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Get up and go: refugee resettlement and secondary migration in the USA

Eleanor Ott

Community Services Intern
Division of International Protection
UNHCR, Geneva

and

Department of International Development
University of Oxford

email: eleanor.ott@gmail.com

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UNHCR
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Policy Development and Evaluation Service

Introduction

Since 1975, the United States has resettled nearly three million refugees, more than all other countries combined. In federal fiscal years (FY) 2009 and 2010, the US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) resettled close to 75,000 refugees per fiscal year (US Department of State 2011d).[1] The refugee admission ceiling for this formal resettlement program was set at 80,000 for FY2008 through FY2011. An unknown percentage of these refugees voluntarily moved within the country after arrival, in what has been termed 'secondary migration.'[2]

This movement is not trivial: it challenges the basic framework of resettlement as a 'stationary solution'. A 2010 US Senate report, *Abandoned upon arrival: Implications for refugees and local communities burdened by a US Resettlement System that is not working*, charged that 'resettlement efforts in many US cities are underfunded, overstretched, and failing to meet the basic needs of the refugee populations they are currently asked to assist' and highlighted a lack of accounting for secondary migration as one of the causal factors to this charge. Despite the significance of the size of this resettlement population in the US and of its role as one of the major frameworks for durable solutions, the topic of secondary migration is largely neglected in both policy and literature.

This paper investigates the gap between federal assumptions of sedentary resettlement and the reality of migration as well as implications for refugee integration.[3] I will argue that secondary migration of resettled refugees in the US requires a rethinking of the refugee integration framework to adopt a flexible concept of continuous, holistic integration of individuals. This section highlights the importance of this subject in the broad context of refugee concepts and solutions. Given the scarcity of the academic focus on secondary migration, the second section outlines the existing academic literature on secondary migration and on resettlement integration.

The third section briefly outlines three case studies used as a basis for a sociological approach to analyze the perceived effects of secondary migration on the individual refugee (fourth section) and on communities (fifth section).[4] The case studies focus on the three largest populations currently arriving in the US and chosen destinations: Burmese refugees to meatpacking towns of the Midwest including Garden City, Kansas; Bhutanese refugees to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Iraqi refugees to greater Detroit, Michigan. Information from semi-structured interviews with service providers and governmental officials are

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[1] The federal fiscal year is defined as 1 October to 31 September, such that FY2011 includes October 2010-September 2011.

[2] The International Thesaurus of Refugee Terminology defines secondary migration as: 'The voluntary movement of migrants or refugees within their receiving country away from the community which they originally resided' (UNHCR 2011). This aligns with the widespread use of the term within the US and in this report, although it is often used in global literature as migration between countries.

[3] Correspondingly, the two research questions are: 1) what are the perceived gaps between US refugee resettlement policy and refugees' onward migration from their initial place of resettlement? and 2) what are the implications for refugee integration?

[4] In this research, while acknowledging knowledge as a social and historical product, I attempt to use these perspectives to offer ideas to explain the complex, real world (Robson 2002).

incorporated to probe the case studies and the effects of secondary migration on the existing integration framework, but interviews are not intended to be representative or comprehensive.

The analysis reflects the research philosophy and methodology that allows for multiple interpretations of 'reality', where the interviewees' perspectives shape the research and findings (Guerin and Guerin 2007; Sheridan and Storch 2009). Various perspectives from academic literature, policy documents, and US news reports combine with the fourteen semi-structured interviews and additional communications to probe the complex gap between policy and practice around secondary migration. Although the approach is inherently multi-disciplinary, I take a primarily interpretive sociological perspective by examining the perceptions of this movement: its origins from social structure and individual agency and the consequences on community-level notions of integration.[5]

Migration and refugees

Underpinning the significance of analysis of resettled refugees in US society are the categorizations of and the normative system around refugees. Refugees are one category of forced migrants[6] who fall under the legal definition from the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* and its *1967 Protocol* of someone who has crossed an international border:

> …owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality [or habitual residence for those without nationality] and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself to the protection of that country' (United Nations 1951).

The crux of the United States' law (INA 101(a)(42)) aligns with this definition (US Congress 1993), and the US resettled refugees based on a hierarchy of three categories: 'P-1: Individual referrals by US Embassy, UNHCR or designated NGO; P-2: Specific groups of concern identified by the USRAP, usually specific groups within a certain nationality; and, P-3: Family reunification cases for designated nationalities' (USCIS 2011).[7]

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[5] Due to a lack of quantitative data, this paper looks more at the meanings people attach to these social phenomena.

[6] For the purpose of this paper, forced migrants are 'people in need of a new state of residence, either temporarily or permanently, because if forced to return home or remain where are they are they would – as a result of either brutality *or* inadequacy of their state – be persecuted or seriously jeopardize their physical security or vital subsistence needs' (Gibney 2004: 7). If the inadequate of the state system is taken as the basis for a definition of a forced migrant, this definition would be much more expansive than the legal definition of refugees, incorporating those displaced internally in their country and across borders and many displaced due to environmental disasters, development projects, and/or generalized violence.

[7] The US definition includes an unwillingness to avail to the protection of the country of nationality or habitual residence due to persecution *or* a well-founded fear of persecution, the ability for the President to specify a nationality or country of habitual residence instead of proving an unwillingness to avail oneself to their protection, and an exclusion to refugee status to 'any person who ordered, incited, assisted or otherwise

Refugees are set apart in a unique category not only by the legal framework defining refugees and the organizational structure built around that definition but also by the 'forced' nature of their movement. The forced nature of refugees' movement challenges traditional economic notions of migration. Forced migration does not fit into either the historical-structural perspective which interprets movement based on capital demand or the micro-economic perspective which interprets movement based on rational action by individuals (Desbartes 1985).

Some argue in a postmodern or post-structuralist vein that the use of sharp classifications renders meaning false or null. Indeed, human movement can be more accurately represented as stemming from both 'force and choice' on a continuum of 'push' and 'pull' factors (Van Hear 1998; Gibney 2004). Furthermore, the term refugee can be contested as having arisen from experiences of violence, flight, and exile or as a bureaucratic label applied to states for political motives (Hein 1993; Zetter 1991).

Numerous recent authors lay a framework, which underlies the basis for this paper, that the lack of enjoyment of state protection separates forced migrants from other migrants (Betts 2009; Betts and Kaytaz 2009; Gibney 2004; Haddad 2003, 2008; Shacknove 1985). Implicit in this definition are the principles common in the contemporary dominate politics of liberal states that: i) everyone has a right to basic human rights, ii) states have an obligation to protect human rights as part of their sovereignty, and iii) forced migrants result when states fail to protect human rights (Betts 2009; Betts and Kaytaz 2009; Gibney 2004; Haddad 2003, 2008; Shacknove 1985).[8] The international community and liberal states then have an obligation to protect forced migrants' human rights (Turton 2003), and it is valuable to study them as a particular category.

Solutions for refugees

Acknowledging this particular protection obligation, the international community has created a basic framework for forced migrants falling under the legal definition of refugees through 'durable solutions' as well as the institutionalization of the pursuit for these solutions through international organizations such as the UNHCR and national structures. The UNHCR generally acknowledges 'three traditional durable solutions for refugees: voluntary repatriation, resettlement and local integration' (UNHCR 2011b).[9] This framework is widely accepted by other organizations and liberal states, including the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United States government.

The US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) acknowledges the same three durable solutions by framing them as 'Repatriation - going

participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion' (United States 1980).
[8] The cited authors express the overarching ideas. However, the obligations of states and exact definitions of human rights differ between authors.
[9] Resettlement is sometimes framed in a last resort framework as 'resettlement to a third country in situations where it is impossible for a person to go back home or remain in the host country' (UNHCR 2011a).

home when they are no longer at risk of persecution'; 'Local Integration - settling permanently in the country to which they have fled' and, 'Resettlement - settling permanently in a third country' (US Department of State 2010).

Multiple authors acknowledge the 'sedentary bias' of the durable solutions framework and development: a belief that refugee solutions require halting movement (Bakewell 2007; Long 2009; Long 2010; Monsutti 2008; Scalettaris 2009; Van Hear 2006). The UNHCR itself acknowledges a historical bias that secondary or onward migration signals a failure of integration within one of the traditional solutions and expressed a commitment to incorporating mobility through finding a strategy to address 'irregular onward movement' of refugees moving from one state to another (UNHCR 2007a; UNHCR 2007b).

Bakewell (2000, 2007) takes a migration approach to refugee movements and argues that in certain situations, such as Angolans in Zambia, imposing a framework of 'refugee problem' and solution fails to recognize individualized contexts and the potential normalcy of migration. Recently, Sturridge (2011) argued for a nuanced approach to mobility and for a tempered version of recognition of mobility as a limited solution for some refugees. Despite the use of different contexts and subtle differences in arguments, a consensus appears to be building globally around recognizing the potential for mobility in durable solutions, although structural changes have yet to be formulated or implemented.

The US refugee resettlement system

Within resettlement in the US, the solution is framed in a stationary manner, which creates a separate category and obligation for refugees. Like other states, the US signals a responsibility to refugees by designing a particular access to the social welfare system to facilitate their inclusion in society (Hein 1993: 55). The US views resettlement as a part of an international obligation and as a durable solution by using the UNHCR to help determine resettlement eligibility, sometimes framing resettlement as an option of 'last resort' or primarily for those who are 'at the highest risk' (PRM 2010).[10]

The core programmatic design for refugee resettlement has remained relatively stable since the passage of the 1980 Refugee Act in the United States (US Senate 2010; Zucker 1983). The US offers a relatively quick path to permanent rights with the requirement to apply for permanent alien status after one year, with the ability to apply for citizenship after five years, and with automatic citizenship to children born on the territory (PRM 2011).

Historically, the refugee resettlement system was *ad hoc* before 1980, and the domestic definition of a refugee referred only to those fleeing communism or from certain parts of the Middle East (Kennedy 1981). The legislature has control over admitting refugees and the ability to alter the parameters of the program, as seen by expansion of the definition to the UN definition in the 1980 Act. The executive branch, on the other hand, proposes the

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[10] The exact US justification for resettling refugees in general and for resettling particular refugee groups is contested and beyond the scope of this paper. Some have argued that the policy is a combination of US foreign policy and domestic interests (Gibney 2004).

refugee ceiling and implements the resettlement program through the federal agencies. The most contested part of the 1980 Act was the domestic portion of the refugee resettlement system. As Senator Kennedy reported, for refugee specific assistance, 'the conferees compromised on a one and a half year transition and a three year limitation.

This compromise, coupled with other authorities in the Act with no time limitation, adequately fulfills the federal responsibility in helping to resettle refugees' (Kennedy 1981: 12). This limitation of 36 months for refugee cash and medical assistance was shortened to eight months in 1991 (Bruno 2011: 5). The implication is both that refugees should become self-sufficient quickly and that the onus is not on the federal government to facilitate that sufficiency.

Importantly, the design of the institutional refugee resettlement program as a whole is also based on the notion that refugees will stay at their initial place of resettlement. Shortly after passage of the Refugee Act, Kennedy (1981) stated that its purpose was to provide 'federal assistance to help those admitted to resettle and to normalize their lives in local communities across the land.' This mission continues. Ten national voluntary agencies (Volags) are currently funded through PRM's Reception and Placement Program to decide on the initial placement of refugees through their network of affiliated offices throughout the country and to provide initial services of 90 days (ORR 2011c).

These Volags and other state and nonprofit services in the communities of resettlement offer additional services by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to provide 'refugees with critical resources to assist them in becoming integrated members of American society' (ORR 2011b). The allocation of funding for grants and assistance are based on initial points of arrival for the Reception and Placement Program or on previous arrivals in the past five years in the case of certain ORR's formula grants.[11] ORR recently described its aims as '…to prepare refugees who are resettled in the US for economic success and community involvement' (ORR Communication 2010). The notion of local integration into a community in which the refugees arrive is, thus, the primary design of resettlement services.

Secondary migration challenges the basic framework of resettlement as a 'sedentary' solution. Refugees are legally free to move within the US, and they are moving. This counters a conceptualization of refugees as passive, helpless actors who would be content in any community (Harrell-Bond 1986). The processes of 'conceptualizing' and 'labelling' can create categories not only for services, but also for identities (Turton 2003; Zetter 2010; Zetter 2006; Zetter 1991); in this case, the identity is rooted in the notion of a stationary solution, a re*settled* refugee, where the categorization of being a refugee continues. The exercise of agency through migration contrasts with the perceived 'forced' nature of previous displacements and the lack of agency in decisions of initial placement. The aspects of the challenge to sedentary labels posed by secondary migration could be explored in a number of directions; this paper focuses on the challenge to the concept of 'integration' in the US refugee resettlement program.

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[11] ORR has some discretionary grant funding, but secondary migrants are still not included in a prescribed manner for that funding.

Acknowledgement of secondary migration

Secondary migration itself is not a newly coined or noted term; it was mentioned twice in the 1980 Refugee Act. The Director of ORR is instructed to 'take into account the secondary migration of refugees to and from the area that is likely to occur' when deciding on the initial placement of refugees (United States 1980: Refugee Act (a)(2)(C)(iii)(IV)). Additionally the Director of ORR is instructed to maintain 'data on secondary migration of refugees within the US, in addition to periodic needs assessment for the program' (United States 1980: Refugee Act: (a)(3)). Despite these mandates, the data system has not been maintained and some argue that secondary migration is not given due weight when initial refugee placement is determined (Anon. 2010; Boumediene 2011).

However, there appears to be growing recognition of a gap between policy design and reality for the US refugee resettlement program created by secondary migration. ORR gives discretionary grants to specific communities for secondary migrants and commissioned a report on secondary migration in 2009. Susan Downs-Karkos (2011), the primary investigator of this report explained that:

> There was a growing interest in learning more about what was happening related to secondary refugee migration, including how both refugees and receiving communities were faring when there were unexpected influxes of refugees. Many communities hadn't necessarily known that these newcomers were coming and were not always prepared for them.

Although this 2009 report was never released and the structural features of the resettlement services have not been officially adapted to account for secondary migration, acknowledgement of the effects is widespread within US refugee policy circles.

In 2010, Eskinder Negash, Director of the ORR, stated an intention to negate some of the complications of secondary migration through two of his six guiding principles (Ababovich 2010). The first guiding principle acknowledges 'appropriate placement and services' as a 'preventative measure against the challenges brought by secondary migration' whilst his sixth guiding principle focuses on 'Data Informed Decision-Making' through developing 'a data system that can track initial placements, secondary migration, resettlement services rendered, and performance indicators; automate some case management functions; and interface with ORR's many data sources.'

However, the discourse of focusing on appropriate placement still clings to a notion of staying in the initial place of resettlement. Another of his guiding principles focused on 'front-loaded resettlement services so that refugees are empowered through early employment, reach self-sufficiency as soon as possible and become active, contributing participants in their communities.' This statement both implies that integration is a swift process and that integration through employment occurs in a local, rather than national, level.

Other departments and branches of government are also drawing attention to this chasm between policy and practice. The US Department of State requires reviewing of 'out' migration in its cooperative agreements for reception and placement funds (US State Department 2011b). In the previously highlighted report to the Committee on Foreign Relations in the United State Senate, titled *Abandoned upon Arrival*, one of the two case studies focused on a community impacted by a secondary migration population. The report notes that 'Burmese have arrived at a rate of two secondary migrants for each refugee directly resettled in the city.

The resources required to assist this flow of secondary migrants are not being directed to Fort Wayne [Indiana] because ORR and PRM have not established such a mechanism for tracking such migration patterns' (US Senate 2010: 8). Likewise, a 2011 Congressional Research Service Report (Bruno 2011) highlights secondary migration as one of the broad challenges. Service providers and advocates also widely acknowledge the challenges caused by secondary migration (Auge 2010; Interviews with author 2011). Church World Service, Episcopal Migration Ministries, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service issued a joint statement about the need to respond promptly to secondary migration situations where recently arrived refugees accept a job elsewhere but are still entitled to services (State News Service 2009).

A common sentiment expressed both by government officials and service providers in interviews was that secondary migration was one of the most important issues facing both individual communities and the entire domestic refugee resettlement system (Interviews with author 2011). Abdallah Boumediene (2011) of the Arab Community Centre for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) highlighted the gap created by funding and program design by stating:

> This issue of secondary migration is actually quite acute given the fact that when the State Department settles these people, they send them to specific states and there is a certain amount of money allocated to these states for serving these people. However, when these people, some of them move, let's say when they come from another state back to Michigan, the resources don't follow. It has resulted in a greater demand for services with less resources.

This resources gap – both funding and infrastructure - was continually highlighted and suggests the question of a larger conceptualization gap. The resources gap perpetuates a conceptualization that refugees *should* stay in one place while eligible for refugee specific resources. Norm-Anne Rothermel, the Pennsylvania State Refugee Coordinator viewed it as 'very hard' to change the structural organizations of the US resettlement program. After being probed, Rothermel stated her belief that refugees should not be allowed to move for around a year from the initial state of resettlement to allow them enough time to give initial resettlement communities a chance, to prevent the difficulties in and lack of shifting the administration of funds between US states as well as to nullify 'state shopping' (Rothermel 2011).

> The problem is that some refugees - I hate to say it – in fact, I just had a case where this particular refugee was state shopping. He was contacting me to see which benefits I had that was better than the state he was in. And I think that's what some of them are doing: they are state shopping.

She consequently viewed it as important for refugees to be in the same state for nine months to a year before deciding to move. This sentiment shows a tension between the agency of individual refugees and the institutionalized refugee system including federal policies, US states' resources, and local communities.

Accordingly, US refugee resettlement as a 'sedentary solution' merits examining on multiple levels. In our current system of ideals of liberal states, refugees are valuable subjects for study, as forced migrants caught without protection of liberal states but within an international framework. In the framing of resettlement as a durable solution, secondary migration challenges the sedentary nature of the system designed to provide the protection of a state and successfully 'integrate' refugees into the state and its society. No other country's resettlement system approaches the size of that of the United States. Yet, the topic of secondary migration, despite being acknowledged by service providers and policy makers, is widely neglected by the academic community.

Literature on refugee integration and secondary migration

Nevertheless, recognition of refugees' secondary migration and questions of refugee integration are not *entirely* new in academia. This section briefly surveys the academic literature, recognizing the gaps and building upon previous theoretical debates on secondary migration and on defining the 'integration' of refugees through economic and psychosocial domains. The theories and experiences with secondary migration and refugee integration contrast with an institutional emphasis for economic self-sufficiency in communities of initial arrival, leading to implications that refugee integration may be better conceptualized as multifaceted, national-level integration.

Literature on secondary migration

While recently secondary migration of refugees has received scant mention in academic literature, historically, a handful of authors have systematically examined the secondary migration of Indochinese refugees in the US. These refugees arrived in large numbers beginning in 1975 with no prior large ethnic community and with initially large welfare use. Furthermore, rich data sets on the migration of the earlier waves of resettled Indochinese refugees existed due to regulations that non-citizens were required to register with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) before 1982 (Forbes 1984).

Desbarates (1985) examined the primary placement and secondary migration of Indochinese refugee resettlement. She found that although a dispersal policy was initially pursued, it was somewhat counteracted by later resettlement through family sponsorship

and secondary migration patterns. Indochinese refugees were concentrated in a few Western states with high public assistance levels, large Asian communities, mild winters, and low unemployment rates. Furthermore, using a regression analysis of secondary migration data from 1978 to 1980, migration correlated the strongest with income and other indicators of overall economic survival. However, she cautioned against assumptions, including her own, that Indochinese evaluate migration in a 'push-pull' model fashion.

Forbes (1984) looked at both the Indochinese and other refugee resettlement in the late 70s and early 80s. He found that by 1980, 45 percent of the Indochinese refugees resettled in 1975 had moved.[12] Being placed in a state other than that of choice was most strongly correlated with likelihood for movement, but preference for populations of one's own nationality or ethnic group was also a contributing factor. By far, the most prevalent destination for the Indochinese and refugees overall was California, and, as of 1984, only five states had gained refugee populations in their social service assistance caseload through secondary migration.[13] Forbes further concluded that:

> …since secondary migration occurs outside of official channels, and therefore little advance notice or preparations can be made, the arrival of refugees through this route is likely to cause greater dislocations than is true of initial placements. Secondary migration is therefore more likely to lead to…community tensions and resentments…thereby aggravating feeling that adverse impacts accompany refugee resettlement. (Forbes 1984: vii)

In the framing of the US resettlement program and examining the effects of secondary migration, secondary migration has often been portrayed in this vein as negative for refugee integration and the resettlement system at large.

Literature on integration

The primary mission of the US resettlement program, as professed on the ORR website, is the integration of refugees. ORR defines its mission as, 'founded on the belief that newly arriving populations have inherent capabilities when given opportunities, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) provides people in need with critical resources to assist them in becoming integrated members of American society' (ORR 2011b). What does it mean for a refugee to be an integrated member of American society? This question remains unanswered as refugee integration continues to be a loose and undefined concept in the US.

The academic study of US refugee integration has branched into distinct strands throughout the years. No seminal piece exists on this subject, but much of the predominant literature coalesces around notions of economic integration as defined as employment or self-

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[12] In 1975, the US accepted more than 125,000 Indochinese refugees within a short period of time (Forbes 1984:7). This group is commonly referred to as the '1975 Indochinese.'

[13] These five states (and net-in refugee migrations) were California (22,546), Massachusetts (578), Virginia (430), Rhode Island (254) and Wisconsin (70) (Forbes 1984: iv).

sufficiency[14] or notions of cultural/psychosocial integration (Fix *et al.* 2001; Stein 1979). I conceptualize integration as three pronged – legal, economic, and psychosocial integration; the later two aspects are examined in the academic literature and in policy while the legal path for refugee integration remains clear and relatively uncontroversial.

The conceptualization of integration through economic self-sufficiency is fairly straightforward and prevalent throughout governmental programs, although the time frame and role of economic self-sufficiency has been controversial (Lewin Group 2008). Economic self-sufficiency is the first point mentioned in the 1980 Refugee Act and its reauthorization in 2002, and the idea of self-sufficiency is reiterated eleven more times in the legislation.

The 1980 Refugee Act states that the Director of ORR shall 'make available sufficient resources for employment training and placement in order to achieve economic self-sufficiency among refugees as quickly as possible.' Economic self-sufficiency is generally defined as 'earning a total family income at a level that enables a family unit to support itself without receipt of a cash assistance grant' and is used as the basis for funding of most of the refugee programs (ASPE 2008).

Some debate centers on whether employment should be emphasized more or less than other aspects such as education and cultural orientation. The 1980 Refugee Act stresses the current design of swift employment by stating that 'employable refugees should be placed on jobs as soon as possible after their arrival in the United States.' The result is an oft-unexamined prioritization of economic integration into the community of initial arrival over national-level economic integration or psychosocial integration.

In the psychosocial strand, integration has historically been viewed as assimilation, losing the culture of origin to conform to the dominate culture, but is now often defined as acculturation, the process of being able to participate in the dominate culture.[15] Acculturation can be conceptualized as interacting with two simultaneous, but separate spheres of culture: the culture of the origin – i.e. the non-dominate culture - and the culture of the United States – i.e. the dominant culture (Birman 1994; Birman and Tyler 1994 as quoted in Vinokurov *et al.* 2000). Acculturation provides the ability to navigate and take part in the dominant culture, expanding the sphere of culture of the US, while not necessarily affecting the sphere of the culture of origin (Hadley *et al.* 2006). Psychological immigration literature describes acculturation as a 'complex pattern of continuity and change in how people go about their lives in the new society' (Berry 1997).

The contemporary United States literature generally uses acculturation as a synonym for integration, although integration can also be viewed as one of the acculturation strategies,

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[14] Economic self-sufficiency has traditionally explicitly been the primary goal of the program (Halpern 2008). Employment measurements additionally have been and continue to be the primary integration framework measured (Gebre-Selassie 2008).

[15] Much of the psychosocial literature focuses on early waves of resettled refugees such as the Indochinese or Soviet Jewish (Vinokurov *et al.* 2000) refugee cohorts.

and the US notion of integration lacks a solid conceptual framework.[16] Berry (1997) outlines the normative questions in determining acculturation strategies in Figure 1 below.

Current policy and advocacy in the United States is primarily framed around a consensus over integration as the acculturation strategy to pursue, respecting the notion of the US as a settler society incorporating different groups and contrasting with the notion of forced assimilation (Fix *et al.* 2001; Freeman 1995).[17] For the purpose of this paper, integration is examined as the acculturation paradigm.
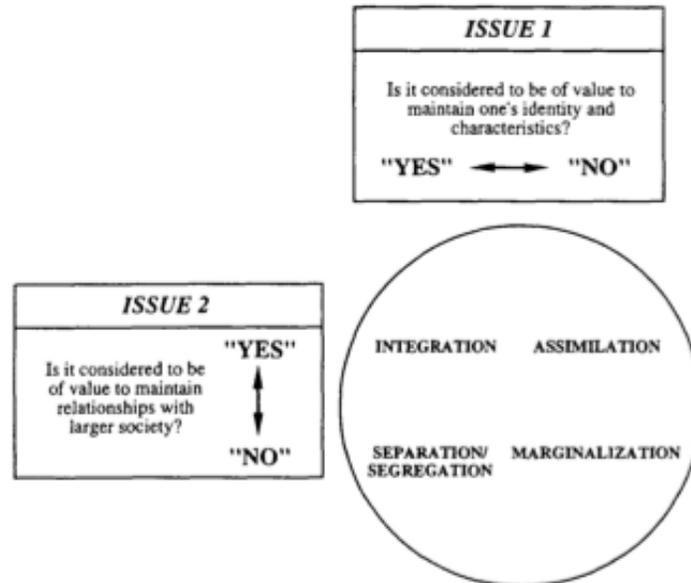

Figure 1: Acculturation strategies (Berry 1997)

The US integration of immigrants in general, and refugees in particular, remains fragmented, not only by different subject lenses such as economic or psychosocial, but also at different levels (Schmitter-Heiser 1998). Portes (1995) envisions the fragmentations of incorporation into 'three levels of reception': 1) government policies, 2) civic society and public opinion, and 3) the characteristics of ethnic communities. Government policies may include ethnic communities, but inclusion in different domains also relies on the desires of the public and on the ethnic communities. In this way, inclusion is a 'two-way street' between those 'being included' and those 'including others', or perhaps even a three-way intersection with the additional official inclusion of the government. Policies and realities at the national, state, and local levels further fragment refugee integration. The level of integration of refugees—whether it should take place on local, state, national, or global community levels—raises additional questions.

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[16] Adaptation is a third term sometimes used synonymously (Desbartes 1986; Portes 1969).

[17] Despite the contemporary emphasis on integration and acculturation, the words 'integration', 'acculturation', and even 'assimilation' never appear in the 1980 Refugee Act.

This paper will touch on the effects of secondary migration through different academic strands of integration and different levels of integration whilst recognizing that refugee integration is defined and affected by more complex factors, as recognized in the international literature. Inherently, refugee integration is a subjective category, which includes notions of converting 'a space into a place' through feelings of belonging, often at a local level (Cresswell 2004; Massey and Jess 1995), a problemitized concept for refugees (Malkki 1995; Malkki 1992; Turner 1969).

Categorizing refugees as a whole itself is problematic; individual experiences with integration are affected by nationality and ethnic group, race, age, gender, and other identifiers as well as by their resettlement location (Desbartes 1986; Rose 1995). Despite the importance of localized notions of place, city-level discussions on integration are rare (Allsopp *et al.* 2011; Gross 2010; Lefebre 1968, cited in Fernandes 2007; Squire 2009). Thus, I use the individual refugee and community level framework for analysis in this paper, attempting to compliment the broader literature while recognizing it as an imperfect frame.

Furthermore, domains or paths to inclusion are not easily split into economic or psychosocial domains. For example, civic participation and citizenship is a concrete pathway to integration (Petsod 2006). Ager and Strang's work on integration includes their 2008 article, 'Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework', based on research in the United Kingdom. Their conceptualization of integration does not correlate to a singular notion or marker; it builds upon a foundation of rights and citizenships with facilitators, social connections and then markers and means of employment, housing, education, and health.

Ager and Strang concluded their discussion of their framework by noting the continuation of controversy over integration 'both as a policy objective and as a theoretical construct' (Ager and Strang 2008: 186). The lack of a comprehensive conceptual framework on US integration of refugees is indicative of this complexity of understanding refugee integration.[18]

The lack of consensus and policy over integration coupled with the lack of framework or examining of secondary migration points to the need for further research and conceptualization. When combined with the particular place of resettled refugees in the global structure and policy concerns, it becomes imperative to examine the impact of secondary migration on integration. Secondary migration alters refugees' economic and psychosocial integration by affecting individual and community experiences. Given the federal mandate of the US resettlement program, the structure and vision of the resettlement may be better coalesced around long-term integration of individual refugees into the country as a whole, rather than economic integration into the community of initial arrival.
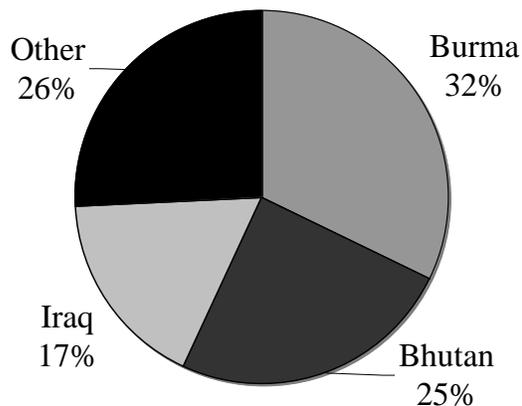
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[18] In the course of the research, no singular seminal work on refugee integration in the US emerged. Furthermore, no interviewee or contacted scholar provided such a conceptual frame.

Case studies of resettled refugees in the United States

Contemporary secondary migration affects a breadth of refugee populations. Further, each individual refugee and individuals from the communities differ in experiences with and perceptions about secondary migration. This section briefly outlines the three case studies and the following sections explore perceptions, primarily from service providers and policy officials, of the effects of secondary migration on the integration of the refugee (i.e. how individuals are transformed), on the integration of the community (i.e. how communities are transformed), and how this gap between policy and practice leads to the need to reframe integration as that of individual refugees no matter where or if they migrate, rather than integration into a particular community.

Arrivals in FY 2011 by 'Country of Chargeability' as of 31 July 2011

The case studies chosen for this report of Burmese in Midwest meatpacking towns, particularly Garden City, Kansas; Bhutanese in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and, Iraqis in Detroit, Michigan. They were chosen to probe different contexts, not to be representative, based on conversations and the literature review of academic documents, policy reports, and news reports. The case studies cover examples of secondary migration from the three largest refugee groups by country of chargeability, that is country of origin, being resettled in the past three fiscal years and in the current fiscal year to date (US State Department 2011c). These recent years have also seen an increase in resettlement in general when compared to previous years.

U.S. Refugee Resettlement Arrivals by 'Country of Chargeability'
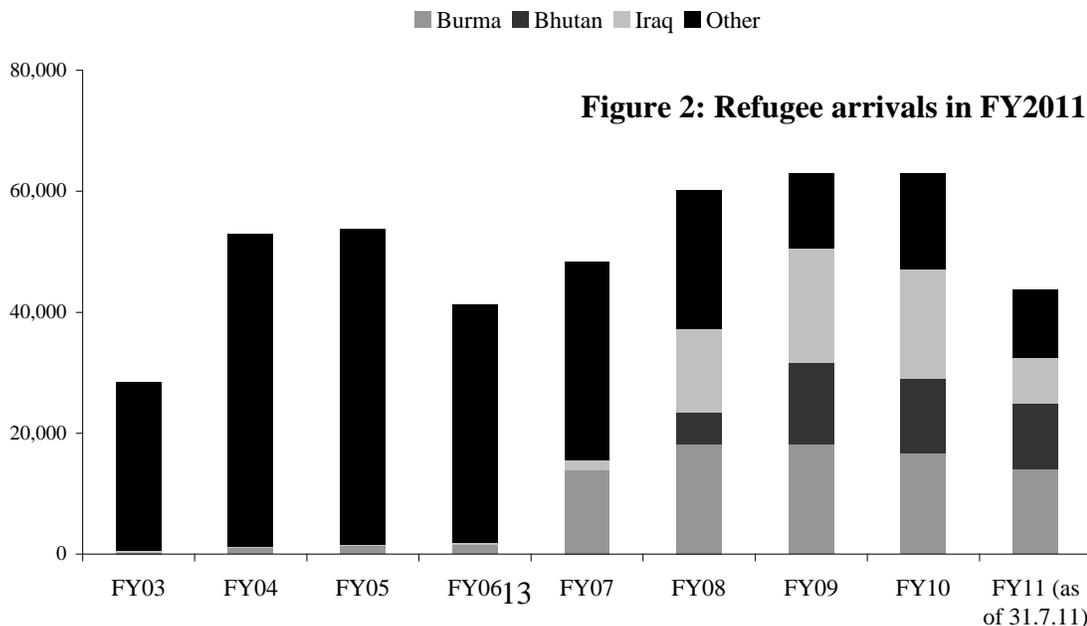
Figure 2: Refugee arrivals in FY2011

Figure 3: US refugee arrivals FY2003 to FY2011

No national data on secondary migration in the last 30 years was available to analyze for this report. Although individual communities track secondary migrants who register with them, this data is highly problematic due to reporting issues and not being available in a compiled manner. Furthermore, as noted in the literature review, it is useful to look at impacts and integration in a localized manner. Communities are not monolithic and experience a diversity of relationships with influxes of refugee populations.

These experiences reveal successes and challenges of the national refugee resettlement program as viewed as a 'durable solution', incorporating a conceptual framework of integration into a community on various dimensions. Understanding secondary migration is thus key to current paradigms of integration. This section summarizes the background of the three case studies before examining them in conceptual frameworks in the next section.

Burmese in Midwest meatpacking towns

Although the number of Burmese in the various meatpacking towns is unknown, much attention has been drawn to the large number of refugees in these communities and recent influxes of Burmese (Downs-Karkos 2011; Kenny and Lockwood-Kenny 2011). The Spring Institute wrote a report in 2009 for the ORR on secondary migration of refugees in a number of communities with or near meatpacking plants: Greeley and Fort Morgan, Colorado; Huron, South Dakota; South Sioux City, Grand Island, and Lexington, Nebraska; Dodge City and Garden City, Kansas; and Cactus/Dumas, Texas (Downs-Karkos 2011; Lincoln Journal Star 2009; States News Service 2009).

Most of these localities do not have refugee resettlement programs; indeed, only about two percent of refugees have been resettled in non-metropolitan areas (Singer and Wilson 2007). Perhaps the most drastic case from the Spring Institute was found in Moore County, Texas, which includes the cities of Cactus and Dumas. In the 2000 census the county had a population of 20,121 with 0.9 percent Asian, but reportedly 'overnight had a huge influx of people from Burma' with '900 people from Burma [living] in Dumas' (Census 2010; Downs-Karkos 2011). Such significant numbers affect the town as a whole, especially in this area where most of the housing was old Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) government trailers due to earlier devastation from a tornado (Downs-Karkos 2011).

Although each community has its own dynamics and refugee populations, frequently with large numbers of Somalis, this report will focus on Burmese in Garden City, Kansas. Garden City has long been a site for migration, with previous waves including Vietnamese refugees and various Hispanic populations (Abdurahman 2011; Broadway 1987).[19] In 2009, the city was estimated to have 1200 refugees, out of a 2010 population of less than 27,000 (Census 2010; Downs-Karkos 2011).

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[19] Although outside the scope of this paper, Downs-Karkos (2011) elucidated that migratory patterns to Garden City involve various migratory patterns including temporary migration and migration of select family members. An examination of the forms of the migrations is a potential area for further research.

Mohamed Abdurahman, Regional Refugee Coordinator for Southwest Kansas, Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, noted, 'in Southwest Kansas, the majority are the Burmese now… and we think Burmese are about 400, 500 in Garden City alone', and 'the majority is Karen, followed by Chin, and then smaller ethnic groups (Abdurahman 2011).[20] Garden City Community College received a $90,000 grant under the refugee social services program for 'basic social services targeted at secondary population' in the federal fiscal year 2010 (ORR 2011). Employment is almost exclusively in the meatpacking plants (Abdurahman 2011).

In certain dimensions, Garden City emerges as a low-conflict community for the Midwest food processing towns. Indeed, when compared to its neighbor communities of Dodge City, Kansas and Emporia, Kansas, Downs-Karkos noted that the community tended to have more of a positive attitude towards refugees, more positive press coverage and more ways to address the impacts of this demographic change. The long history of immigrant and refugee waves contributes to less conflict (Downs-Karkos 2011; Stull 2011). Although many of the perspectives from the Burmese migration to Garden City later discussed serve as a good example of issues raised by secondary migration to a smaller, rural community, it should not be considered representative.

Bhutanese in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area, as defined by Allegheny County, has seen an influx of Bhutanese refugees since they first began being resettled there in 2008 (Adhikari 2008; Buell 2011). Allegheny County has a 2010 population of 1.22 million, and Bhutanese community leaders estimate the Bhutanese population at about 2,000 (Aizenman 2011). This Bhutanese population is much greater than the population resettled in formal channels and additionally significant due to the lack of immigrants moving to the area, decreasing population, and relative lack of non-white ethnic diversity.

According to the 2010 Census, Allegheny County lost 4.6 percent of its population between 2000 to 2010, and the county is the second oldest in the US after Palm Beach County in Florida (Census 2011; CNN 2010; Lord 2011). Additionally, according to 2007 to 2009 government estimates, 95 percent of the county population describes itself as white, non-Hispanic or black, leaving relatively little room for ethnic diversity (US Census Bureau 2009). Indeed, the metropolitan region has been listed as the whitest of the US benchmark metropolitan regions, and the Hispanic (1.1 percent) and Asian (1.5 percent) populations remain virtually negligible according to the 2007 to 2009 estimates (Pittsburgh Quarterly and Pittsburgh Today 2011).

Three refugee resettlement agencies operate in Pittsburgh: Jewish Family and Children's Service (JF&CS), Catholic Charities, and Northern Area Companies. Recently, JF&CS

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[20] This research project did not aim, or have the resources, to probe the differences in experiences between ethnic groups, and they were generally conflated in discussions. However, as later noted, the different ethnic groups in Garden City came together to form the Burmese Refugee Community of Southwest Kansas.

decided to scale up their program, and Catholic Charities independently decided to scale back. Additionally, Northern Area Companies began its refugee resettlement program in 2011. Interviewees explained the reorganization as a result of internal organization decisions but with real effects on refugees and secondary migration.

As Kheir Mugwaneza, previously at Catholic Charities Refugee Services and currently at Northern Area Companies Community Assistance and Refugee Resettlement, elucidated 'since Catholic Charities reduced their numbers, we've had [Bhutanese] people coming during the R&P [Reception and Placement] period, like they get to Cincinnati, and the same month or the very next day, they come to Pittsburgh. They're in touch with their families here, so their family's just going to tell them, just come. When you get to Ohio, just tell them you're going to come to Pittsburgh.'

Other service providers noted Bhutanese refugees arriving in Pittsburgh after having being in the US for around a year. Bhutanese refugees have become the major refugee group for initial arrivals as well as secondary arrivals in Pittsburgh. In discussions with their national Volag on which populations to resettle in Pittsburgh, JF&CS of Pittsburgh began requesting Bhutanese refugees, classifying the population as a 'good fit for Pittsburgh' because it already had a small host community with English speakers (Aizenman 2011).[21]

However, Pittsburgh has no additional resources to deal with the secondary migrant influx and little media attention on the issue, as demonstrated by a lack of newspaper articles. However, the *New York Times* noted the difficulties for Bhutanese living in an expensive location such as New York City and the frequency of migration from the city (Semple 2010). Furthermore, attention on the issue is prevalent for service providers, state refugee coordinators, and the refugees themselves.

The service providers emphasized the influx and the strain on resources, and Norm-Anne Rothermel (2011), the Pennsylvania State Refugee Coordinator, stated that, 'I would say… that the biggest area [for secondary migration] is Pittsburgh. I hear a lot from them about secondary migration.' Discussions about Pittsburgh as a desired destination have even reached the refugee camps in Nepal (Aizenman 2011; Mugwaneza 2011; Rai 2011).

Iraqis in Detroit, Michigan

Even before the influx of Iraqi refugees to the US in FY2008, the Detroit area was known not only as the key hub for Iraqi refugees but also for the impact of the economic downturn. From 1983 to 2004, approximately one in five Iraqi refugees arrived in Detroit, establishing it as a hub before the sharp economic crisis (Shoeb *et al.* 2007; Singer and Wilson 2007). Prior to May 2010, Michigan was the state with the highest unemployment rates in the US for four years straight, and Detroit is well known as an economically struggling metropolitan area with high unemployment rates.

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[21] This sentiment will be analyzed later in the paper. However, it is worth noting that it was expressed by multiple interviewees as a generalized non-hostile atmosphere of city community to refugee community relations due in part to economic and educational mutually beneficial opportunities.

In recent numbers, the Michigan unemployment rate was projected at 11.8 percent in February 2011, down from 15.2 percent in February 2010 (US Department of Labor 2011). The economic situation contributed to the US State Department placement of a two-year restriction on resettlement to this area by only resettling new arrivals with close family members to Detroit from 2008 to 2010. This restriction was lifted in June 2010 after the doubling of initial resettlement funds to $1,800 per refugee and in recognition of the needs of secondary migrants to the area (Grand Rapids Press 2009; Karoub 2010).

The number of Iraqi secondary migrants to Detroit is unknown, like in the other case studies, but it is estimated to be significant. From FY2006 to FY2008, the number of reported arrivals of Iraqis to Detroit increased 1,565 percent (Georgetown University Law Center 2009). Thus, while the federal funding formula accounted for 845 refugees per year in Michigan, the state received 3,243 refugees per year, largely Iraqi refugees to the Detroit area (Georgetown University Law Center 2009). State Refugee Coordinator Al Horn noted that one agency in the Detroit area reported that, prior to 2008, it could 'identify about 150 refugees served that moved from another state. By 2010, this had increased to 450' (Horn 2011).

There are three refugee resettlement agencies in the Detroit area—USCRI (United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants) Dearborn, Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, and Refugee Services of the Archdiocese of Detroit—and additional organizations that serve refugee populations. Boumediene (2011) noted that the health services at ACCESS (Arab Community Centre for Economic and Social Services) received about 2,500 refugees per year on average passing through in the past few years for new refugee medical screenings; this number includes new arrivals and secondary migrants. USCRI received funding from ORR for a new special program to target services for secondary migrants and later received permission to offer services to anyone who arrived in the past 12 months, although they have had difficulty in reaching secondary migrants who may need the services (Alazem 2011; Anon. USCRI 2011; Murphy 2011).

Even without the ability to isolate the numbers and distribution of secondary migrants nationwide or in these communities, the effects of secondary migration are tangible. Secondary migration disrupts the design of the resettlement system to allocate funds for integration and use of social services based on local resettlement agency and state of initial resettlement. Although the secondary migration clearly goes against US policy designed for refugee integration, its actual effects on the integration of individual refugees and communities are more nuanced as the following two sections will show.

Perceived effects of secondary migration on refugee integration

As noted in the introduction and literature review, the influxes of secondary migration challenge the sedentary notion of integration of individual refugees. Although not easily separated, the next section will focus on the effects of secondary migration on the perceptions of the wider community – i.e. neighborhood, town, or metropolitan area.

This section will probe the effects of secondary migration on the economic integration and cultural/psychosocial integration of refugees, while prefacing the discussion by acknowledging both the dependency of analysis on the definition of integration and the lack of disruption by secondary migration to the legal rights or national/political integration of refugees. Although secondary migration is typically perceived as having no effect on legal integration, it is also perceived as having positive effects on economic integration and mixed effects on cultural/psychosocial integration of refugees.

Rights and citizenship, the basis for integration according to Ager and Strang (2008), are not directly affected by secondary migration within the US; there is no sedentary bias. Refugees have the right to exercise agency through movement within a country, just like any other legal resident or citizen, and they have the right to retain their path to citizenship.

Refugees are required to apply for legal permanent residents status after one year and maintain all rights, no matter their location or if they move. Rights and citizenship restore a refugee from his or her particular position to a relationship to a liberal state, placing this domain securely under the responsibility of the US federal government as enshrined in the 1980 Refugee Act. Little literature focuses on rights and citizenship for refugees resettled in the US, likely due to its non-controversial nature.

The difference in social service benefits between US states, often referred to as the lottery effect, is a more controversial issue (Zucker 1983; International Rescue Committee 2009), but it parallels the effects of a US citizen having access to more or less services based upon the state of birth. The concern over 'state shopping', refugees considering levels of welfare benefits when deciding where to move, is likewise no different from US citizens weighing considerations when moving. It can be argued that such differences are part of the economic system of the United States which incentives movement to certain locations. Thus, these differences are ultimately a question of the (federalist) form of the US government and not ones particular to refugees or their legal rights.

Economic integration impact

The economic integration and self-sufficiency of refugees is affected not only by benefits but also by job opportunities and the cost of living in certain location. As Murage (2011), of the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board in Pittsburgh and previously a Job Placement Specialist with Catholic Charities Refugee Services in Pittsburgh, noted the waves of secondary migration depend on the experience of those who first arrive here. 'Where there are jobs, they will go.' The secondary migration of refugees is normally perceived as positively affecting their financial situation, as demonstrated by multiple comments in the cases of Bhutanese moving to Pittsburgh and Burmese working in meatpacking plants.

When asked the reasons that the Bhutanese are moving to Pittsburgh, the individuals working with Bhutanese refugees in Pittsburgh responded that it was economic. Kheir

Mugwaneza, Northern Areas Companies, Community Assistance and Refugee Resettlement, enumerated these reasons as:

> The first one is employment. And, the second one is that it's more affordable, the rent especially. They say it's more affordable here. And, as far as employment, me as an employment specialist, I can see that. Like, every refugee who comes here, and they really, really want to work: they are going to find a job. We get people coming from California and especially Idaho. I don't know what's going on there. People come here, and they've been there (in the US) for six months, a year, they've never had a job. So, the main reason is to have a job.

Additionally, Mugwaneza described a swift path to economic self-sufficiency for many of these secondary migrants, often without the help of outside agencies:

> ...I know a place where I took six new second migrants. It's a little bit far from Pittsburgh. So, they had to drive. Those guys, they came to see me, and I took them there. Six of them, right. But, after six months, I found out there are like 80 Bhutanese refugees working there. So those guys, initially they helped other second migrants to find jobs there. And that's really good. I called and said, oh, we have 80 people here. And the six guys, they brought others. So, there are second migrants who have never been to Catholic Charities or JFCS [Jewish Family & Children's Services]. They came, they have an apartment, and they find a job within one week.

This swift path for economic self-sufficiency is a key goal in the US resettlement system, and, ironically, often achieved outside of the system. Bhutanese refugee and translator Sancha Rai commented that 'in Nepal, Pittsburgh is very famous' now because of the people moving to Pittsburgh for jobs, affordability, and relative safety.

This story of secondary migrants independently migrating and finding jobs without agency assistance was reiterated in interview after interview, from Iraqi refugees assisting relatives to vast social networks of Burmese refugees being utilized to inform and secure jobs for fellow Burmese refugees. The ingenuity of Burmese refugees was noted both in strategies of primary workers living in a meatpacking town during the week and traveling back to cities during the weekend and of enterprising refugees creating a shuttle service to the plants (Anon. Senate staff member 2011). In particular, Burmese refugees of Karen origin have organized a carpool for the two-hour ride from Minnesota to meatpacking plants in Demison City, Iowa since jobs have dried out there (Anon. Burmese refugee 2011).

There exists some evidence that early job opportunities are crucial and that 'occupational and economic adjustment tends to lead to socio-cultural adjustment by refugees' (Stein 1979: 27; Portes 1969). Theories and research suggest that initial employment is likely to be of a much lower occupational status than the refugees' occupational status in their country of origin; and, this is followed by a few years with high motivation to improve job status and a sharper likelihood of increasing status during this initial stage (Finnan 1981;

Stein 1979). However, after this period, it becomes more difficult to improve occupational status. At the end of the first decade, the occupational status of the refugee will likely remain lower than that in the country of origin, although economically and socially the refugee will do well (Stein 1979).

Indeed, Stein's research suggests that accepting certain jobs may inhibit further training that could lead to higher occupational status. In particular, multiple interviewees perceived refugees working in meatpacking plants are often too busy to take English classes (Anon. Burmese refugee 2011; Downs-Karkos 2011). One Burmese refugee (2011) commented that in this environment, 'young people take classes to get their GED. They try. Old people don't really think about it.' Economic integration thus directly affects the exposure of refugees to others and their personal perceptions of integration.

Psychosocial integration impact

The causes of migrating from the place of initial resettlement also fall under psychosocial integration. As the case study of refugees in the Detroit area demonstrates, perceived reasons for and impacts of secondary migration include improving or hurting psychosocial integration, as defined by mental health, social networks, and an improved ability to navigate in the community. When asked why Iraqi refugees migrated to Detroit, Boumediene of ACCESS summed it up as:

> I think the main reason is because there is a large concentration of Iraqis. They have acquaintances, friends, or they hear that there is a large concentration of people from their background. So, there is a certain comfort level with being in an environment where there are people of their kind. And, there is a reputation obviously of the diversity, the ethnic diversity that exists in this area as well. So, there is a comfort level. There are relationships, friends, family, acquaintances, what have you.

Factors including ethnic communities, familiarity with diversity, and welcoming environment can perhaps help refugees feel less alienated and turn a space into a meaningful place (Weine 2011). In the model of integration expressed in most of the US literature, this environment would contribute to integration.

However, given that the system allocates funds based on preceding years' arrival numbers, often there are not the resources for resettlement agencies or other nonprofits to provide services to help acculturation and broader psychosocial integration. Leslie Aizenman of Jewish Family & Children's Service in Pittsburgh noted how due to resource constraints, '...the secondaries don't get as much case management, and that's hard for them, they could use it.' Mugwaneza (2011) echoed Aizenman's sentiments:

> Because agencies don't have extra funding, it does affect the services provided to second migrants. Then you go from just focus on employment, and do some case management if needed... because I believe they need

services just like anybody else. Because they come here are second migrants, it doesn't mean that they're more self-sufficient than the new people who are here.

Mugwaneza further noted the importance of initial appointments and the ability to receive better services through initial appointments arranged by caseworkers who have institutional knowledge of the US system and community to share. Underlying such statements are a value placed on the services of resettlement organizations and an assumption of individual refugees as dependent on assistance. Secondary migration challenges these assumptions by removing these services. No literature on secondary migration currently has the rigor to make a judgment on the validity of these assumptions, other than noting the variations in individual refugees' experiences and needs.

Concern was raised about refugees' psychological integration given high caseloads and refugees not receiving acculturation and mental health services as needed. This issue was brought up with particular emphasis to Iraqi refugees in the Detroit area. Iraqis are cited as a population with high rates of mental health issues (International Rescue Committee 2009). Boumediene from the Community Health and Research Center in ACCESS in the Detroit area works on issues concerning mental health. He noted that for ACCESS:

> …I know it for a fact, that the demand for the services we get far outstretches the resources that we have. The caseloads are high for people; whether it's for mental health or social services, it's not enough. And, we've been lobbying for adequate resource levels to serve these people. Because one of the things is that when people are getting more or less into a desperate situation, they become depressed, and you have situations where there's domestic violence, there's substance abuse, there's an impact on kids' school performance. It really impacts not only the family, but the community at large. I think that the better we help these people integrate and become self-sufficient the better the community will be.

He continued this discussion by focusing particular attention on those 'who suffer from chronic conditions like PTSD or depression. Because if they are not properly treated or given proper care, the actual cost to society is far more than if they were treated initially.' Additionally, this issue shows how the individual integration of the refugee strongly impacts the community.

Perceived effects of secondary migration on community integration

Integration is usually framed with the understanding that refugee populations certainly impact whole localities, including the community as well. Downs-Karkos (2011) framed integration as a long term-goal:

> Integration in many ways is conceptualized in terms of how immigrants and refugees become part of their communities and how their new "receiving"

communities come to accept and embrace newcomers and the diversity that they represent. Ideally, the integration or adaptation process is a two way street. Immigrants and refugees come to these communities, and in order to adapt, learn English, enroll their children in school, find employment, and work towards citizenship to become fully contributing members of society. There is also a significant role for the receiving community to play in that process: such as providing language interpretation in health or social service encounters, support for learning English, and a welcoming climate. For communities are healthiest if they recognize that by working proactively on integration they will be a stronger community, and this will be mutually beneficial.

In order for this integration process to take place, a community must adapt to these incoming populations by including them in offering services and adopting a particular attitude that welcomes or incorporates refugees. Interviewees expressed different levels of community reception and transformation based on secondary migration influxes.

In all three case studies, refugees and influxes were seen as potential forces for 'revitalization' of neighborhoods, albeit often accompanied by community tensions. In the case of Detroit, the city itself has lost 25 percent of its population from the 2000 to 2010 Census, helping to spur a study, which recommended, in the words of Sister Beth Murphy of Catholic Services of Macomb, 'doing strategic planning around the idea that they [immigrants including refugees] need to be welcome and assisted with their integration into the community. I don't think that's a new idea. I think it gives you the sense that there are people who want to welcome refugees and understand that they're important in the community.'

Boumediene (2011) noted the skill set that refugees can offer, particularly often 'highly, highly qualified and educated' Iraqi refugees, and 'an opportunity to take advantage of some great skills that could positively impact the community.' The Detroit community was described as 'very receptive' to refugees and helpful from informal translation at the grocery store to having a specific person assigned to refugees in the Department of Human Services (Anon. USCRI 2011).

Likewise, the Bhutanese population was generally perceived as positively affecting Pittsburgh. Service providers discussed their role filling jobs in a county with a declining and aged population. Aizenman noted that Bhutanese are settling in the neighborhood of Carrick in Pittsburgh, which has a declining population. She continued that '...we've worked with the community council there. So, hopefully, it'll revitalize Carrick.' She discussed a perception of the Bhutanese as likely to stick around in this neighborhood and as reliable tenants. In turn, she perceived a positive response from the neighborhood including satisfied landlords and a councilwoman happy to advertise for English tutors.

The ability for refugees to be entrepreneurs was further noted by their opening up shops. Mugwaneza (2011) noted, '…we have a new Bhutanese store, they just opened one there. So, it's part of the community already. I don't think it has affected them [the community] in

a negative way, I think it's in a positive way.' This sentiment was paralleled by Boumediene's (2011) statement that, 'they [Iraqi refugees] are hard workers, they are motivated. And we can see that the Dearborn area [of Metropolitan Detroit] for instance, it is by and large immigrants and refugees who had a very positive impact in that area. And it's booming, its been booming despite the downturn in the economy and auto prices. So, I think that by and large these are people who could have a great benefit on the economy and the communities that they serve.' The refugee and larger communities can thus have a beneficial symbiotic relationship.

On the flip side, community relationships could be strained through cultural misunderstandings and discrimination from an increase in the refugee population (Abdularaham 2011; Downs-Karkos 2011). Rothermel, the Pennsylvania State Refugee Coordinator noted the discussion between refugee coordinators about cultural clashes in different meatpacking towns:

> Unfortunately, these meatpacking factories are in little towns where no one has ever heard of a refugee. And they're having problems: cultural problems, language problems, and everything like that, but these refugees keep coming to get these jobs and the plants hire them because they're good workers.

This strained relationship can be seen through a general atmosphere of tension and discrimination and through overburdened resources (Abdularaham 2011; Downs-Karkos 2011).

Most interviewees noted strained public resources such as social services, schools, and public health clinics. Although this was perhaps most acute in the rural regions with little experience with refugees (Downs-Karkos 2011; Stull 2011), it was also prevalent in cities with refugee resettlement agencies. Murage (2011), Mugwaneza (2011), and Aizenman (2011) noted school personnel had expressed feeling overburdened by refugee populations suddenly increasing in certain neighborhoods. Sometimes this contributes to issues such as school providing proper enrollment and parent/student communication.

As the Pennsylvania State Refugee Coordinator, Rothermel noted that, although she had not heard personally any complaints about the medical services being 'overburdened,' she had read about the case in North Carolina with 'secondary migrants coming in and applying for medical assistance, and it was really stretching their funding. And the state refugee coordinator there was starting to get rumblings and complaints from the medical assistance people that this was really stretching their resources.' She further remarked that a system over its capacity affects all services, to the general public and to refugees themselves. Thus, secondary migration 'might affect integration of refugees as a whole is if they're coming into an area with large numbers that takes away the resources available to help other refugees. They all end up getting less services as a result. Which would cause them not to be integrated as quickly' (Rothermel 2011).

The issue of strained resources spilled over into concerns about the supply and use of private resources, most notably housing. From her research on secondary migration to rural meatpacking areas, Downs-Karkos highlighted housing:

> Housing was a big issue. Many of these communities had housing shortages already, and having large influxes only exacerbated those challenges. Probably every single one of these communities had housing shortages or problems with the quality of housing, with some of the housing quite old and in need of repair. In Catus [Texas], refugees were living in FEMA trailers. And, often housing was overcrowded, for some landlords found too many people living in one apartment but refugees sometimes felt that doubling or tripling up in an apartment was a great way to save money and important way culturally to show welcome to your friends. This was an example of a cultural gap that is not uncommon in communities.

This statement notes not only the challenge of limited resources but also the cultural misunderstandings that arose between community members and refugees who arrived via secondary migration. Downs-Karkos also commented the need to dispel myths and to improve living environments for refugees and community members. 'One of our most significant lessons from this project [research on rural secondary migration] was the importance of building connections between new refugees and receiving community members.'

Many of the communities with refugee influxes have recognized conflicts and/or the need to ensure a welcoming environment and created some type of community body to build these connections and focus on refugee integration. Downs-Karkos (2011) noted that in most of the communities studied, 'there was some kind of mechanism for people to continue to communicate and deal with issues as they arose,' whether through a citywide refugee alliance or a refugee and immigrant task force. In Detroit, the Refugee Task Force restarted in 2009 due to a desire and need, after it had previously existed in 2007 and 2006 before loosing funding (Anon. USCRI 2011).

These types of organizations have also gone statewide such as the Michigan Refugee Council that selected one of its main foci the issues around secondary migration (Boumediene 2011). In Garden City, the Coalition of Ethnic Minority Leaders is one organization helping with community integration (Ahmed 2010). The presence of these bodies speaks not only to the impact of secondary migration on communities and to potential solutions but also to a real need to bridge between a federal policy which does not account for secondary migration and the impact of secondary migration on both the refugees and the communities to which they migrate.

Considerations in reframing the US refugee resettlement system

The gap between US refugee resettlement policy and practice of secondary migration is ultimately created by the agency of the refugees in voluntarily moving. In order to close

this gap, the resettlement model would have to either stop the movement or recognize refugees' agency, as the US recognizes the agency of its citizens.

In this paper, I have argued that resettlement offers a durable solution in part by allowing refugees to move freely within the country to best meet their own integration needs (e.g. employment opportunities, access to social networks, or access communities with a welcoming environment). These are the same rights offered to US citizens, and indeed, over ten million Americans moved counties in 2008 (Bruner 2008 from IRS Data). In order to adapt to this agency, the US refugee resettlement model would need to be reframed to account for internal migration and to focus on the integration of particular refugees instead of whole communities.

The importance of internal migration was expressed by one refugee in a Midwest meatpacking community when he noted, 'that's why the US is like heaven for me, I can go anywhere I want. You can walk wherever you want. In Thailand, you are a refugee, and your movement is restricted.' This connects back to the introduction and the earlier question of whether refugees should even maintain the categorization 'refugee' after resettlement. In certain ways, such as the freedom of movement, there is no separation. This same refugee commented that, in the meatpacking plant, individuals 'don't even know that I'm a refugee. They don't really care who you are. In the US, we're the same. Nothing different.' This sentiment holds truths of the current refugee resettlement system: refugees are encouraged to gain full legal rights and become self-sufficient as soon as possible.

However, for other matters such as economic and psychosocial integration, refugees' needs are arguably much greater than those of the general population. The US federal government positions itself as being obliged to help refugees by recognizing refugees as caught between liberal states in the international system and by creating a framework to pursue 'durable solutions' including resettlement. Thus, the federal government holds a particular responsibility to them for their integration—legal, economic, and psychosocial—in accepting them for resettlement. This seeming paradox between the agency in creating ones own 'solutions' and the obligation of assisting in creating a framework for 'solutions' is at the center of the debate around secondary migration.

Secondary migration is a purposeful, planned action; refugees create their own solutions. Multiple interviewees mentioned refugees' ingenuity in the process of secondary migration, such as having certain family members arrive first and collaborating with individuals from the same ethnic group to share housing or transportation. Sancha Rai (2011), a secondary Bhutanese refugee in Pittsburgh, described the process of his fellow Bhutanese in deciding to migrate:

> Oh, yes, secondary migrants, they know they have limited support form resettlement agencies, but they still they take this struggle to come here. Before coming here, they don't come blindly or randomly. They first just know the situation. Like what are the services that will be available for secondary migrants from the resettlement agencies. And, they know they only get employment help, and some other referrals, nothing more than that.

Ok, and they ask: will there be welfare benefits? Ok, here they get welfare benefits. And, after that, they decide to come here. And, also, they have someone, a relative or friends or somebody to help them at the beginning to find job or even sometimes to pay their rent, a loan, they get help from some people. And, once they get job, they save their money and pay back.

Hence, in many ways there is a resettlement system that accounts for secondary migration: the informal network of co-ethnic groups (Kenny and Lockwood-Kenny 2011). As Downs-Karkos (2011) described that case of rural secondary migration, '…in most of the smaller communities, some type of entity steps up to meet the emerging needs of refugees, perhaps a grassroots ethnic-based group or a nonprofit organization.' In Garden City, the Burmese Refugee Community of Southwest Kansas formed in 2009 and cuts across ethnic groups of Burmese, Karen, and Chin in the community (Ahmed 2009).

Given the existence of these informal support networks, an argument could be made that the federal system of refugee resettlement does not need to consider secondary migration. However, as discussed throughout this paper, both secondary migrant refugees and communities of secondary settlement face additional struggles and tensions. If the US believes in durable solutions for refugees and in the refugee resettlement system, the federal government would then logically strive to make the system fair and flexible—which means accounting for secondary migration.

The subsequent portion of this section discusses five key issues in the reframing of the US resettlement system: 1) data and research on secondary migration, 2) who is framing the debate, 3) resource allocation accounting for agency and secondary migration, 4) flexibility and duration of refugee assistance, and 5) conceptualization of US integration. Questions on the use of data and on whose perspectives are represented underpin the reconceptualization process, while assistance allocation and its duration both raise practical and larger conceptual issue. Concomitantly, there is the question of the overall goal of the US resettlement process and the conceptualization of integration.

Data and research on secondary migration

This paper has shown a clear need for further research and data collection, both to further probe the effects of secondary migration and to use in the reconceptualization and reformation of the resettlement program. The Office of Refugee Resettlement is frequently chastised for its lack of research-based strategic planning and coordination (Human Rights Action; US Senate 2010). The topic of secondary migration serves as no exception. Data was inaccessible nationally and for all three case studies.

Without further research or data, the knowledge about the effects of secondary migration remains the perceptions of those whose voices are heard. The conclusions in this paper represent the views of the author based in part on qualitative interviews from a selected sample of service providers, refugees, academics, and policy makers who tended to hold positive views of the resettlement system. The ideas advanced in this paper, while

preliminary, are not uncontroversial. Barnett of the Center for Immigration Studies reached a different conclusion with his May 2011 assessment of the US resettlement system. His recommendation is to:

> …discourage "secondary migration"….This causes unplanned and unfunded demands on social services at the "secondary migration" destination and can be largely prevented by allowing access to social services only in the original state for some period of time after arrival. (Barnett 2011: 3)

Barnett based this recommendation and his overall critical piece on resettlement primarily on his own opinions with a review of some previous policy reports and a call for further evaluation. Data collection could remove some of the guesswork by determining the magnitudes of secondary migration as well as more tangible measures of effects on social services, individuals, and communities.

Policy groups and the US federal government have drawn attention to the need for data in determining resettlement policy, although this has not resulted in action (Lewin Group 2008; ORR 2010). My argument for a comprehensive evaluation of the domestic resettlement system is not new; previous studies have called for such an evaluation to create a basis for understanding what works and what does not (IRC 2008). The Lewin Group's study (2008) commissioned by ORR called for strategic planning to include ongoing tracking and data collection as well as a comprehensive evaluation with long-term measurement.

One of the Office of Refugee Resettlement's six guiding principles is 'Data Informed Decision-Making' (US Department of Health and Human Services 2010; ORR 2011c). Furthermore, in a recent communication to Senator Lugar, the ORR stated that the office is considering expanding 'iRADS [*Refugee Arrivals Data System*] to address priority areas such as secondary migration, overseas medical screening information and enhanced tracking of funding, service delivery and program outcomes' (US Department of Health and Human Services 2010). ORR should follow through on this consideration. Tracking and researching problematic areas are the first step in understanding how and when to target them.

Who is framing the debate?

The issue of whose opinion or research is being presented in regards to secondary migration correlates to a question of who is forming resettlement policy and conceptualizing the process. Whose perspectives should matter - those of the public, of the refugees being resettled, of international norms, of research, of federal policy? In this paper I have argued for a reconceptualization of the US refugee resettlement system based on the perspectives expressed by all of these as expressed through the literature, policy, and news reports review as well as the semi-structured interviews.

Certain sources tried to express others' perspectives, such as news reports or academics discussing the opinions 'of the public' or service providers expressing the opinions and experiences 'of refugees.' All of the perspectives expressed may not be generalizable, and the resettlement system may value certain perspectives over others in the power structure or in an attempt to create a 'just' system. Further research should aim for a more systematic look at the above perspectives as well as more thoroughly probe the value of the various perspectives.

This speaks to one of the major questions on secondary migration: so far as secondary migration is a problem, for whom is it a problem? This report showed that secondary migration problematizes the sedentary integration framework of the US resettlement policy and can effect the economic and psychosocial integration of both individual refugees and communities. However, these effects are not necessarily 'problems' for either refugees or communities. On the contrary, they often demonstrate the resiliency of individuals and of networks of individuals. Beneath this dialogue is a philosophical debate as to whether the US refugee system should target problems or promote resiliency: whether the conceptualization should focus on deficiencies or strengths?

To a certain extent, this paper suggests that the US resettlement system should focus on both – it should simultaneously promote individuals finding their own solutions such as through secondary migration and acknowledge that refugees have particular needs if they are to be integrated into society. This is not unproblematic. Individuals and society influence cannot be isolated just as vulnerabilities and strengths cannot be easily identified and targeted. Likewise, their identification as 'vulnerabilities' or 'strengths' is affected again by who is labeling them as such. In relation to secondary migration, one issue is practicality of targeting funding to individuals on the move.

Resource allocation accounting for agency and secondary migration

I argue that in reframing the issue resources—primarily funding—should be based on the individual refugee, not the community. Funding following the refugee has been proposed in multiple reports, including *Abandoned upon arrival: Implications for refugees and local communities burdened by a US Resettlement System that is not working,* and *Refugee Crisis in America: Iraqis and their Resettlement Experience* (Georgetown University Law Center 2009; US Senate 2010). The task of shifting allocation formulas is difficult but not insurmountable.

Populations of the US in general are continually changing, but governmental agencies at different levels take responsibilities for censuses that determine and allocate funds based on shifting populations. The federal government, states, and cities allocate funding based on population counts (Georgetown University Law Center 2009). A system with more rapidly shifting funding requires resources and political will. Altering the system in this manner places a belief in the normality of migration and in a value of the refugee.

The reoccurring theme in this research is that secondary migration ultimately simplifies to the agency of the refugee. Effects of secondary migration on communities are contingent on the resources of the individual refugees – refugees may be perceived as a revitalizing force bringing resources (e.g. labor skills, entrepreneurial ideas) into the community or as dependent individuals taxing the resources of the community (e.g. unfairly burdening social services). Refugees are commonly perceived to bring 'short-term costs and long-term benefits to their receiving communities' (Zucker 1983: 186). Initial analyses indicate that this sentiment may be misguided. Although integration is a long-term process, refugees can bring short-term benefits (such as labor) to communities, and problems (such as tensions) can perpetuate if they are not addressed. Changing funding formulas to better follow refugees would reinforce their ability to bring resources into the communities, ease any strain on services and resources, and potentially prevent long-term issues.

The flexibility and duration of refugee assistance

Accepting the obligation to a federal resettlement system argued for in this paper, another key issue raised by secondary migration is the temporal framework for integration within the resettlement system. Does an emphasis on immediate assistance mask other issues? A previous study commissioned by ORR questioned whether short-term self-sufficiency should be the emphasis (Lewin Group 2008).

Most interviewees stated that they had no idea when, after arriving, refugees were migrating. One interviewee suggested that most Burmese move to meatpacking towns after a year, although he cited cases of individuals who moved to Kansas two weeks after arriving (Anon. 2011). A study on Iraqi refugees found that of the 'Iraqi refugee secondary migrants interviewed in Detroit, [they] spent an average of fifty days at their initial placement before moving to Detroit' (Georgetown University Law Center 2009: 35), and many did not continue receiving assistance after migrating. In the best-case scenario, refugee cash assistance and medical assistance lasts eight months, and individual refugees are left with ongoing issues and vulnerabilities such as chronic health and mental health problems, the need for education and retraining, and the economically difficult environment. These issues have been raised as particularly acute for Iraqi refugees arriving with high rates of vulnerabilities during the economic crisis (Alazem 2011; Boumediene 2011; IRC 2008).

This research suggests that although intense short-term services should continue, integration should be conceived as a long-term process. This means both measuring outcomes on a longer-term basis such as five years after arrival as well as continuing to offer services for refugees struggling after eight months or a year, including vulnerable populations. ORR already does this on an *ad hoc* basis through discretionary grants to vulnerable populations such as those to Somali Bantu women. The federal government and other entities and agencies should also consider offering drop-in services to all refugees. This would ease complications arising from issues such as chronic underemployment without knowledge about how to advance, integration struggles for individuals with particularly strong barriers such as mental illnesses and language difficulties, unanticipated

difficulties after secondary migration as well as unforeseen events such as the economic downturn, which hit low-income and new populations particularly hard. A period of up to five years may be ideal considering this would cover them until they are eligible to become full US citizens.

Conceptualization of refugee integration

The gap between reality and policy raises questions outside of the narrow purview of secondary migration; primarily, what is the integration paradigm for the United States? Does the government and country agree with the framework proposed in this paper of legal, economic, and psychosocial integration with the acculturation philosophy that it is of value to maintain relationships to larger society and to maintain one's identity and characteristics (Berry 1997)?

In other countries and historically, dispersion has been framed as a method both to decrease the 'burden' to any one community and to increase the interaction of refugees and community members by decreasing the strength of an ethnic community. The current system has an *ad hoc* dispersal by having rules for placement by voluntary resettlement agencies, ORR, and PRM.[22] One refugee interviewee commented that he tries to live alone since he will not learn anything about the 'real American life' from within his national or ethnic community (Anon. Burmese refugee 2011). Additionally, Murage (2011) discussed an individual case of a refugee who had recently moved to Pittsburgh from the Dearborn area of Detroit after having lived there since arriving in the 1980s and working the same job: 'He just stayed in their society. When he was laid off from his job, he didn't speak any English.' Now, as an older man, it is harder for this refugee to learn English and adapt in 'American society' (Murage 2011). Thus, secondary migration counters potential integration goals by concentrating ethnic communities and raises this question on what the goals of integration should be.

As demonstrated in this report, the issues around refugee resettlement, secondary migration, and integration are complex. They involve interplay between diverse individuals, societal structures and norms, and power dynamics of who decides the goals of the refugee resettlement system. This paper has shown that the US government does not approach refugee resettlement in a way that meets their professed goals. ORR recently stated the domestic goals of the resettlement program as: '(1) capitaliz[ing] on the strengths and contributions refugees have to offer, (2) remov[ing] any barriers to opportunities for economic success and community involvement and (3) creat[ing] such opportunities where none exist.' In order to meet these goals, it could be beneficial to reconceputalize resettlement as individual refugees integrating over time into the fabric of the country as a whole.

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[22] As expressed in the report *Refugee Crisis in America: Iraqis and their Resettlement experience*, 'And although the PRM, the ORR, and Volags each impose their own restrictions on placement, no one agency is responsible for refugee placement as a whole, which directly affects refugees' ability to integrate into their new communities' (Georgetown University Law Center 2009: 35).

Conclusion

Any meaningful reconceptualization and structural changes require political will and resources harnessed by that political will. Although policy makers at all levels – local governments, state, federal departments, congress, advocacy organizations – clearly acknowledge secondary migration and the complications to the US resettlement system, no systematic changes have been made. This situation fails to acknowledge the lacuna between the ideals of refugee integration and the reality.

In reality, refugee resettlement is not a solution based on sedentary integration. All of the major refugee populations are significantly shifting their locations, affecting both individual refugees' integration and communities at large. However, the most appropriate framing of refugee integration in light of secondary migration is to frame refugee integration as individuals integrating into the liberal state. This allows for integration to be defined as national legal rights with economic and psychosocial integration into the national consciousness – rights on par with those of native citizens. Given the particular responsibility of the liberal state towards 'solutions' for refugees caught between states, the federal government should still allocate resources to facilitate this integration; it should just be done in conceptual and practical manners that allow for refugee agency and migration throughout the country.

In the broad scheme, incorporating secondary migration as an explicit part of resettlement policy is crucial to challenge sedentary notions of solutions and to value the agency of refugees. This incorporation does not diminish the power of liberal states in their responsibility for 'solutions' for refugees or in the critical role that US refugee resettlement plays in this solutions framework. Manifestly, accounting for secondary migration becomes a link in holistic solutions for refugees.

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