Rebuilding the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program in the Next Four Years

2 pm ET, Wednesday, October 28, 2020
Welcome

I am Matthew Wilch, Refugee Policy Advisor, USCCB/MRS, and I am the moderator for today’s panel.

Welcome to all who are viewing this webinar: those from Justice for Immigrants (JFI) (the Catholic network of networks), RCUSA Members and Member affiliates, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, SCORR, and other guests.
Introduction

Charles Shipman, State Refugee Coordinator
State of Arizona

Barbara Strack, Former Chief, Refugee Affairs Division
Department of Homeland Security

Rachel Pollock, Refugee Resettlement Director
USCCB/MRS

Matthew Wilch, Refugee Policy Advisor
USCCB/MRS, Moderator
A Conversation

This webinar will be a conversation about some major challenges of rebuilding the resettlement program under a continued Trump or a new Biden Administration. We will examine opportunities to meet those challenges, and how best to pursue those opportunities.

Refugee resettlement takes refugees out of harm’s way, provides them a new life, and reunites them with their families.
Overview of Challenges

- Operating/advocating in an uncertain environment — 10 min.

- Understanding/responding to global resettlement needs — 10 min.

- Securing the important humanitarian, strategic, and economic benefits of resettlement — 10 min.

- Building back from the unprecedented low level of admissions (86% drop in refugee arrivals) — 10 min.
Challenge 1: An Uncertain Environment

Operating and advocating in a time when

- The refugee program is in the spotlight
- All of society is navigating COVID-19
- New champions are coming forward
THE NUMBERS

- 79.5 million forcibly displaced
- 26 million refugees
- 1.445 million refugees need resettlement (UNHCR)—region-by-region commitment
- US Typical PD: 95,000; region-by-region commitment
- TRUMP FY21 PD—15,000; no region-by-region; narrow categories: religious persecution, Central Americans, Certain Iraqis, “other” refugees.
- BIDEN—125,000 refugee admission pledge
Challenge 2: Understanding Resettlement Need--2

BEHIND THE NUMBERS

- Understanding need/response at federal policy, operational level
- Understanding Resettlement Need/Response from State Level
- Understanding Resettlement Need/Response from Catholic Social Teaching
Challenge 3: Securing US Interests

- Securing the important humanitarian, strategic, and economic benefits of resettlement
  - Humanitarian leadership
  - Foreign policy, national security interests
  - US humanitarian/economic interests
  - US Values
Challenge 4: More Seats in the Lifeboat

- Building back from the unprecedented low level of admissions (86% drop in refugee arrivals)
  - US Government $; mobility; innovation
  - State level rebuilding
  - Community level rebuilding
Q&A