



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

RESEARCH BRIEF

FINDINGS FROM THE NEW AMERICANS PROJECT

ASSESSING THE HUMAN SERVICE LANDSCAPE IN CENTRAL OHIO

Immigrants are a growing part of the Central Ohio community. Human service organizations—such as schools, hospitals, social service agencies, and community-based ethnic organizations—provide an array of services to the growing New American population. These organizations help mediate the transitions faced by immigrant and refugee populations. If we are invested in supporting New Americans in Columbus, we need to understand the human service landscape of the region. This project examined formal, informal, and volunteer services to see what the community is doing well and where improvements could be made to keep Columbus a welcoming city where New Americans can rebuild their lives, contribute, and thrive.

DATA COLLECTION

94

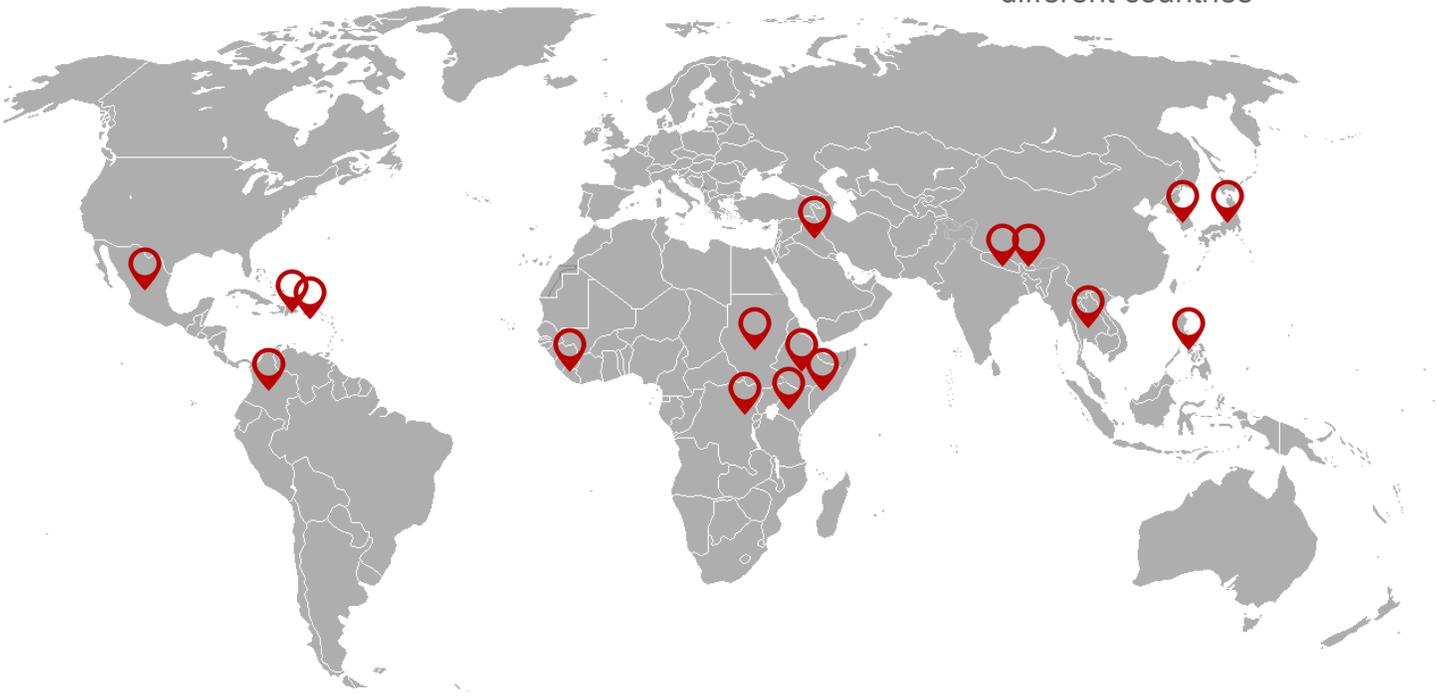
Human service organizations completed online surveys

18

In-depth interviews with human service professionals

48

Focus group participants (community members and leaders) representing 19 different countries



KEY FINDINGS



Many human service organizations (68%) in central Ohio are serving New Americans, but the New American population still have limited access, **particularly to legal and mental health services.**



While language translation is widely available, it does not necessarily translate **cultural interpretation**, greatly jeopardizing services.



Grassroots ethnic organizations are **bridging the gaps** between mainstream service providers and the New American communities. Yet, they have limited resources and are faced with many challenges.



Human service organizations overwhelmingly agree on the problems facing New Americans, however there is a **lack of consensus around solutions.**

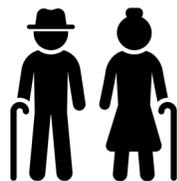


More **service coordination** and **collaboration** is needed among human service organizations, grassroots ethnic organizations, and the New American communities to provide culturally responsive services.

EMERGING ISSUES IN NEED OF IMMEDIATE ATTENTION



Opioid and related substance abuse



Aging and late-life migration



Human trafficking



Violence against women



Mental health



New American youth

CONCLUSIONS

There is strong consensus that Columbus is a welcoming city. While study participants identify social issues and gaps in service provision, they also underscore the crucial role of culturally-responsive services. Implications discussed in this report are grounded in the lived experiences of New Americans, which will go a long way in strengthening the human service landscape, and ensuring that Columbus remains home to a vibrant and diverse New American population.

ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS

Drs. Arati Maleku, Njeri Kagotho, Sharvari Karandikar, and Cecilia Mengo conducted the assessment of the human service landscape pertaining to the needs and capacity of the growing immigrant population. The Ohio State University College of Social Work has faculty expertise in a wide range of issues relating to immigrant and refugee populations. Our faculty work with many community partners and leaders to address these pressing issues. Other team members: Bridget Freisthler, Vanessa Baaklini, and Caroline Filbrun.



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To read the final report, please visit: go.osu.edu/NewAmericans

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