seven months. Some (within the Karen speaking focus group) seemed not to understand that they did not remain under the purview the case manager indefinitely; questions were posed such as "If I do not have my job and I quit and am unemployed, can the Resettlement Office help me find another job?" or "Is it the responsibility of the Resettlement Office to help us with all of the problems we have here?" or "Do you know how the government will take care of our kids until they are 18 and then after that?"

Others of the refugees, however, clearly understood the circumscribed scope of the case managers' help, and matter-of-factly rode with it: the "case manager told me where to find things, now it has changed because after one year the case manager doesn't help so now I learn where to buy things from my friends." Indeed, for all three of the refugee focus groups, when they reached the limits of what their case managers could or would do, they tended to turn to their friends within the community for the help that they needed. This was especially true with respect to jobs:

The first time I got a job the Refugee Office found it for me, and I worked in a fruit factory, but then they laid people off....Then I got a job in a bakery, my friends introduced me to it.

When we arrived in the US we have to depend on our case worker to try and find a job for us. After 4 months here the case worker found a job for me, it was nights, which was hard for me so I changed jobs to the meat packaging. The job is better than before...this job was not through the case worker but through friends in my community that work in the plant.

Agency tries to look for job at a place far away from home. New refugees don't have cars, or don't know how to use the bus, so it has to be mostly through friends so they can hopefully find jobs close to the residence.

My first job was working in the hotel through the refugee office, [but] I didn't get enough hours so I started looking for another job. Now I work at the meat packaging plant. I heard about it through a friend.

I spoke with my friends and they helped me get a job in the industry, now I make doors....Yes, the people who helped me find my jobs are from Burma.

Friends in the community were also where the refugees turned to help with things like transportation—"he has friends who don't have a car so he helps them out"—and learning about shopping—"you would ask friends in the community...follow our neighbor or all go together." Reliance on friends, neighbors, and countrymen was important to all of the refugees. In particular, the people from Burma talked often about the importance of people from their communities giving them help:

The people who were here before us who have been here longer—they know how a lot of things work.

People before us help us, and we help people who come after us.

Our neighbors, the people who have lived here the longest from our country, help us the most.

It seemed clear that, at this stage of their experience in the US, the refugees looked to their bonds within their own cultural (ethnic, language) communities to give them the help and support that they still often needed. To that end, it was a help to the refugees to be given housing close to neighbors of the same community from which they came. All of the Community Connectors underscored the importance of this:

Refugees feel more comfortable with people from their own community.

In Aurora they can find a lot of refugees to lean on, but other places like in Littleton they don't have the neighbors or other refugees to depend on. In Aurora the kids have people to play with from their country and they have other people to watch their kids. It is much easier to be among people of your similar culture and background.

It is the most important to be connected with people you can talk to who can show you what to do and where to go. People who can help you be comfortable here in a new place...The people who have cars help those who do not have them or take them to the store. The people here felt such a responsibility to helping each other

and when new Burmese people get here they will help show them the way as they were helped when they got here.

As for interactions with individuals outside of the refugee communities (other than the case managers), very little mention was made in the focus groups, and certainly not in the context of seeking help in coping with the issues of being in a new country. (When asked if they found anyone to help them out outside of their community, one refugee answered "I do not speak English, so no. ...We don't have anyone"). Yet the beginnings of relationships with non-community members were starting to emerge. One refugee noted that "in my job I have friends who are from Burma and Mexico." Another said that she has some American friends at the work place, and she doesn't hesitate to talk to them and if she doesn't understand she asks them to repeat. Some have met people through their kids "all kinds of people, parents, and teachers. I went to family day at the school." Others have been getting to know their employers; some of those interactions have been positive, some not. One said "every employer treats us nicely." Another noted that "there is discrimination in the jobs...the employer has not been raising the pay rate. It looks like the law does not apply to the employer."

By and large, the discussions in the focus groups did not dwell on working or playing with, or getting help from, individuals outside of the refugee communities. One young Burmese speaking woman was originally placed in housing in Littleton with neighbors who were not from the Burmese community. She reflected on that experience:

I lived there for four months. I have since moved in with people who are from Burma. The ones around my apartment were from Nepal and Mexico. I had to walk 20 minutes to meet other Burmese people.

When asked if she would have preferred to have lived by other people from Burma at the outset, she at first said "Yes, it would have been better." Then she thought about it for a moment, and changed her mind: "It's both. You don't learn English if you are only around Burmese people. The place should be more diverse."

The balance between the support, security and help obtained through sticking with one's own countrymen, and the growth and development that can occur through venturing out into the more diverse surrounding world is a tricky one; quite possibly the key to the integration process lies somewhere in striking that balance correctly and encouraging it to evolve over time.

c. What Makes the Refugees Particularly Anxious?

Given the hugely new environment in which these refugees find themselves during their first year, and the struggles with language, employment, and just getting by with everyday life, it is not surprising that they would seem anxious about aspects of their brand new life in the US. For example, they all are, to some degree or another, worried about holding onto their jobs, and the consequences of not being able to: "In the job

place if you commit a few mistakes they will fire and when they fire you the whole family will have to leave the apartment and that is her concern."

What is most intriguing, however, is the level of anxiety and the issues triggering it that bedevil some of the refugee groups as represented by these focus groups, but not others. Two examples that came to light during the focus groups involve, first, safety outside the home, and second, preserving of the refugees' culture of origin.

Safety concerns for the refugees from Bhutan. When the focus group discussions touched upon issues of safety outside the home, the refugees from Bhutan quickly got very engaged. One noted that "there is a security problem; we don't feel when we go outside of our apartment." Another stressed that

This is a very good question. Yes we have security problems because a lot of people work at night and a lot of people don't have cars and they have to walk from the bus stop to their house. People have gotten beaten walking home from work and the bus stop.

This concern with physical safety contrasted markedly with the remarks of the Burmese and Karen speaking refugees, living in more or less the same neighborhoods in Aurora as the Bhutanese participants; issues of safety did not appear to be high on their list of concerns. A Burmese speaker noted that "compared to Malaysia, it feels much safer," while a Karen speaker commented that

I came from Burma refugee camp...and I feel very safe. When I live in my country I was very scared of the soldiers, and here everything is safe and perfect for me.

When the RISE focus group leader pressed both Burmese speaking and the Karen speaking groups as to whether they really felt safe outside their apartments, they essentially shrugged and reiterated that, compared to what they had known before, safety is not a problem for them in the US.

Preservation of culture for the Karen speakers. The Karen speakers brought an unanticipated issue to the table when the discussion turned to their children learning English. When asked whether their children, who are in school and immersed in English, ever translate for them, one participant observed that he "has to ask my kids what it means in English, but the child often forgets how to say it in Karen." Another chimed in that "my child can speak Spanish, Somali and English but does not know how to translate it into my language." Soon the whole group was vigorously expressing their concerns about losing both the ability to communicate with their kids and the language and experiences of their native land:

The kids who live here are very smart, and are learning very quickly, but they cannot speak our language and communicate with us.

I really worry about the people coming from our original country. The kids who live here I want them to learn the language here; it is important, but I need them to speak my language too. Don't want to lose the communication.

I do not worry about my older kids, they are excellent in both languages, but the younger two will likely lose our language.

My opinion is that when they become American their life will be better, but they will lose the hard things that we go through, but they will also become educated and more successful.

Both the Bhutanese and the Burmese speaking refugees are undoubtedly experiencing a similar phenomenon of their children quickly learning English and at the same time, forgetting or becoming unaccustomed to the language and culture of their original homes. One of the Bhutanese did casually mention that it was sad that "people are changing very fast and have already started acting like they don't know their own people," but quickly followed with how that "after having seen our people being Americanized that encouraged her to go to school and after that she became stronger to deal with matters on her own." The prospective cultural loss did not seem to bother her. Other than that, unlike the Karen speakers, the other two groups did not appear to be significantly worried that their language or culture might be slipping away.

The unworried Burmese speakers. In contrast with the Bhutanese and the Karen speaking refugees, the Burmese speaking refugees did not express or exhibit any particular anxieties or concerns overall. They generally seemed more at ease and less nervous than their Bhutanese and Karen speaking counterparts.

Why Do Groups React Differently?

The three groups are currently living in similar, if not the same, neighborhoods, have similar kinds of jobs, and have kids in mostly the same schools. Yet they appeared, from within the focus groups, to have very different worries. One thing that did differ among them, quite substantially, was the environment that they experienced before coming to the US⁸

Most of the Burmese speaking participants were never in refugee camps; they lived in Malaysia as illegal refugees where they had to fend for themselves with little support or protection from any authorities. As their Community Connector pointed out,

⁸ There are, of course, many other differences among the groups of participants that could play a role in the affective differences that they displayed in the focus groups. For example, it was snowing hard outside on the day that the Bhutanese and Karen speakers gathered, whereas the snow had abated by the next day when the Burmese speakers arrived.

The ones who came from Malaysia had to work and find a way to get by on their own so bringing them here they can do the same thing. They know they need a job and they need to work to survive, and they will run into problems and they just need to deal with it. So they take that same look at life here and are just happy for the opportunity.

The Karen speakers, on the other hand, lived in a refugee camp where there was little to do, no place to work, and danger lurking everywhere. Their sustaining of cultural traditions was important to them under such conditions. Their Community Connector observed:

A lot of the people had a very hard time in the camp and dealt with the war and with the problems of authority arresting and beating people for no reason. They don't encounter that here and in comparison to where they came from this is very safe. The unknown for them is the scariest thing.

The potential for getting beaten up on the way home for work would pale for these Karen speakers in comparison to the arbitrariness of police-instigated violence in the camps; but the "unknown" of life without a vibrant, nurturing Karen language and culture could be strange and frightening.

It should also be noted that, in contrast to the Burmese speakers, the Karen speakers were the ones who appeared to be much more bothered by the fact that they no longer could depend on their case managers for support; without this help, as the Community Connector pointed out, "some of them don't know where to go." The Burmese speakers simply acknowledged that, now that the case manager was no longer in their lives, they would rely on friends—and moved on.

The Bhutanese were, like the Karen speakers, in refugee camps for a very long time, over a decade. Whereas the Karen camps in Burma were a restrictive and arbitrarily dangerous place to live, the camps in Nepal for the Bhutanese were much less so. The Bhutanese Community Connector related the history of the camps: that when originally established, they were disorganized and dangerous, with much unrest for a few years, but then "the Nepali government stepped in and brought things under control, and it got a lot better." School became available, especially for children who learned English, and those who got educated could get permits to go outside the camps into Nepal for jobs. Many of the older, uneducated refugees did not do so, and "many did stay in the camps with nothing to do." The camps were boring, but not terribly dangerous:

Once the initial unrest died down, people were free to move in and out of the camps and around the camps. Most tents or huts did not have doors, and if they did they were of bamboo. So, no locked doors, no need for security. Refugees thought that when they came to the US, they would have the same freedom to move around and come and go in safety. And they some got beaten up, robbed.

| *Word of that got around. Everyone had been in the same camp, a very close network. So the fear or worry about security travels fast.*

Two forces appeared to be at work that might underlie the Bhutanese having anxieties about safety here while the Karen and Burmese speakers do not. First, the Bhutanese refugee camp experience involved a degree of freedom of movement and openness, whereas the Karen and Burmese speakers apparently lived in environments of constraint and violence and fear. As a result, the groups may have brought very different expectations of what "safe" would mean once they arrived in the US. And second, the tightness of the social bonding and networking within the Bhutanese refugee community—all having lived together in close, unfettered quarters in the same camp—may have meant that the negative experience of a handful of members of the group quickly became a shared experience of the whole community. Fear, indeed, "travels fast."

Pride in and Happiness for the Kids

Not everything about the refugees' experiences in their first year was an unmitigated struggle. One shared source of happiness and pride enthusiastically expressed in every group arose from their children and their bright prospects. Participants were quick to extol the fact that "my kids have a chance to go to school." One was "very happy that my children got the opportunity to go to school and my child learned English and speaks it very well." Another was pleased that "for me especially when I go to the school the teachers are so friendly even though I have never met them before. They are always friendly and welcoming." A third marveled that "the kids who live here are very smart and are learning very quickly."

While the path for these refugees' children has not been entirely unblemished—the Karen speakers worry about their language and culture being replaced by English and Americanism, there are problems with getting bus passes for transportation to school, and one mother had trouble grasping what it means for her son's teachers say that "he is a slow learner," these refugees are optimistic about their children's potential in the US, where "their life will be better...they will also become educated and more successful."

Let's Get a House!

In each of the focus groups, one of the final questions posed was "what do you hope to accomplish in the coming year?" And in every group, the very first answer spoken by at least one participant was:

| *Own a house!*

| *I hope to buy a house, but it will depend on my income.*

| *If I become able in terms of English I wish to buy a house.*

One of the Community Connectors explained why he thinks home purchase and ownership looms so large as a goal for these refugees:

It is something everyone named as an accomplishment they wanted for the next year. [It is] a better environment for bringing up a child. [There is the] symbolic nature of home ownership—social status. A symbol of becoming an American.

He also noted that many of his countrymen have friends from the camps living in other states who have already bought houses. And that, in his experience, an expressed desire for home ownership is "a clear indication that they already have two cars."

Conclusion

The RISE study was initiated because the Colorado Refugee Service Program (CRSP) recognized the need to take a more holistic approach to understanding refugees' process of resettlement and integration into the receiving community, rather than to focus solely on refugees' progress towards economic self-sufficiency, which is what was previously done. An integration framework developed by Ager and Strang (2004)⁹ was used to guide the work of the RISE study. Their Framework of integration involves (1) achievement of public outcomes in the domains of employment, housing, education, and health, (2) the building of social networks both within and outside of one's community, and (3) the acquisition of linguistic competence and cultural knowledge and safety and stability (which are facilitators to making social connections and to ultimately achieving the desired public outcomes). Despite the fact we had a conceptual framework of integration that informed the development of the RISE survey, we recognized the importance of conducting focus groups that attempted to obtain an unbiased, clearer, and more nuanced sense of the first-year experiences of newly arrived refugees into Colorado without the constraints of a framework.

Not too surprisingly, many of the themes that emerged from the focus groups aligned with the Ager and Strang integration framework (see Table 3.1). The challenges encountered and discussed by the focus group respondents fit into three categories. The first was the interconnected challenges of language, employment, and transportation; two of which are included in the Ager and Strang framework (language and employment). Like Ager and Strang, the refugees in the focus groups discussed the fact that English language skills was a facilitator to finding employment. They took this a step further, however, and discussed transportation as a facilitating barrier to both taking language classes and to finding employment. Of the three variables, two (language and employment) are captured by the RISE survey.

The second quandary, focus group participants discussed related to ways of obtaining help from both within and outside the refugee community to grapple with the challenges

⁹ Ager, A. & Strang, A. (2004). *Indicators of integration: Final Report*, Home Office Development and Practice Reports, London.

mentioned above (language, employment and transportation). These relate to what Ager and Strang called “social bonding” (involvement with people, information sources, and events from the refugee’s culture, ethnic group, language or religion) and “social bridging” (involvement with people, information sources, and events from a culture, ethnic group, language or religion different from the refugee’s). Ager and Strang recognized that social connections was a link to the desired outcomes of education, employment, housing and health. Among focus group respondents, social bonding emerged more often as an avenue of assistance than social bridging, no doubt influenced by language ability and employment.

The third challenge that emerged in the focus group discussion had to do with free-floating anxieties about certain conditions in the US that were not part of the refugee camp environments. One of those concerns was about safety, which is defined as a facilitator in the Ager and Strang framework, which is captured on the RISE survey. This was uniquely expressed by the Bhutanese respondents. Interestingly, in an analysis of Baseline data, Bhutanese as a group reported feeling significantly less safe outside the home than Burmese (the only other group for which sufficient data existed to make a comparison). Only 43% of Bhutanese respondents reported feeling safe outside their homes, compared to 73% of Burmese. The issue bears closer scrutiny. Feeling safe outside the home is rated low across the entire sample (56.3% at Baseline), and is one of the few that dropped for respondents overall in 1 Year Follow-Up (44.3%).

Housing, which is a marker of achievement, was discussed both in the terms of government aid and the desire to ultimately own a home. The latter being “A symbol of...being American”. Rights and Citizenship, which Ager and Strang, consider the “foundation” to their framework were discussed when refugees’ initial impressions of the US were discussed. A few of the refugees commented upon their surprise at how this country treats the very diverse elements of its population more or less equally, and according to *the rule of law*. One refugee noted he “was surprised to see the law of this country...that everyone is controlled by the law and the system and has never seen that anywhere else, and following the system, streamlined.”

Domains in the Ager and Strang framework that were not addressed in the focus group discussions were education (except as a means towards employment) and health, two “means and markers” (desired outcomes). It could be that these are more distal outcomes than the immediate need to acquire English and employment and meeting people along the way that can help them to do both.

Themes that emerged from the focus group sessions that are not part of the Ager and Strang framework primarily related to the participants’ children, which is beyond the scope of the framework. One theme related to the worry about the children quickly learning English and at the same time, forgetting or becoming unaccustomed to the language and culture of their original homes. This theme, however, was balanced with

the theme of pride in and happiness for the children because of the opportunities afforded to citizens of the US

Table 3.1. Relationship between RISE Survey Domains and Focus Group Themes

Pathways to Integration/RISE Survey Domains	Focus Group Themes and Categories
Employment	Struggles Along the Way: Employment
Education	(Struggles Along the Way)
Health Care	<i>Not addressed</i>
Housing	Arrival: Government aid; Let's Get a House
Social Bonding	Struggles Along the Way: Where do they go for help?
Social Bridging	Struggles Along the Way: Where do they go for help?
Language and Cultural Knowledge	Struggles Along the Way: Language
Safety and Stability	Struggles Along the Way: What Makes the Refugees Particularly Anxious?: Safety Concerns for the Refugees from Bhutan
Rights and Citizenship	Arrival (initial observations)

IV. Cognitive Interviews: Clarifying Targeted Survey Items

Background

The original idea for the RISE Validation Study (RVS) emerged as a result of a meeting on Friday, February 17, 2012 with QED researchers, Paul Stein and Joe Wismann-Horther, in which specific RISE survey items raised questions in Mr. Stein's and Mr. Wismann-Horther's minds about how respondents were understanding the survey questions. For example, half of respondents reported that they had not had a medical exam in the last year, when in fact all refugees undergo a physical and mental exam upon entry to the US. The fact that half of respondents did not indicate as much was, therefore, surprising. Certain other items also raised questions. Regarding safety, Mr. Stein mentioned that there is a United Nations goal to provide safety and protection for refugees, and aligning the safety items in the survey with the U.N. definition could strengthen the value of the survey to professionals and in refugee services community.

The RVS rolled out in two phases: 1) 35 core survey items were back translated (this study was described in the Year 2 Report); and 2) cognitive interviews with refugees focusing on a subset of core and supplemental survey items were conducted. In spring 2012, QED submitted thirty-five items critical for determining domain scores to The Spring Institute for back translation. It was determined that the denotation of survey items is good—the items translate accurately into the target languages. However, questions still remained regarding how refugees interpret various items based on their culture and previous life experiences. In January, 2013, Mr. Stein submitted detailed questions and concerns related to these interpretation issues about many items in the Year 1 Follow-Up survey. In response, QED developed and implemented the second phase of the RVS, cognitive interviews, to explore these issues, with the intention of further strengthening the RISE evaluation instrument. This report describes the goals, research questions, methods and results of the second phase of the RVS.

Goals & Research Questions

Goals

Phase II of the RVS had two goals:

- 1) Clarify target survey items to ensure that respondents provide information as intended; and
- 2) Increase the credibility and usability of the RISE evaluation instrument during the current study and for refugee service professionals in the future.

Research Questions

QED sought to determine whether survey items are interpreted as QED researchers intended, so that refugees' responses provided relevant and meaningful information. QED explored the following research questions:

- 1) How do refugees understand particular items on the RISE survey?
 - 1a) What do respondents believe these items are asking?
 - 1b) What do certain words and phrases mean to respondents?
- 2) In what ways can items be reframed to elicit the information intended?

Method

The method employed was a verbal probing technique called a cognitive interview (Willis, 1999¹⁰). This method is usually done one-on-one, but it has also been employed with a small group of people (2-4 people). In the case of the RVS, the cognitive interviews were conducted by a QED researcher, with the assistance of an interpreter and with 1-2 refugees at a time. It should be noted that the interpreter was also used as a "key informant" throughout the cognitive interviews because of his/her familiarity with the refugees' language and culture, as well as the RISE survey items.

Participants

Participants were a convenience sample of refugees who had been in the US for 90-120 days at the time the cognitive interviews were conducted. Language groups were chosen because of their prevalence in the RISE sample population to date (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Language groups, proportion in RISE sample, minimum interview sample per group.

<i>Language</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>% Representation in RISE data to date</i>	<i># Refugee Participants interviewed</i>
Nepali	Bhutan	60%	6
Burmese	Burma	14%	2
Karen	Burma	15%	1

Item Selection

Items to be probed were identified in two ways. First, Mr. Stein carefully reviewed the RISE survey, identifying items that appeared problematic. Second, RISE researchers identified items with anomalous responses on Baseline data that might have been caused by confusion about the question being asked. The RISE survey comprises two types of

¹⁰ Willis, Gordon B. (1999). Cognitive interviewing: A 'how-to' guide. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Statistical Association. Alexandria, VA: Research Triangle Institute. Also see, Willis, G., DeMaio, T., & Harris-Kojetin, B. (1999). Is the Bandwagon Headed to the Methodological Promised Land? Evaluation of the Validity of Cognitive Interviewing Techniques. In M. Sirken, D. Herrmann, S. Schechter, N. Schwarz, J. Tanur, & R. Tourangeau (Eds.), *Cognition and Survey Research*. New York: Wiley.

questions: 1) core questions that contribute to a score within each domain; and 2) supplemental questions that are intended to clarify issues within domains, but are not intended to contribute to an overall rating score in a domain. Twelve domain score items were identified for the cognitive interviews and four supplemental items.

Procedure

Cognitive interviews were scheduled with the help of the Community Connectors, who were interpreters. The cognitive interviews took place in the month of April 2013 in the community use room at an apartment building, in which many of the refugees lived, or in a close by apartment of an interpreter (when the community use room was unavailable). The community use room was a large, but cozy, room with a table, couch, chairs, fireplace and kitchen. The cognitive interviews were conducted at the large table in the center of the room. The cognitive interviews at the interpreter's apartment were conducted in the living room of the apartment. The living room was relatively small, but featured a large rug, two couches with an end table in between, a China hutch, a TV stand with a TV and some children's toys (since the interpreter had a preschool-aged son). The apartment smelled distinctively of spices (after a round of interviews one day, the interpreter's wife offered members of the research team "Indian tea", which was undoubtedly was one source of the spice smell.

For each selected item, the following protocol was generally followed (see Appendix C for the cognitive interview script and questions).

- 1) The interpreter read the question and asked the participant to respond to the question.
- 2) Each refugee was then asked what he or she believed was being asked by the question. In some cases, the QED researcher asked refugees to define specific terms or phrases in the question.
- 3) After the interpreter related refugees' responses, the QED researcher may have asked the interpreter, as well as refugee(s), for clarification, using *spontaneous probes*.
- 4) QED then explained (through the help of the interpreter), the intention behind the question, which the interpreter would relay to refugees. Once refugees understood the intention, they were asked how questions might have been phrased to more clearly/adequately reflect the intention.

Interviews lasted approximately one hour. Food and beverages were provided during each cognitive interview. Logistics of the interviews were largely driven by participant selection, but attempts were made to balance for gender (and age in some cases) within each language group. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed.

Results

Table 4.2 summarizes the suggested changes that resulted from the cognitive interviews for each survey item and domain.

Limitations

Obviously, the necessary limitation of working through an interpreter raises the possibility of error and continued misinterpretation. However, the researchers feel that the process used conformed with conventional implementation of the method and overall increased the correspondence between the intention underlying survey items and refugees' comprehension of them.

Conclusions

The goals of the RVS were to clarify target survey items and to increase the credibility and usability of the RISE evaluation instrument during the current study and for refugee service professionals in the future by understanding how items could be re-worded to elicit the intended information. Overall, results suggest that the current survey has good validity in that, for the most part, respondents were (and are) interpreting most of the items in ways that were intended. Some survey items were reworded or eliminated, but in most cases, alterations of sampled items were minor. This study addressed items that were of most concern to the administration of the Colorado Refugee Services Program (CRSP) and to the study researchers. While some items that were not sampled may still be somewhat confusing, the researchers do not feel that further follow up is warranted, since core items are largely stable and supplemental items, though useful, are not integral to survey outcome scores.

Table 4.2. Results of cognitive interviews by questions.

Survey Domain	Survey Item	Suggested Changes	Illustrative Quote/Interview Exchange
Employment/ Economic Self-Sufficiency	11. Is your <u>family's</u> monthly income sufficient to cover rent, food, and other expenses necessary for daily living? (Core)	N/A – None	
Education/ Training	12. Have you obtained a license or certificate that qualifies you for a specific kind of job in the United States? (Core)	Remove “license or” because most respondents associated the word “license” with a “driver’s license” and not a job certificate.	“Certificate is something she [respondent] gets when she goes thru some kind of training but understands license as something like a driver’s license. They are different.”
	13. Have you taken job-training or job-readiness classes or programs in this country (such as Cultural Orientation, English as a Second Language, Job Readiness, Work Intensive Skills Camp, Pathways, WorkWise, Community Work Experience Programs)? (Core)	Remove “Cultural Orientation, English as a Second Language” because respondents did not view these two classes as “job-readiness classes”	“They [respondents] have never attended job training, but they have attended ESL classes and cultural orientation classes. They would say ‘yes’ to this question because of these classes.”
	21. Are you currently enrolled in a degree program? (Core)	Change “degree program” to “community college or college (ex. B.A., Associates)” because “degree program” appeared to be rather nebulous (not specific enough)	<p>Researcher: “What does that [the question] mean to you?”</p> <p>Interpreter: “She [respondent] did not understand, she has a sense of what it means but could not explain it”</p> <p>Researcher: “So this question is not very clear. Is there another word that you think of that we could use to make it clearer? “</p> <p>Interpreter: “Specify the degree maybe would give them a better idea of what they mean.”</p>

Survey Domain	Survey Item	Suggested Changes	Illustrative Quote/Interview Exchange
	34. Have you volunteered your time at one of your children's schools? (Core)	N/A – None; respondents understood the word “volunteered”	
Health/Physical Well-Being	38. Have you visited a doctor for a routine physical exam within the past year? (Core)	N/A – None; some of the respondents included the initial screening when they were thinking of their baseline survey and others did not; but this is a moot point for the follow-up surveys	
Housing	N/A - None	N/A – None	
Social Bonding	47. Do you spend time interacting with people other than your family who share your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion? (Core)	Change “other than your family” to “who are not related to you”	<p>Interpreter: “Yes, she spends her time with someone other than a family member who shares a common cultural, language, ethnic group etc. To her that means there is something that makes them all the same.”</p> <p>Researcher: “Who is she thinking about when she answers yes to that question?”</p> <p>Interpreter: “Her parents and friends who live elsewhere.”</p> <p>Researcher:” So when she thinks of family she only thinks of her husband and her kids who live with her?”</p> <p>Interpreter: “She thinks of both.”</p> <p>Researcher: “Is it clearer to say people who are of the same culture, but are not related to you?”</p>

Survey Domain	Survey Item	Suggested Changes	Illustrative Quote/Interview Exchange
			Interpreter: "That would be more clear."
Social Bridging	52. Do you spend time interacting with people of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different than your own? (Core)	N/A – None	
Language & Cultural Knowledge	58. Which of the following best describes your English skill? (Core)	For data analysis purposes, need to collapse "I speak a little English" and "I can speak English when shopping and doing other types of business". This suggested change is based off researchers' observations of the discrepancy between respondents' level of English language proficiency (observed in the cognitive interview process) and their selected response option to this question. The researchers noted that those with the highest level of English language proficiency often endorsed the lowest level of English language proficiency response option on the survey and vice-versa (those with the lowest mastery of English language endorsed a higher level on the survey response options)	
	59. Do you regularly speak with people whose native language is English? (Core)	N/A – None	
Safety and Stability	70. Do you feel safe when you are at home? (Core)	N/A – None	
	74. Do you trust your neighbors? (Supplemental)	Remove question from survey; not a good question; most people interpreted the meaning of "neighbor" differently (e.g., the people who live in the apartment on either side of mine, the people on my apartment building floor, all of the people in my apartment building) and they questioned	"He [respondent] said his neighbor is on either side of his apartment. He said he wouldn't trust his neighbors with his keys."

Survey Domain	Survey Item	Suggested Changes	Illustrative Quote/Interview Exchange
		“trust with what?...my kids, the keys to my apartment?”	<p>Interpreter: She said if it is a Nepali neighbor she would trust them to even pick up their children or watch them.</p> <p>Researcher: If just asking the question in general what would you say?</p> <p>Interpreter: She said no. That question is difficult to answer.</p>
	76. In the past year, have you experienced racial, cultural, or religious discrimination...? (Core)	N/A – None	
Civic Engagement	77. Have you participated in meetings of community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies in the past year? (Supplemental)	Respondents understood the general meaning of the item, but not the specific meaning of “community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies”	<p>Researcher: “Is this question difficult to answer?”</p> <p>Interpreter: “Yes, there are so many organizations to look at and mention. And not necessarily sure what to point out.”</p>
	79. Have you volunteered your time for community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies in the past year? (Supplemental)	Respondents understood the term “volunteer” and the general meaning of the item, but again, not the specific meaning of “community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies”	
	82. Do you have a valid driver’s license from Colorado or another US state? (Supplemental)	Change “valid” to “legal”	“Both of them [respondents] answered ‘no’. Both of them say this question is difficult to answer because of the word valid being attached to this description. In Nepali valid means anything that is recognized by the government and can be enforced legally. It allows

Survey Domain	Survey Item	Suggested Changes	Illustrative Quote/Interview Exchange
			someone to drive, but not necessarily legally. Removing the word valid and maybe putting the word legal would make it less confusing.”

V. RISE Survey Refinements

As a result of feedback from the survey-givers, Volag case managers, interpreters and Community Connectors, and others serving the refugee communities, certain refinements were made to the 1 Year Follow-Up Survey instrument prior to the beginning of its administration in June of 2012. Those changes were described in the Year 2 Report.

During the current reporting period, further refinements were made to the survey prior to commencement of administration of the 2 year Follow-Up Survey. Those refinements arose from two main data sources: the Focus Groups (discussed in Part IV above) and the Cognitive Interviews (discussed in Part IV above).

The Focus Group data highlighted at least one issue not covered in the Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up Surveys about which the RISE team felt survey data would be helpful. Participants in all three Focus Groups drew attention to the relationship between transportation difficulties (and the felt need to have use of an automobile), on the one hand, and their experience in a number of domains (*e.g.*, education, language and culture, employment), on the other. Accordingly, three questions about transportation were added to the 2 Year Follow-Up Survey:

- Do you own a car or use someone else's?
- Within the past year, have transportation problems been a barrier in taking English classes?
- Within the past year, have transportation problems been a barrier in finding or keeping a job?

It also became clear in the Focus Groups that, for the item "Why are you currently not employed?"—where participants are asked to check all responses on a provided list that apply—two very real reasons for non-employment had not been included on that list: being "too old" or "in school." Those two responses were added to the list.

Finally, the importance of buying and owning a home loomed large for the focus group participants as an indication of their acclimating to the US, and the Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up Survey did not provide an opportunity for refugees to indicate home ownership in response to the item inquiring as to their housing situation; that item now allows a refugee to check off that "I own a house or a condo."

The Cognitive Interview results suggested a number of changes in the wording of particular survey items in five different domains (Education/Training, Social Bonding, Language & Cultural Knowledge, Safety and Stability, and Civic Engagement). Among the suggested changes that have been incorporated into the 2 Year Follow-Up Survey Instrument are:

- removal of the term "license" from a question about acquisition of job certification, because of the confusion with "driver's licenses"

- removal of the term "degree program" and replacing it with "community college or college" because participants did not understand the term
- replacing the term "other than your family" with "who are not related to you" in the Social Bonding questions about time spent with others, due to confusion about what "family" meant in this context
- removal of the item "do you trust your neighbors?" due to confusion as to what "trust" and what "neighbors" mean.

The current, RISE 2 Year Follow-Up survey is included in Appendix D. It is hoped that changes made will strengthen the validity of the survey and the reliability of the results.

VI. Summary of Survey Analyses: Baseline vs. 1 Year Follow-Up

The second cycle of survey administration was conducted from August 2012 through July 2013. We refer to this cycle as the 1 Year Follow-Up (1YR+). A total of 367 respondents took the survey this year, compared to a total of 467 at Baseline, reflecting a refugee retention rate in the study of 78.6%.¹¹

Attrition was not equal among refugee groups. Of those who have left the study, 61.5% were from Burma, and 22.9% were Bhutanese. Attrition among Iraqis (10.1%) and Somalis (5.5%) was minimal. The disproportionate attrition among the Burmese creates a limitation in the study.

Item Comparisons with Domains: Baseline vs. 1 Year Follow-Up

Comparisons of some demographic data from Baseline to 1Yr+ are shown in Table 6.1. Tables 6.2 (a-j) show comparisons from Baseline to 1YR+ on RISE survey items used to create domain level scores.

¹¹ Last year we reported a Baseline sample of 494. As we prepared longitudinal analyses, however, we discovered that we had included respondents in Baseline data that had refused to take the survey or for whom there was no time to take the survey. We also discovered that some names had been double entered, even though only one survey was completed. We have cleaned up the database and instituted a system by which to protect against single respondent being entered twice.

Table 6.1 Descriptive Statistics (Frequencies, Means, and(Standard Deviations) for Respondents at Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up

Demographic Variable	Baseline ^a % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n=367)
Country of Origin		
Bhutan	57.9	68.8
Burma	33.4	24.7
Iraq	3.9	3.4
Somalia	4.8	3.1
Gender (Male)	49.2	48.8
Age	33.5 (12.8) ^b	34.16 (13.1) ^b
Marital Status		
Married	61.1	68.7
Divorced	1.3	0.5
Separated	2.4	1.4
Widowed	3.9	4.1
Single/Never Married	30.9	25.0
Other	0.4	0.3
Received Certification/Training in Home Country	26.1	*
Level of Education from Home Country		
Primary (0-8 years)	50.7	*
Secondary (9-12 years)	34.2	*
2-year college or vocational education/training (13-14 years)	5.5	*
4-year college degree 15-16 years)	3.4	*
Graduate school (> 16 years)	1.8	*
Other	4.3	*
Can Read in Native Language	46.2	*
Can Write in Native Language	46.8	*

^aThe baseline survey was completed approximately 90 days after arrival to Denver

^bMean (Standard Deviation)

* data are the same at Baseline and subsequent years

Table 6.2a. Domain 1. Employment & Economic Self-Sufficiency

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Currently Employed	17.2	54.4
Number of Full-Time Jobs ^a		
0	33.8	16.0
1	64.9	83.0
2	1.3	0.5
> 2	0.0	0.5
Number of Hours/Week Employed ^a		
1-9	3.8	2.5
10-19	7.7	2.5
20-29	25.6	12.3
30-39	53.8	74.9
40-49	6.4	6.9
> 50	2.6	1.0
Receives Retirement Benefits Through Job ^a	4.7	12.0
^a Of those respondents who are employed		
Number of Jobs in the US in Past Year		
0	85.8	38.8
1	14.0	53.3
2 or 3	0.2	7.9
4 or more	0.0	0.0
Family's Average Monthly Net Income		
\$0	10.4	27.8
\$1 - 399	6.3	1.9
\$400 - 699	15.3	10.5
\$700 - 999	22.6	13.5
\$1,000 - 1,299	21.5	18.7
\$1,300 - 1,599	11.4	12.9
\$1,600 – 1,899	7.1	9.9
\$1,900 – 2,199	1.9	3.0
\$2,200 – 2,499	3.5	1.1
More than \$2,500/month	0.0	0.6

We are pleased to see the proportion of those employed rise from 17% at Baseline to over 50% a year later. The proportion of refugees who work 30-39 hours per week has increased, yet over 90% of respondents are employed less than 40 hours. We are not sure how to make sense of the fact that, although more refugees report having jobs and working more hours, the proportion of refugees who report \$0 of family income has almost tripled, from 10.4% at Baseline to 27.8% at 1YR+.

Table 6.2b. Domain 2. Education/Training

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
In The Past Year in the U.S.....		
obtained a work-related license or certificate	17.5	4.6
taken job-training/job-readiness classes/programs	28.3	53.4
Taken an English language class	66.8	62.7
Taken other kinds of classes	13.3	4.1
Is Currently Enrolled in a Degree Program	1.3	5.4
Level of Degree Program ^a		
High School Diploma/GED	100.0	85.0
Associates degree	0.0	10.0
Bachelor's degree	0.0	5.0
Master's degree or above	0.0	0.0

^aOf those respondents who were enrolled in a degree program

One year after Baseline, fewer refugees are taking English language classes. Focus groups suggest this could be related to the fact that jobs limit refugees' ability to take classes. At 1YR+, the proportion of refugees who have taken job training has almost doubled, from 28.3% to 53.4%. The proportion of those enrolled in degree programs has risen from 1.3% to 5.4%, with a 15% of those enrolled in higher education.

Table 6.2c. Domain 3. Children's Education

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Has Visited with at Least One of Your Children's Teachers about His/Her Performance or Progress in School	29.1	59.2
Has Volunteered Time at Children's School	1.6	2.7
Has Attended a Social, Sporting, Cultural, Educational Activity or Event <i>at</i> Children's School	7.2	26.5
Has Attended a Social, Sporting, Cultural, Educational Activity or Event <i>Outside</i> Children's School	4.4	21.2
At Least One Child Has at Least One Good Friend at School Who is Not from Home Country or Culture	31.1	39.3

QED hypothesized that having children would facilitate integration. These data reflect much more integration activity compared to Baseline. Originally, the RISE Team hypothesized that having school aged children would promote integration activity. Clearly, we find increases in integration activity from Baseline to 1YR+; however, in the correlations below (see table 6.5), Children's Education has no to low correlations with other integration domains.

Table 6.2d. Domain 4. Health & Physical Well-Being

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Have you visited a doctor for a routine physical exam w/in the past year? Y	71.6	87.5
Do you know how to make and appt. to see a doc? Y	32.4	55.3
Do you have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance, prepaid plans such as HMO's (like Kaiser), or government plans such as Medicaid? Y	96.9	49.7
Have you visited a dentist or dental clinic for a routine exam within the past year? Y	17.8	11.4

Although more refugees report knowing how to make an appointment to see a doctor compared to Baseline, we note a precipitous drop in the proportion of refugees who access health and dental care and those with health and dental coverage. (The increased proportion of those reporting having seen a doctor may be an artifact of confusion about the question at Baseline or maybe because of the services provided to refugees in the first 3 months after arrival, the difference reflects a true change in receipt of health care services.)

Table 6.2e. Domain 5. Housing

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
What is your housing situation?		
I am currently homeless	0.2	0.3
I live in a homeless shelter/transitional housing	0.4	0.0
I rotate between homes of friends and family	0.7	3.5
I live in my own home (i.e. rooms, apt, condo)	98.7	96.2
How many bedrooms are in the place where you live?		
1	44.1	38.6
2	48.6	51.9
3	6.8	6.2
3+	--	3.2
Do you get help from the government to pay your rent or housing costs? Y	79.0	13.3

Predictably, refugees report decreased assistance from the government for housing. We observe a five-fold increase in the proportion that rotate between homes and family.

Table 6.2f. Domain 6. Social Bonding

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Do you spend time with people who share your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion? Y	78.7	90.3
Do you access information about your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion? Y	57.8	76.6
Since coming to Denver, have you attended a celebration or event of your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion(i.e., march, parade, or festival)	30.8	86.4

We observe a consistent pattern of increased social bonding, which might not be surprising, considering that Baseline data were collected only three months after arrival.

Table 6.2g. Domain 7. Social Bridging

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Do you spend time with people of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different from your own?	48.0	60.0
Do you access information about cultures, ethnic groups, languages, or religions different from your own?	29.5	55.7
Since coming to Denver, have you attended a celebration or event of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different than your own (i.e., march, parade, festival)?	13.1	61.4

We note huge increases in social bridging. However, 40-45% of refugees do not report engaging in social bridging activities at 1YR+.

Table 6.2h. Domain 8. Language and Cultural Knowledge

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Which of the following best describes your English skills?		
I cannot speak English.	32.1	22.7
I can speak English when shopping or doing other types of business.	54.8	36.0
I can speak English in most social and work situations.	6.3	35.9
I am fluent in English.	6.7	5.4
Do you regularly speak with people whose first language is English?	43.6	56.8
Do you celebrate any American Holidays?	34.8	65.2
Correctly identified location of the White House & Congress	33.3	51.4

We note increases in refugees' English skills and understanding of American culture.

Table 6.2i. Domain 9. Safety & Stability

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Do you feel safe when you are at home?	90.3	95.1
Do you feel safe when you are outside the home?	56.3	44.3
Would you call the fire department to report a fire?	86.7	91.7
Since coming to Denver, have you been the victim of a crime, such as assault, robbery, or vandalism?	1.3	3.8
Since coming to Denver, have you experienced racial, cultural, or religious discrimination?		
Never	98.2	98.1
Sometimes	1.6	1.6
Regularly	0.2	0.3

Respondents report feeling less safe at home compared to Baseline. More have been victims of assault, robbery, or vandalism.

Table 6.2j. Domain 10. Civic Engagement

Variable	Baseline % (n = 467)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 367)
Have you participated in meetings of community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies in the past year?	3.7	8.5
Have you volunteered your time for community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies since in the past year?	2.3	5.5
Have you advocated or spoken up for your own or your family's rights in public and/or before a government agency, body, or office in the past year?	1.1	1.4
Have you applied for a green card?	.9	93.2
Do you wish to become a citizen of the United States?	98.6	99.4

Ager and Strang identify Civic Engagement as *foundational* to refugee integration. There are notable increases in these items at 1YR+. QED will explore connections between this domain and Overall Integration.

Domain-Level Responses

The RISE survey is designed to describe refugee integration on two levels. First, we seek to describe integration based on patterns of responses within each of the ten survey domains that comprise the survey. Each domain contains several items, some of which are intended to contribute to a domain-level score, and others of which provide supplementary information. Of those items that are pooled to yield a domain score, we examine their internal consistency (reliability) using *Cronbach's alpha*, a statistical test that assesses the extent to which different items within a domain are related. Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0-1. The higher the number, the more related the items are. Domain reliability ratings are shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Cronbach alpha ratings for RISE survey domains

Domain (number of items)	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	
	Baseline	1 Year Follow-Up
1. Employment & Self-Sufficiency (5)	.08	.37
2. Education & Training (3)	.40	.11
3. Children's Education (6)	.51	.52
4. Health & Physical Well-Being (4)	.40	.45
5. Housing (1)	NA†	NA†
6. Social Bonding (3)	.59	.76
7. Social Bridging (3)	.60	.80
8. Language & Cultural Knowledge (9)	.77	.85
9. Safety & Stability (6)	.29	.21
10. Civic Engagement (4)	.35	.35

† This statistics requires 2 or more items in a scale; Housing only comprises one item.

What is Table 6.3 telling us? We have more confidence in the measurement of the underlying domain that has a reliability of $\alpha=.70$ or higher. In 1YR+, only 3 domains meet this criterion: Social Bonding, Social Bridging, and Language & Cultural Knowledge. Some domains may not evidence increases in Cronbach's alpha, if the items within them are found not to relate to one another. In such cases, the number of "yes" responses becomes like a count—the more "yes" responses, the more points earned.

Table 6.4 Comparing Domain Scores at Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up

Domain	Baseline Mean (SD)	1 Year Follow-Up Mean (SD)	Change over Time: F-Statistic	Range min/max
Employment and Economic Self-Sufficiency	1.1(2.0)	3.2(2.9)	177.2***	0-10
Education and Training	0.4(0.7)	0.6(0.6)	5.4*	0-3
Child(ren)'s Education	0.4(0.8)	0.4(1.0)	1.3	0-5
Health and Well-Being	2.2(1.1)	1.8(1.0)	29.4***	0-4
Housing†	0.19	0.87	***	0-1
Social Bonding	1.5(1.1)	2.5(0.9)	204.1***	0-3
Social Bridging	0.8(1.0)	1.7(1.3)	171.1***	0-3
Language and Cultural Knowledge	4.6(3.3)	6.4(3.9)	142.6***	0-12
Safety and Stability	3.3(1.2)	3.8(0.6)	48.1***	0-4
Civic Engagement	0.1(0.4)	1.4(0.7)	966.1***	0-4
Overall Integration	14.6(6.9)	22.4(8.1)	435.1***	0-53

* $p < 0.5$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

†One item, expressed as a proportion. No standard deviation; McNemar statistical test used.

In the meantime, we can cautiously examine changes across integration domains over time (see Table 6.4, above). From Baseline to 1YR+, changes were significant in all domains, except for Child’s Education. Health and Physical Well-Being, indicators for which focus on refugees’ ability to interface with medical professionals, was the only domain to show a decrease from Baseline to 1 Year Follow-Up. Comparisons were made using the F-Statistic. As a guide, when the F-Statistic reaches 15, the difference is usually considered pretty big. Many of our F-Statistics are orders of magnitude higher than this. The magnitude of the statistically significant differences suggests robustness of the findings, even though Cronbach alpha’s are low. The pattern of these findings suggest that refugees’ domain scores are going up over time. Since we believe that higher scores reflect increased integration, this is a terrific sign.

Relationships between domains are consistent with Ager & Strang’s theory, as shown in table 6.5, below.¹² Ager and Strang hypothesize interrelatedness among integration variables. If RISE domains indeed reflect critical pathways towards integration, we would expect mild to strong inter-correlations among many or most domains. We see such relationships at 1 Year Follow-Up, where they were not apparent at Baseline.

Table 6.5. Correlations between Domains at Year 1 Follow-Up

Domain	Employ- ment	Educ/ Train	Child Educ	Health	Housing	Social Bonding	Social Bridging	Lang & Cult Know	Safety	Civ Eng
Employment	1									
Educ/Train	.25***	1								
Child Educ	-.13*	-.01	1							
Health	-.29***	-.17***	.10*	1						
Housing	.24***	.04	-.23***	-.19***	1					
Soc. Bonding	.20***	.27***	-.08	-.12*	.19***	1				
Soc. Bridging	.50***	.47***	-.09	-.32***	.26***	.50***	1			
Lang & Cult Knowledge	.54***	.51***	-.03	-.36***	.25***	.37***	.79***	1		
Safety	.15**	.20***	-.02	-.08	.13*	.37***	.37***	.31***	1	
Civic Eng	.36***	.22***	-.09	-.09	.09	.05	.31***	.45***	.15**	1

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Some exceptions are evident. Overall, Children’s Education is not correlated with other domains; however, these data include adults who do not have children living with them. We have not yet assessed the effect of having children living at home on integration just among those who have children. Health and Physical Well-Being is negatively correlated with all but one domain, because health variables declined over the year while others increased. The pattern of results for Safety & Stability bear more scrutiny. While minimally correlated with other variables, this domain is moderately correlated to Social Bonding, Social Bridging, and Language and Cultural Knowledge—which are emerging as important domains related to

¹² Ager, A. & Strang, A. (2004). *Indicators of integration: Final Report*, Home Office Development and Practice Reports, London.

integration. Future analyses and qualitative inquiry can help us understand that relationship. Several other relationships might be explored. For now, it is most notable that the large number of statistically significant relationships and a credible pattern of results between domains argue for the integrity of the domain scores.

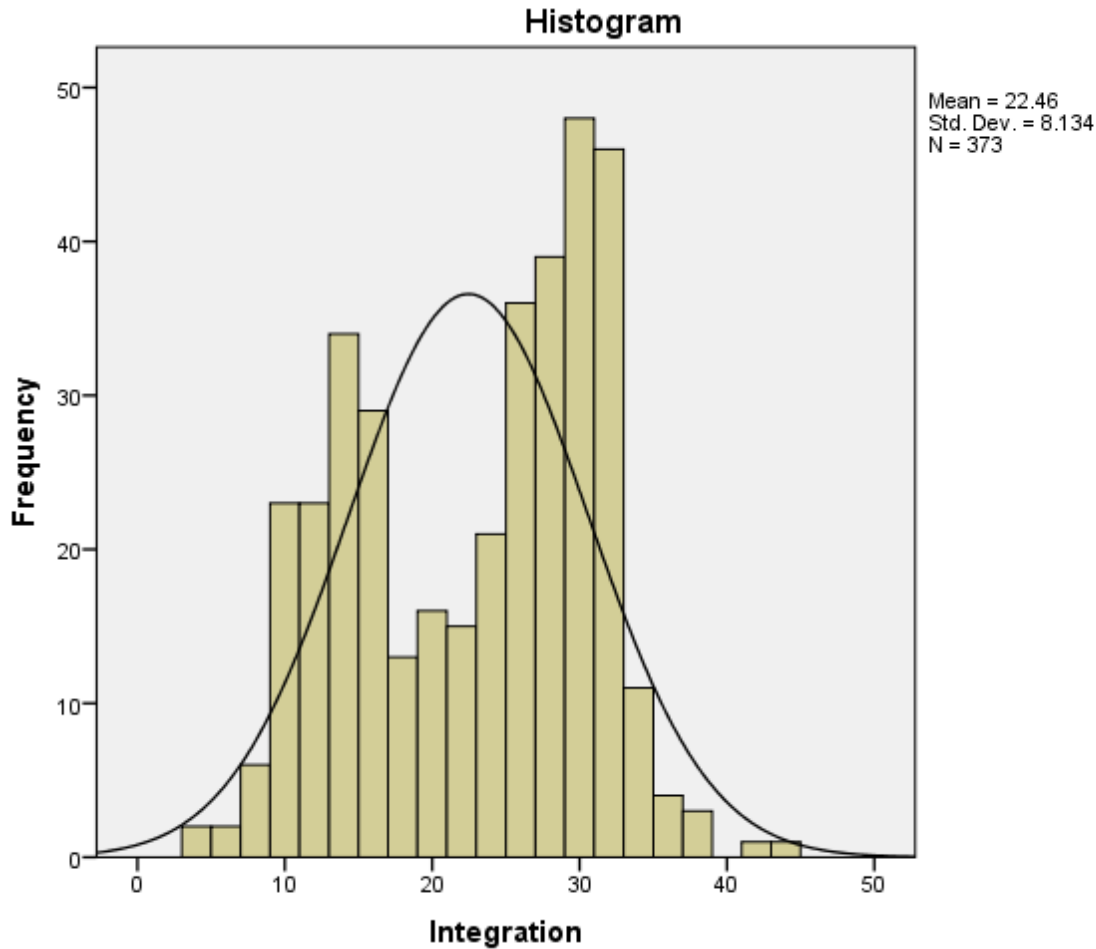
Assessing Overall Integration

The second way that the RISE survey seeks to describe integration is by aggregating all domain-level scores into an Overall Integration score. In spite of low Cronbach reliabilities among several domains, aggregated scores have increased explanatory power. With more scores contributing to an Overall Integration score, the results are much more robust than domain level scores.

Overall Integration scores were created by summing items within and across domains. Since different domains include different numbers of items, the contribution of each domain to total scores is not equal. For example, Housing, which has only one item, will carry less weight in the Overall Integration score than Language & Cultural Knowledge, which has nine items. However, the reason that Housing only has one item is that there was almost no variation across respondents on items within this domain. This means that the contribution of these items towards understanding refugee integration is minimal. Language and Cultural Knowledge, on the other hand, does evidence a diverse range of scores across items, meaning that items in this domain contribute more information about differences across refugees. So, the domains that have more items also tend to have more explanatory value. On the other hand, most domains have comparable numbers of items comprising the domain score, and there are sufficient numbers of domains so that any one or two domains can't overly weight the Overall Integration score. As data accumulate across survey administrations, we will explore what happens if we standardize all domains so that each has the same score range. This would enable comparisons across domains. For now, we are comfortable with the current method, which we believe realistically reflects the experiences of refugees. For example, we believe that Language and Cultural Knowledge and Economic Self-Sufficiency have more to do with refugees' integration experiences than Housing.

After Overall Integration scores were calculated, 1 Year Follow-Up (+1YR) scores were plotted (see figure 6.1). The graph shows two clusters of vertical bars. The first cluster is the range between 0-16 on the x-axis (the numbers shown at base of the figure). Respondents with these scores were determined to be *low integrators*. Another "hump" is seen in the scores of those from 25 to 44. These are considered *high integrators*. Those with scores in the middle (17-24), were designated as *medium integrators*.

Figure 6.1. Histogram of Overall Integration scores at 1 Year Follow-Up



Once we determined the ranges for Overall Integration categories among 1YR+ respondents, we backward-mapped those ranges onto participants at Baseline. Table 6.6 shows the counts and percentages of refugees in the three integration categories at Baseline and then at 1YR+.

Table 6.6. Ranges and frequencies for low, medium, and high integrators at Baseline and 1 Year Follow-up

Integration Category (Range)	Baseline % (n = 493)	1 Year Follow-Up % (n = 373)
Low (0-16)	62.9	31.9
Medium (17-24)	28.8	17.4
High (25-44)	8.3	50.7

Whereas 62.9% of respondents at Baseline were rated as Low Integrators, this figure dropped to 31.9% Low Integrators one year later. High Integrators increased from 8.3% to 50.7% from Baseline to 1YR+. Table 6.7 summarizes how proportions of refugees shifted categories from Baseline to 1YR+

Table 6.7. Changes across Overall Integration categories: Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up

Baseline	1 Year Follow Up			Total Baseline†
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	29.7%	12.7%	18.8%	61.2%
Medium	2.4%	4.5%	22.3%	29.2%
High	0%	0%	9.5%	9.5%
Total 1 Year Follow-Up*	32.1%	17.2%	50.6%	99.9%

† Total percentage varies from 100% due to the fact that the total number of refugees at Baseline was greater than at 1 Year Follow-Up.

*Column does not total 100% due to rounding error.

Table 6.7 shows the extent to which refugees moved across categories from Baseline to 1 Year Follow-Up. For example, the table shows that 29.7% of refugees who were Low Integrators at Baseline remained Low after one year. On the other hand, 12.7% of those who scored Low at Baseline, moved to Medium after one year, and 18.8% moved to High Integration category in 1YR+. Only 2.4% of refugees slipped from a higher category to a lower category, and all of these were refugees who scored Medium at Baseline and dropped to Low after one year. A total of 53.8% of refugees moved up in categories from Baseline to 1YR+, with 41.1% of those moving from Low or Medium into the High category. No one in a High Integration category at Baseline dropped into a lower category. QED finds this pattern of results to be quite consistent and credible, suggesting that the survey results may be a good reflection of actual integration experiences across the sample.

QED analyzed changes from Baseline to 1YR+ by key demographic variables, including Country of Origin, Gender, and Level of Education in Home Country (see Table 6.8). Country of Origin was not significant, suggesting that integration issues affected all groups similarly. Formal Education in Home Country, Gender, and Age were all significant. Men showed higher integration scores than did women. Younger people had higher integration scores (minimum age of survey respondents is 18 years).

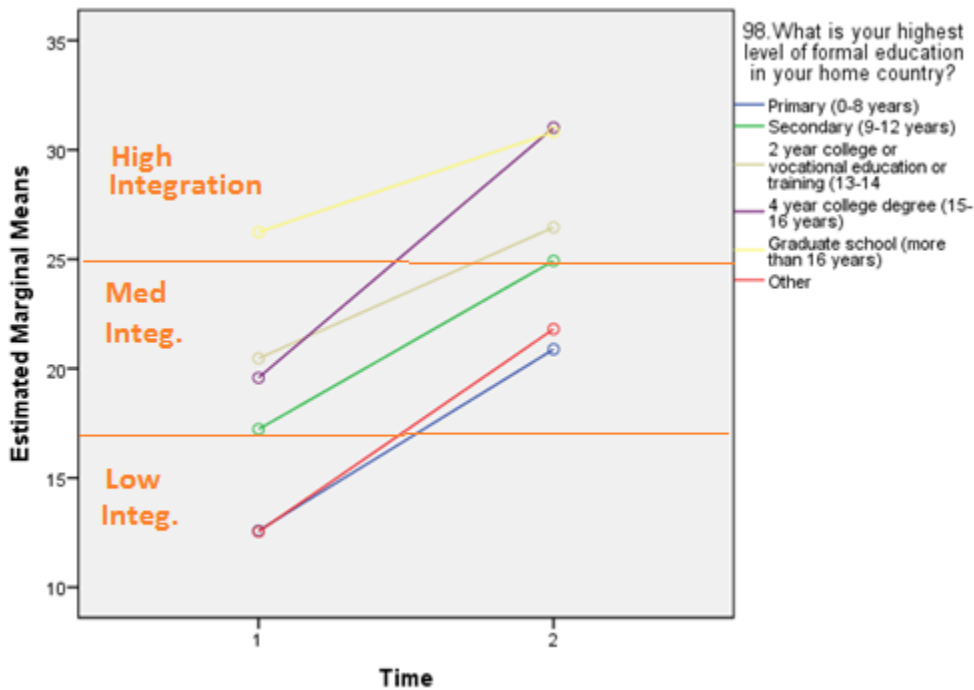
Table 6.8. Integration scores analyzed by key demographic variables

Demographic Variable	F-Statistic
Country of Origin	1.8
Formal Education in Home Country	27.0***
Gender	66.3***
Age	71.3***

*p < 0.5; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Formal Education in Home Country is interesting. Figure 6.2, below, shows that education level does predict integration. Those with lower levels of education have lower integration scores at Baseline. The relationship is nearly linear. In addition, growth from Baseline to 1YR+ is similar for all groups, except for those with 4-year college degrees, whose integration scores rise more quickly than other groups, so that one year out, this group reaches the integration level of those with graduate education in their home countries.

Figure 6.2. Integration scores by level of education in home country.



Conclusions

A total of 367 refugees were administered the RISE survey one year after Baseline, reflecting 78.6% retention rate in the study. Item-level comparisons show dramatic differences on some items, and few differences on others. Within domains, the overall trend was upwards, with nine of ten domain level scores showing statistically significant increases. Health & Physical Well-Being showed a statistically significant decrease, which seems plausible given that many of the refugees went through an initial health screening upon arrival into the US and many were provided with dental care, neither of which were readily made available a year after arrival into the US. Patterns at the domain level appear to be consistent and credible. Most domains show low Cronbach reliabilities, but domains do evidence increased reliability when variability increases, which is a good sign. The extremely high F-Statistics on domain level comparisons between Baseline and 1 Year Follow-Up suggest that significant differences are not the result of random variation, but reflect real trends across refugees.

When domain scores are aggregated into Overall Integration scores, the power of these results seems to accumulate. One Year Follow-Up scores reflect a bi-modal distribution, from which three levels of integration could be identified: low, medium, and high. The pattern of results align with expectations based on prior integration research (i.e., women integrate less quickly than men and level of education in home country affects socialization in the new country). Preliminary indications suggest that the low, medium, and high distinctions are meaningful. Further research, particularly with groups of respondents at each level, will help confirm these initial findings.

QED is most pleased to find that the survey does seem to be sensitive to changes in refugees' integration experiences. On one hand, we went from nearly uniform responses at Baseline, to a pattern of varied responses at 1 Year Follow-Up. On the other hand, the instrument does not seem to be overly sensitive. Two domains, Social Bonding and Safety & Stability are reaching the high end of their range (adjustments can be made if needed). All the other domains and the Overall Integration score have plenty of room to capture change.

QED is still mostly concerned with findings that confirm the strength of the survey, rather than provide information about refugees. If our continued internal inquiries and qualitative research in Year 4 (2013-2014) confirm that the survey is in fact reliably and validly capturing refugees' integration experiences, we will then explore with confidence the implication of these data for refugee understanding refugee integration. In the meantime, we are most optimistic that this evaluation study can provide an instrument and findings that have the potential to illuminate integration issues on a national scale.

VII. What Are We Learning? What Is the Focus of Year 4 (2013-14)?

What Are We Learning from the Wilson-Fish Evaluation So Far?

This report summarizes Wilson-Fish evaluation activities during the 2012-2013 year, including data collection from and analyses of the RISE survey to 373 respondents, three focus group interviews with 29 refugees total, and cognitive interviews with nine respondents. These data provide an emerging picture of refugee integration in Denver. We believe that the unique longitudinal data we are collecting and stories related to them have the potential to yield valuable insights into refugees' integration that have not been possible previously. These insights can help refugees navigate integration pathways and help agencies that assist refugees better target their resources. Furthermore, these data have the potential to inform researchers and agency professionals about integration itself—what it looks like in the lives of refugees and which factors seem most key to successful integration in the initial months and years after arrival to the US

First, however—before realizing the promise of the RISE survey and interview data collected by QED—the evaluation team must focus on what we're learning about the RISE survey itself. Before extrapolating findings and conclusions about refugee integration, we want to be confident that the survey instrument is effective. First we ask, *Is the information we are getting from the survey valid?* That is, do refugees interpret the questions on the survey in the ways we intend them, and do their answers reflect their true beliefs at the time? Second, *Are the survey items reliable?* By this we mean, does each item contribute in a statistically meaningful way to the domain-level score and/or to the Overall Integration score?

QED has explored item-level validity in four ways. First, we have listened carefully to feedback from Volunteer Agency staff (Volags) and Community Connectors, who have administered the survey. They have informed us of items that are confusing or misleading. Second, we have met with ORR staff, who have pointed out anomalous results, such as the fact that at Baseline, not all respondents reported having had a medical exam, when in fact all refugees had medical screenings upon entry to the US. Several items over the past two years have been eliminated or re-worded to address these issues. Third, QED had survey items re-translated by the Spring Institute, a third party unaffiliated with the study, to ensure that the denotation and connotation of items translated accurately from English into the target languages. This study was reported in our Year 2 (2012) Report. We found that most items translated effectively. Those that didn't were re-worded or eliminated. Re-wording items risks losing explanatory value across survey administrations, because some changes make results incomparable from one year to the next. This was, however, a calculated risk. Because there was so little variability across most items at Baseline, and because wording changes were mostly minor, we believe that these changes won't unduly affect longitudinal results. However, some individual items may not be comparable over time, and some items have been eliminated and some items are new in the second and third cycles compared to Baseline. QED has a *Codebook* document that meticulously tracks the evolution of each item across administration cycles.

The fourth way we explored item validity was by asking respondents directly how they interpret items that we thought might be confusing or that resulted in anomalous survey results. Cognitive interviews (reported in Section IV) were conducted specifically for this purpose. The focus group protocol contained questions designed to clarify issues with specific items, but also sought to determine the extent to which survey domains assessed map onto refugees' experiences. This is a validity check not of specific items so much, but of the ten domains that comprise the RISE survey. Table 3.1 shows the correspondence between refugees' reports of their experiences and RISE survey domains. Survey items in several domains do seem to touch critical issues mentioned in comments made during focus groups (reported in Section III).

One thing we learned after Baseline from Community Connectors and the Spring Institute translators is that the original survey was translated using formal nomenclature across all language groups. Survey items are written as if respondents read at a college level. Yet most refugees have minimal formal education and weak literacy in their native languages. After talking with Volags and Community Connectors, as well as analyzing two years' of survey results, QED determined that this issue is mitigated by the fact that the survey is administered orally by people who can translate items to respondents in a less formal register. Although this does risk some slippage in meaning, the questions on the survey are as simple as possible, strengthening the possibility that items' core meaning is retained. Yet, were we to replicate this study in the future, we would probably have it translated in a common vernacular.

Regarding questions of survey reliability, we are encouraged by the trends in the survey data. Items within each RISE domain do show trends as expected (mostly from less towards more integration), with overall differences from Baseline to 1 Year Follow-Up showing statistically significant increases in nearly all cases. The domain that does not show this trend (health care) does seem explainable.

Domain scores align with the integration framework articulated by Ager and Strang¹³, which provides the underlying framework for the RISE survey. Our results show an interconnectedness among many domains, as expected by Ager and Strang. For example, Language and Cultural Knowledge is identified as a *facilitator* variable in their framework. As reported in Section VI, Language and Cultural Knowledge is moderately to strongly correlated with all other domains and may emerge as an early predictor of overall integration. Employment & Self-Sufficiency is strongly correlated with Language and Cultural Knowledge, as might be expected, and weakly correlated with Child's Education and Social Bonding, which might also be expected. Several such correlations reveal a pattern of results that is encouraging. As an aside, it is notable that Employment and Economic Self-Sufficiency is weakly to moderately correlated with other domain variables, suggesting that it is possibly mediated by other variables. Such a result (yet to be confirmed) validates a multi-dimensional approach to studying refugee integration compared to traditional measures that rely solely on employment.

¹³Ager, A. & Strang, A. (2004). *Indicators of integration: Final Report*, Home Office Development and Practice Reports, London.

The fact that the Overall Integration scores can be divided into three empirically meaningful categories is also encouraging. Trends from Baseline to 1 Year Follow-Up are consistent with expectations. Only 2% of respondents dropped from a higher to a lower category, and none of the high integrators dropped into the medium or low integration categories. We are curious whether the observed drops from medium to low integration among a few respondents is a reflection of their lived experience, or an artifact of survey scoring. The 2 Year Follow-Up data collected this year will help sort this out. Overall, domain scores are consistent with Ager and Strang's framework, and Overall Integration scores reflect trends in integration that seem credible intuitively and reliable statistically.

Projected Evaluation Activities from October 2013-September 2014

In the upcoming year (2 Year Follow-Up) the QED team will continue exploring the longitudinal data to confirm the efficacy of the survey. If what we find is consistent with analyses to date, we will be able to use results derive inferences about refugee integration. During the coming year, we have built in our design and budget extensive qualitative studies, interviewing refugees based on integration category (low, medium, and high), thus further validating the RISE survey and deriving insights about how refugees' experiences related to different domains affect their integration into US society. For example, what might refugees say who went from low integration at Baseline to high integration in the 1 Year Follow-Up, compared to refugees who remained low in both survey administrations? What are the demographic and domain profiles of refugees who scored as high integrators at Baseline and how do they compare to those who started in the low and medium categories? What items and/or domains predict movement from low integration one- and two-years after arrival? As we continue interviewing refugees, what factors seem to support or hinder their success navigating each of the integration domains?

As the QED team continues to analyze longitudinal results over the next year and our confidence in the RISE instrument increases, we will begin to study the profile of item, domain, and Overall Integration results across survey respondents and offer preliminary findings about refugee integration. Such findings would be tentative, potentially gaining much more meaning, depth, and power from data collected in a third cycle of survey administration.

APPENDIX A—2013 FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Introductory Section

Thanks for coming, and why we're here

Appreciate and value your contribution of time here; thank you for taking the survey, for keeping in touch with us

Purpose of RISE – exploring process of “integration” – basically what the move to US has been like for you, adjustment to life in US

You are here to teach us – we want to learn from you – so that what you know can be communicated, used to help other refugees in their efforts to adjust to life in US, settle in better. To that end:

We want your own words

Have a translator

With your permission, will record what you say

Voluntariness of participation here – gift cards for your time [do we need separate consent form for focus groups?]

Confidentiality – your names will not be used, your words will not be connected to you

Stop – is it ok to go on?

Introduce self, and Maggie, and our respective roles in RISE project

Introduce yourself – go around room

Name, Country of origin; if from Burma, what ethnic group

Warm-up question: One thing in US that has completely surprised you (*skip if they don't seem to need warming up*)

Ground rules for rest of focus group/meeting/session

You can speak at any time, answer any question – don't have to go around room

Speak not just to me, but you can respond to each other, if you like

But try to speak one at a time!

If you want a break at any time -- ask, it's ok!

We are recording, and will make a transcript and use it to understand more about your experiences here!

OK? -- Any questions?

Big General Question

What would it mean, to you, to “become an American?”

Prompts:

What does being an American look like?

Think of someone in your community who you think has become an American. What makes him/her that way? What did he/she do to get there? Who helped him/her along the way?

Follow up: Is it important to you to become an American? How so?

Questions about your experiences here (many of which were touched on in the survey you took)

How important has it been for you to learn English?

Why is it important?

What have you been doing to learn English?

<p>How has that been working out for you?</p>		
<p>There have been a number of processes you have had to go through as part of your move here. I'd like you to walk us through how you looked for/obtained/managed – <i>(depending on time, may only do one of the three, probably employment)</i></p> <p>Potential prompts for each one: What has been hard What has been easy Obstacles? Good strategies/successes? What has worked/what has failed? Depending on time, we probably will not cover all of these....</p>		
<p>Employment</p>	<p>Training/educational opportunities for yourself (Such as job readiness training; English classes; etc)</p>	<p>Groceries/shopping needs</p>
<p>Questions about the receiving communities</p>		
<p>During your first year here, where have you gone to seek help? What about? Where have you managed to secure help (individuals, groups, agencies, institutions), and how?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prompts: Volags? Schools? Community members? Employers? What else?</i></p>		
<p>How have these helpers treated you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sensitive/responsive to your needs?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Have they reached out to you?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Treated you like a person or like an alien?</i></p>		
<p>More specifically, what people outside the refugee community have you dealt with?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Prompts: Employers, teachers, doctors, library people, store</i></p>		

clerks?

How have they treated you?

Who has kids in school here? For you, what has the impact of your being a parent of guardian of school-aged children been on your adjustment to life here?

Prompts: *has it made getting adjusted more complicated? Or has it helped you to*

Understand things?

Meet people?

Get settled easier?

Self-sufficiency

People talk a lot about refugees becoming “self-sufficient.” What does “self-sufficiency” mean to you?

Prompts:

What would self-sufficiency look like?

Do you know anyone in your community whom you think of as self-sufficient?

How did self-sufficiency look in your home country? Different? Is it even a concept with any meaning there?

Some summary questions

- a) **What has made you happiest, gladdest, feel the best since you came here?**
- b) **What has been the hardest thing to deal with?**
- c) **What do you hope to accomplish in the coming year?**
- d) **Anything else you want to say?**

Thank you! Maggie, distribute gift cards. Say g'bye.

APPENDIX B-- Focus Group Themes/Codes

Age

Anxiety - exhibition of

Bureaucratic difficulties

Citizenship

Community Connector Insight

Cost of Living

Discrimination experienced - in employment, elsewhere

Diversity - no conflict- harmony - treated well

Education - lack of it = hardship, getting it makes you stronger!

Learning English -- importance of it!

Care for Elderly/healthcare for disabled - cared for by govt

Friends -- connections to make jobs, find stuff in community

Health issues

Help -- Getting help/needng help (cao navigators)

House -- Wanna buy a house!

Job! Anxiety about job loss, getting fired if you make a mistake

Kids' School

Rule of Law

Language difficulties -- need for interpreters at job interviews --

difficulty getting interpreters except for Burmese -- Bhutanese Nepali
vs Nepali Nepali

Loss of homeland identity -- concern about people acting "like they
don't know their own people" when they get Americanized =>
ambivalence about Americanization

Time in Refugee Camp (or not)

Refugee tag

Safety outside home

Social bonding

Social bridging

Sponsor

Self-sufficiency -- standing on own feet

Surprised at

Thanks to US govt

Transportation difficulties -- bus passes! Jobs/English classes too far
away

Volags -- resettlement office/agency (they don't use the term "volag")

Get job through Volag -- too far away => go thru friends, get job closer
to home

APPENDIX C—COGNITIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

RISE Validation Study (RVS) Cognitive Interview Script and Questions

[*Note: This Appendix shows the instrument as it was originally written. In the course of the cognitive interviews, the first probe under each survey question (Probe a) was never asked because of the fact these cognitive interviews were conducted through interpreters.*]

Preamble

Thank you so much for coming today. My name is Jini. I am a researcher who is working on the RISE study. I am talking with refugees who are participating in the study to learn about how they are interpreting the questions on the survey.

Today, we will go over several of the survey questions. For every question, I'll ask you to repeat it in your own words and then will ask you questions about what you say, what you think the question means and how you decide on responses to the questions.

Maggie will be typing notes about what we talk about, but with your permission, we would also like to audio record what you say so that we can listen to it later to make sure we didn't miss anything. We will likely write about what you tell us in a report, but we will not put your name in the report.

The last thing that I want to tell you is that I didn't write the questions on the survey, so don't worry about hurting my feelings if you criticize them; my job is to find out what's wrong with them, if anything is. Does this all sound ok?

Ok. Let's get started. The first question on the survey that we want to hear your thoughts about is:

Employment/Economic Self-Sufficiency

- 1. Q11: Is your family's monthly income sufficient to cover rent, food, and other expenses necessary for daily living?**
The income is too low; The income is enough; The income is more than enough

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) [*clarify if any discrepancies*]

- b. What does “your family’s monthly income” mean to you? (To test comprehension of a particular term)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? Whose income do you include when you think about the answer to this question?
(To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

Education/Training

2. Q12: Have you obtained a license or certificate that qualifies you for a specific kind of job in the United States?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does “license or certificate” mean to you? (To test comprehension of a particular term)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer?
(To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

3. Q13: Have you taken job-training or job-readiness classes or programs in this country (such as Cultural Orientation, English as a Second Language, Job Readiness, Work Intensive Skills Camp, Pathways, WorkWise, Community Work Experience Programs)?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*

- b. What does “job-training or job-readiness classes or programs” mean to you?
(To test comprehension of a particular term)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

4. Q21: Are you currently enrolled in a degree program?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does “degree program” mean to you? (To test comprehension of a particular term)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer?
(To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

Your Child’s Education

This next question is only asked to people who have children. Regardless of whether or not you have children, we would still like to know thoughts about the question. It is...

5. Q34: Have you volunteered your time at one of your children’s schools?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does “volunteered” mean to you? (To test comprehension of a particular term)

- c. *[If have children ask...]* How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. *[If have children ask...]* How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

Health/Physical Well-Being

**6. Q38: Have you visited a doctor for a routine physical exam within the past year?
Yes, No**

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does “routine physical exam” mean to you? (To test comprehension of a particular term)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer?
(To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

Social Bonding

**7. Q47: Do you spend time interacting with people other than your family who share your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion?
Yes, No**

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*

- b. How would you answer this question? Who do you think about when you think about “people other than your family who share your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion”? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- c. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

Social Bridging

8. **Q52: Do you spend time interacting with people of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different from your own?**
Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. How would you answer this question? Who do you think about when you think about “people of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different from your own”? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- c. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

Language and Cultural Knowledge

9. **Q58: Which of the following best describes your English skill?**
I cannot speak English; I speak a little English; I can speak English when shopping and doing other types of business; I can speak English in most social and work situations; I am fluent in English

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*

- b. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- c. *[Read each of the response options and ask.....]* What does this mean to you? (To determine how well comprehends a specific response option)
- d. How hard was this to answer? (To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

10. Q59: Do you regularly speak with people whose native language is English?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does this question mean to you? (To test comprehension of a question)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer? (To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

Safety and Stability

11. Q70: Do you feel safe when you are at home?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does this question mean to you? (To test comprehension of a question)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)

- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

12. Q76: In the past year, have you experienced racial, cultural, or religious discrimination?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does “racial, cultural, or religious discrimination” mean to you? (To test comprehension of particular phrase)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How well do you remember this? (To test recall of the relevant information)
- e. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

[Optional Questions (if time permits)]

13. Q74: Do you trust your neighbors?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does this question mean to you? (To test comprehension of a question)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

14. Q77: Have you participated in meetings of community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies in the past year?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does “participated in meetings” mean to you? (To test comprehension of particular phrase)
- c. What does “community organizations, clubs, or government agencies” mean to you? (To test comprehension of particular phrase)
- d. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- e. How well do you remember this? (To test recall of the relevant information)
- f. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

15. Q79: Have you volunteered your time for community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies in the past year?

Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does “volunteered your time” mean to you? (To test comprehension of particular phrase)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How well do you remember this? (To test recall of the relevant information)
- e. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

16. Q82: Do you have a valid driver's license from Colorado or another US state?
Yes, No

Probes:

- a. Can you repeat the question I just asked in your own words? (To test how well the subject comprehends the question) *[clarify if any discrepancies]*
- b. What does this question mean to you? (To test comprehension of question)
- c. How would you answer this question? What did you think about to get your answer? (To determine the overall cognitive strategy used)
- d. How hard was this to answer?
(To determine level of difficulty and likelihood of estimation/guessing)

APPENDIX D—RISE SURVEY YEAR 4 (2013-2014): 2-YEAR FOLLOW-UP

Study ID _____

Name of person giving the survey _____

Date Administered (mm/dd/yy): _____ Time Started: _____ Time Completed: _____

Complete (C) or Refused (R)? _____

Survey of Refugee Integration YEAR THREE (7-21-13)

Hello! As you know, my name is ____ and I'm from the RISE Project. (Refugee Integration Study and Evaluation). As you know, you took a survey about 1 year ago and about 1 year before that.

You are now being asked to take the survey again, and you may be asked to take it again next year. Each time you take it, you will be paid \$10.

As you know, the purpose of this survey is to gather information about refugees' employment, education, health, housing situation, and more, so that we can understand what it is like for you to get settled in the U.S. and so that we can make this move easier for refugees in the future. We are informing the State of Colorado about the needs of refugees during their first four years in the U.S.

The survey is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to. It takes about 20-25 minutes to complete. There are no risks to taking this survey. Your answers will be kept confidential and will not be connected with your name.

If you have any questions about the survey, I'll try to answer them as best I can now or I could give you the name of a person to call (Ms. Maggie Miller at 303-886-5116). Do you have any questions? *[Answer any questions.]* After today, if you have any questions, you should contact Maggie Miller or myself.

Great. Thank you in advance for taking this survey.

[After the survey: give "I'm moving" form. Explain that if they move, they should send the form in; 1 for each member of the family who is a survey taker. They'll get a \$5 gift card for each form they send in. Even if they move out of state! We can give them the survey by phone if they move out of state.]

Section 1: Employment

First, we'll start with employment.

1. Are you currently employed for pay? *[Do not read the responses]* (s1q1y3)
 - a. ___ No -> **(If "no" go to question # 7)**
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

2. How many full time jobs do you have? *[Do not read the responses]* (s1q2y3)
 - a. ___ 0
 - b. ___ 1
 - c. ___ 2
 - d. ___ More than 2
 - e. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

3. How many part time jobs do you have? *[Do not read the responses]* (s1q3y3)
 - a. ___ 0
 - b. ___ 1
 - c. ___ 2
 - d. ___ More than 2
 - e. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

4. What is the total number of hours you work for pay each week? *[Do not read the responses]* (s1q4y3)
 - a. ___ 1-9
 - b. ___ 10-19
 - c. ___ 20-29
 - d. ___ 30-39
 - e. ___ 40-50
 - f. ___ More than 50 hours
 - g. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

5. Do you get retirement benefits through your job? *[Do not read the responses]* (s1q5y3)
 - a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

6. When considering all your jobs, are you employed..... [**READ** the responses] (s1q6y3)
- ___ Below your educational or skill level. -> (**Go to question # 8**)
 - ___ At your educational or skill level. -> (**Go to question # 8**)
 - ___ Above your educational or skill level. -> (**Go to question # 8**)
 - ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer) [*Do not read this response*]-> (**Go to question # 8**)
7. Why are you not currently employed?
[Please **check all that apply**; Do not read the responses]
- ___ Enrolled in vocational training program (s1q7ay3)
 - ___ Children at home (s1q7by3)
 - ___ Working as a volunteer (s1q7cy3)
 - ___ Could not find a job for pay (s1q7dy3)
 - ___ Health / disability (s1q7ey3)
 - ___ Too old (s1q7fy3)
 - ___ School (s1q7gy3)
 - ___ Other (s1q7hy3)
 - (Please specify) _____ (s1q7hspy3)
 - ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer) (s1q7iy3)
8. How many jobs have you had in the United States during the last year? [*Do not read the responses*] (s1q8y3)
- ___ 0
 - ___ 1
 - ___ 2 or 3
 - ___ 4 or more
 - ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

9. What is your average monthly net income? Please include all sources of income, such as Food Assistance, TANF, OAP, CARES when responding. *[Do not read the responses]*)
(s1q9y3)

- a. ___\$0
- b. ___\$1 - 399
- c. ___\$400 – 699
- d. ___\$700 – 999
- e. ___\$1,000 –1,299
- f. ___\$1,300 – 1,599
- g. ___\$1,600 – 1,899
- h. ___\$1,900-2,199
- i. ___\$2,200 – 2,499
- j. ___ More than \$2,500/month
- k. ___(Don't know / Refused to answer)

10. What is your family's average monthly net household income (including your income)? Please include all sources of income, such as Food Assistance, TANF, OAP, CARES when responding. *[Do not read the responses]*)
(s1q10y3)

- a. ___\$0
- b. ___\$1 - 399
- c. ___\$400 – 699
- d. ___\$700 – 999
- e. ___\$1,000 –1,299
- f. ___\$1,300 – 1,599
- g. ___\$1,600 – 1,899
- h. ___\$1,900-2,199
- i. ___\$2,200 – 2,499
- j. ___ More than \$2,500/month
- k. ___(Don't know / Refused to answer)

11. Is your family's monthly income sufficient to cover rent, food, and other expenses necessary for daily living? ***[READ the responses]***)
(s1q11y3)

- a. ___The income is too low.
- b. ___The income is enough.
- c. ___The income is more than enough.
- d. ___(Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]*

11a) What is your monthly rent or housing payment? . *[Do not read the responses] (s1q11.a.y3)*

- a. ____ \$0
- b. ____ \$1-\$200
- c. ____ \$201-\$500
- d. ____ \$501-\$900
- e. ____ \$901-\$1,400
- f. ____ More than \$1,400
- g. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]*

Section 2: Your education/training

Now I'm going to ask you questions about education and training....

- 12.** Within the past year, have you obtained a certificate that qualifies you for a specific kind of job in the United States? (s2q12y3)
[Do not read the responses]
- No
 - Yes¹ (Please specify) _____
 - (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 13.** Within the past year, have you taken job-training or job-readiness classes or programs in this country (such as Job Readiness, Work Intensive Skills Camp, Pathways, WorkWise, Community Work Experience Programs)? [Do not read the responses] (s2q13y3)
- No
 - Yes
 - (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 14.** Have you taken English language classes within the past year? [Do not read the responses](s2q42y3)
- No
 - Yes
 - (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 15.** Within the past year, have you taken other kinds of classes in this country? [Do not read the responses] (s2q15y3)
- No -> (If 'no', go to question # 18***)
 - Yes
 - (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 16.** Are you currently enrolled in a community college or college (ex. B.A., Associates)? [Do not read the responses] (s2q16y3)
- No -> (if 'no', go to Section 3, question #18)
 - Yes
 - (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 17.** At what level is this degree program? Is it....[READ the responses] (s2q17y3)
- High School Diploma or GED
 - Associates Degree
 - Bachelor's Degree
 - Master's Degree or above
 - (Don't know / Refused to answer) [Do not read this response]

Section 3: Your children's education

Now I'm going to ask you about your marital status and your children's education, if you have children.

18. What is your current marital status? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q18y3)
- a. Married
 - b. Divorced
 - c. Separated
 - d. Widowed
 - e. Single; never married
 - f. Other
(Please specify) _____
 - f. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
19. Do you have children who currently live with you? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q19y3)
- a. No -> **(if 'no', skip to Section 4, question # 34)**
 - b. Yes
 - c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
20. How many children are currently living with you? *[Record response on the line]* (s3q20y3)
- a. _____ children
 - b. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
21. How old is your oldest child who lives with you? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q21y3)
- a. Less than one year
 - b. 1-6 years
 - c. 7-12 years
 - d. 13-18 years
 - e. Older than 18 years
 - f. (Don't know / Refused to answer)

22. What is your oldest child's grade level? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q22y3)
- a. ___ Too young for school
 - b. ___ Preschool or Kindergarten
 - c. ___ Grades 1-5 (Elementary school)
 - d. ___ Grades 6-8 (Middle school)
 - e. ___ Grades 9-12 (High school)
 - f. ___ Post high-school (College, voc-ed)
 - g. ___ No longer in school
 - h. ___ Other⁸
 - i. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

[If there are no more children, go to question # 29]
[If "a," go to question # 34]

23. How old is your second oldest child who lives with you? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q23y3)
- a. ___ Less than one year
 - b. ___ 1-6 years
 - c. ___ 7-12 years
 - d. ___ 13-18 years
 - e. ___ Older than 18 years
 - f. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

24. What is your second oldest child's grade level in school? (s3q24y3)
[Do not read the responses]
- a. ___ Too young for school
 - b. ___ Preschool or Kindergarten
 - c. ___ Grades 1-5 (Elementary school)
 - d. ___ Grades 6-8 (Middle school)
 - e. ___ Grades 9-12 (High school)
 - f. ___ Post high-school (College, voc-ed)
 - g. ___ No longer in school
 - h. ___ Other⁸
 - i. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

[If there are no more children, go to question # 29]

25. How old is your third oldest child who lives with you? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q25y3)

- a. ___ Less than one year
- b. ___ 1-6 years
- c. ___ 7-12 years
- d. ___ 13-18 years
- e. ___ Older than 18 years
- f. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

26. What is your third child's grade level? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q26y3)

- a. ___ Too young for school
- b. ___ Preschool or Kindergarten
- c. ___ Grades 1-5 (Elementary school)
- d. ___ Grades 6-8 (Middle school)
- e. ___ Grades 9-12 (High school)
- f. ___ Post high-school (College, voc-ed)
- g. ___ No longer in school
- h. ___ Other⁸
- i. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

[If there are no more children, go to question # 29]

27. How old is your fourth oldest child who lives with you? *[Do not read the responses]*(s3q27y3)

- a. ___ Less than one year
- b. ___ 1-6 years
- c. ___ 7-12 years
- d. ___ 13-18 years
- e. ___ Older than 18 years
- f. ___ Other
- g. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

28. What is your fourth oldest child's grade level? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q28y3)
- a. ___ Too young for school
 - b. ___ Preschool or Kindergarten
 - c. ___ Grades 1-5 (Elementary school)
 - d. ___ Grades 6-8 (Middle school)
 - e. ___ Grades 9-12 (High school)
 - f. ___ Post high-school (College, voc-ed)
 - g. ___ No longer in school
 - h. ___ Other
 - i. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

[If there are more children, record this information on the back of this sheet]

29. Have you visited with at least one of your children's teachers about his/her performance or progress in school? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q29y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

30. Have you volunteered your time at one of your children's schools? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q30y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

31. Have you ever attended a social, sporting, cultural or educational activity or event at one of your children's schools? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q31y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

32. Have you ever attended one of your children's social, sporting, cultural, educational, religious, or community activity or event outside of their schools? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q32y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

- 33.** Do any of your children have at least one good friend at school who is not from your home country and culture? *[Do not read the responses]* (s3q33y3)
- a. ____ No
 - b. ____ Yes
 - c. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

Section 4: Health

Now I'm going to ask you questions about your health and health care.

- 34.** Have you visited a doctor for a routine physical exam within the past year? *[Do not read the responses]* (s4q34y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 35.** Do you have one person you think of as your personal doctor or health care provider? *[Do not read the responses, but if says "yes" ask, "only one or more than one?"]* (s4q35y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes, only one
 - c. ___ Yes, more than one
 - d. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 36.** Do you know how to make an appointment to see a doctor? *[Do not read the responses]* (s4q36y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 37.** Do you have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance, prepaid plans such as HMO's (like Kaiser), or government plans such as Medicaid? *[Do not read the responses]* (s4q37y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 38.** Have you visited a dentist or dental clinic for a routine exam within the past year? *[Do not read the responses]* (s4q38y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

Section 5: Housing

Now I am going to ask you questions about your housing.

- 39.** What is your housing situation? [*READ the responses*] (s5q39y3)
- a. ___ I am currently homeless. -> (***If checked, skip to question # 41. If not checked, go to Question # 40.***)
 - b. ___ I live in a homeless shelter/transitional housing (such as Warren Village). -> (***If checked, skip to question # 41. If not checked, go to Question # 40.***)
 - c. ___ I rotate between homes of friends and family. -> (***If checked, skip to question # 41. If not checked, go to Question # 40.***)
 - d. ___ I rent an apartment or house.
 - e. ___ I own a house or a condo.
 - f. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer) [*Do not read this response*]
- 40.** How many bedrooms are in the place where you live? [*Do not read the responses*] (s5q40y3)
- a. ___ 1
 - b. ___ 2
 - c. ___ 3
 - d. ___ More than 3
 - e. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 41.** Do you get help from the government to pay your rent or housing costs (e.g., TANF, CARES, or Section 8 Housing)? [*Do not read the responses*] (s5q41y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 42.** How many times have you moved in the past year?
[*Record response on the line*] (s5q42y3)
- a. _____ Times
 - b. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

Section 6: Social Bonding

Now I am going to ask you some questions about the people you spend time with.

43. Do you spend time interacting with people who are not related to you who share your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion?

[Do not read the responses]

(s6q43y3)

- a. No -> **(If 'no', go to question # 45)**
 - b. Yes
 - c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
44. How many hours per week do you spend time interacting with people (who are not related to you) who share your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion? *[Do not read the responses]*
- (s6q44y3)
- a. 0 hours
 - b. 1-3 hours
 - c. 4-10 hours
 - d. More than 10 hours
 - d. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
45. Do you access information about your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion? *[Do not read the responses, but you can give examples from Question # 46 if needed.]*
- (s6q45y3)
- a. No -> **(If 'no', go to question # 47)**
 - b. Yes
 - c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
46. Which of the following sources of information do you access to get information about your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion?
- [READ Responses; Check all that apply]**
- a. Newspaper (s6q46ay3)
 - b. Radio (s6q46by3)
 - c. TV (s6q46cy3)
 - d. Online (s6q46dy3)
 - e. Other people (s6q46ey3)
 - f. (Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]* (s6q46fy3)

47. In the past year, have you attended a celebration or event of your culture, ethnic group, language, or religion (such as a march, parade, or festival)? *[Do not read the responses]*

(s6q47y3)

- a. ____ No
- b. ____ Yes
- c. ____ (Don't know)
- d. ____ (Refused to answer)

Section 7: Social Bridges

48. Do you spend time interacting with people of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different from your own? *[Do not read the responses]* (s7q48y3)
- ___ No -> ***(If 'no', go to question # 51)***
 - ___ Yes
 - ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
49. How many hours a week do you spend time interacting with people of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different from your own? *[Do not read the responses]* (s7q49y3)
- ___ 0 hours
 - ___ 1-3 hours
 - ___ 4-10 hours
 - ___ More than 10 hours
 - ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
50. How did you meet people of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different from your own? ***[READ Responses; Check all that apply]*** (s7q50y3)
- ___ Through work
 - ___ Through my school or my children's school
 - ___ Other
(Please specify) _____
 - ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]*
51. Do you access information about cultures, ethnic groups, languages, or religions different from your own? *[Do not read the responses, but you can give examples from Question # 52 if needed.]* (s7q51y3)
- ___ No -> ***(If 'no', go to question #53)***
 - ___ Yes
 - ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

52. Which of the following sources of information do you access to get information about cultures, ethnic groups, languages, or religions different from your own? **[READ responses; Check all that apply]**

- a. ___ Newspaper (s7q52ay3)
- b. ___ Radio (s7q52by3)
- c. ___ TV (s7q52cy3)
- d. ___ Online (s7q52dy3)
- e. ___ Other people (s7q52ey3)
- f. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]* (s7q52fy3)

53. In the past year, have you attended a celebration or event of a culture, ethnic group, language, or religion different from your own (such as a march, parade, or festival)?

[Do not read the responses] (s7q54y3)

- a. ___ No
- b. ___ Yes
- c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

Section 8: Language and Cultural Knowledge

Now I'm going to ask you questions about your language skills and about things about the United States.

54. Which of the following best describes your English skill? [**READ** responses] (s8q54y3)
- a. ___ I cannot speak English.
 - b. ___ I speak a little English.
 - c. ___ I can speak English when shopping and doing other types of business.
 - d. ___ I can speak English in most social and work situations.
 - e. ___ I am fluent in English.
 - f. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer) [*Do not read this response*]
55. Do you regularly speak with people whose native language is English? [*Do not read the responses*] (s8q55y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
56. Do you listen to English language radio or watch English language television? [*Do not read the responses*] (s8q56y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
57. Do you celebrate any American holidays? [*Do not read the responses*] (s8q57y3)
- a. ___ No
 - b. ___ Yes
 - c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

58. What is the name of the current president of the United States? [*Record the response on the line below*] (s8q58y3)
- a. _____
- b. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
59. What is the city where the White House and Congress are located? [*Record the response on the line below*] (s8q59y3)
- a. _____
- b. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
60. What are 3 popular American sports? [*Record the response on the lines below*]
- a. _____ (s8q60ay3)
- b. _____ (s8q60by3)
- c. _____ (s8q60cy3)
- d. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer) (s8q60dy3)
61. Have you visited any famous places in Colorado or the United States? [*Do not read the responses*] (s8q61y3)
- a. ____ No
- b. ____ Yes -> (***If yes, say this statement***)
- i. Name one of the places that you visited: _____ (s8q60biy3)
- c. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
62. Do you know how to use the Internet? [*Do not read the responses*] (s8q62y3)
- a. ____ No (***If 'no', go to question #64***)
- b. ____ Yes
- c. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
63. How many hours per week do you use the Internet? [*Record the response on the line below*] (s8q63y3)
- a. _____ Hours
- b. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
64. Do you have a phone? [*Do not read the responses*] (s8q64y3)
- a. ____ No -> (***If 'no', go to Section 9, question #66***)
- b. ____ Yes
- c. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

65. What type of phone do you have? [**READ** responses]

(s8q65y3)

- a. ____ Cell phone
- b. ____ Land line (“home phone”)
- c. ____ Both a cell phone and a land line
- d. ____ (Don’t know / Refused to answer) [*Do not read this response*]

Section 9: Safety and Stability

Now I'm going to ask you some safety questions.

66. Do you feel safe when you are at home? *[Do not read the responses]* (s9q66y3)
a. ___ No
b. ___ Yes
c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
67. Do you feel safe when you are outside the home? *[Do not read the responses]* (s9q67y3)
a. ___ No
b. ___ Yes
c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
68. Would you call the fire department to report a fire where you live? *[Do not read the responses]* (s9q68y3)
a. ___ No
b. ___ Yes
c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
69. Would you seek help from the police if you were attacked by a stranger? *[Do not read the responses]* (s9q69y3)
a. ___ No
b. ___ Yes
c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
70. In the past year, have you been the victim of a crime such as assault, robbery, or vandalism? *[Do not read the responses]* (s9q70y3)
a. ___ No
b. ___ Yes
c. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer)
71. In the past year, have you experienced racial, cultural, or religious discrimination....**[READ responses]** (s9q71y3)
a. ___ Never?
b. ___ Sometimes?
c. ___ Often?
d. ___ Regularly?
d. ___ (Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]*

Section 10: Civic Engagement

Now I'm going to ask you about your involvement in things.

- 72.** Have you participated in meetings of community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies in the past year? *[Do not read the responses]* (s10q72y3)
- a. No -> **(If 'no', go to question # 74)**
 - b. Yes
 - c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 73.** Which of the following have you participated in?
[READ responses; Check all that apply]
- a. Community organization meetings (such as CAO) (s10q73ay3)
 - b. Neighborhood associations (s10q73by3)
 - c. School board meetings (s10q73cy3)
 - d. City council / county commissioner meetings (s10q73dy3)
 - e. (Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]* (s10q73ey3)
- 74.** Have you volunteered your time for community organizations, clubs, or governmental agencies in the past year? *[Do not read the responses]* (s10q74y3)
- a. No
 - b. Yes
 - c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)
- 75.** Have you advocated or spoken up for your own or your family's rights in public and/or before a government agency, body, or office, in the past year? *[Do not read the responses]*(s10q75y3)
- a. No **(If 'no' go to question #77)**
 - b. Yes
 - c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)

76. In which of the following situations have you advocated or spoken up? (**READ** responses;
Check all that apply) (s10q76y3)

- a. County courts
- b. Health provider or agency
- c. Welfare (TANF)/benefits office
- d. Housing office
- e. Signed a petition
- f. Protest gathering
- g. Other government office, board, or commission
- h. (Don't know / Refused to answer) *[Do not read this response]*

77. Have you applied for a green card? *[Do not read the responses]* (s10q77y3)

- a. No
- b. Yes
- c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)

78. Do you wish to become a citizen of the United States? *[Do not read the responses]* (s10q78y3)

- a. No
- b. Yes
- c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)

79. Do you have a legal driver's license from Colorado or another US state? *[Do not read the responses]* (s10q79y3)

- a. No
- b. Yes
- c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)

80. Do you own a car or use someone else's? (s10q80y3)

- a. No
- b. Yes
- c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)

81. Within the past year, have transportation problems been a barrier in taking English classes? (s10q81y3)

- a. No
- b. Yes
- c. (Don't know / Refused to answer)

82. Within the past year, have transportation problems been a barrier in finding or keeping a job? (s10q82y3)

- a. ____ No
- b. ____ Yes
- c. ____ (Don't know / Refused to answer)

--END--