

**Thank you for joining today's webinar
on *Community-Based Organizations in
Orientation*.**

This webinar will be recorded and archived on the COR Center website, at <http://www.culturalorientation.net>, for later download or viewing.

Community-Based Organizations in Orientation

September 27, 2012

Presentations:

Chum Awi

Pastor, Chin community – Lewisville, TX

Colleen Mahar-Piersma

Associate Director, Cultural Orientation Resource Center

Bhadra Rai

Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston – Houston, TX

Djimet Dogo

Africa House, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization – Portland, OR

Phuong M. Do

Director of Training and Technical Assistance, SEARAC

Today's session

Presentation Overview

- ▶ Presenters from community-based organizations
 - Description of their organization and discussion of the orientation they provide
- ▶ Cultural Orientation Resource Center
 - Community-based organization responses to an online survey about orientation content and delivery
- ▶ Southeast Asia Resource Action Committee (SEARAC)
 - SEARAC technical assistance approach to support emerging ECBOs to develop strong service programs

There will be an opportunity for questions and answers after each presenter.

Community-Based Organizations in Orientation

Presentations:

Chum Awi

Pastor, Chin community – Lewisville, TX

Colleen Mahar-Piersma

Associate Director, Cultural Orientation Resource Center

Bhadra Rai

Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston – Houston, TX

Djimet Dogo

Africa House, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization – Portland, OR

Phuong M. Do

Director of Training and Technical Assistance, SEARAC

Chum Awi, of Chin Development Association

- ▶ Chin Development Association (CDA): organized by 12 leaders in Lewisville, TX in 2009
- ▶ 2009 was when leaders realized that Chin refugees have disadvantages in services to them because there is no Refugee Resettlement agency in the area.
 - no services provided for language proficiency,
 - no training for job skills,
 - no care for youth education, and
 - no child care.

They decided to form CDA in order to be able to find better ways and means of providing those services.

Leaders looked for help from offices of refugee services in Dallas and Fort Worth. They started to attend ORR annual conference. They contacted SEARAC and got trainings for technical assistance. It got a small grant from SEARAC for youth programs in July 2012.

CDA: Community Background

- ▶ Chin refugees are people from Burma where farming is the only way of earning for living. English is so difficult for them. They were not educated well, and have no job skills for industrial countries.
- ▶ They need:
 - extensive learning of English
 - training in job skills
 - basic computer knowledge
 - longer grants for food stamps and Medicaid
 - child care allowance, and
 - after school program for young people
- ▶ Some resettlement agencies provide some part of programs. They are aware of the needs of child care, youth education, more English teachings, ...









CDA: Service Needs

- ▶ Longer grant of food stamp and room rent will give Chin refugees a better chance to learn English
- ▶ Refugee services such as ESL, training for job skills, cultural orientation, after school programs, summer camps for youth, child care programs for families
- ▶ Priority issues are child care, youth education, ESL for adults, and training for job skills
- ▶ Farming Opportunities for adults

CDA: Community Challenges

- ▶ Income
 - Mothers care for children without any income
 - Fathers' income is not enough for families
- ▶ Language: Parents/adults ignore English language
- ▶ Children's education and care
 - Parents do not take care of education of children
 - Refugee children have disadvantages in learning
 - Children play games and roam after school
 - No good performances on homework
 - Babies are not taken care of very well in modern ways
 - Head Start program is neglected by baby sitters
 - Children have no good facilities and toys to play with

CDA: Targets

CDA's targets are:

- ▶ Integration through education & business with Individual Development Accounts
- ▶ For Adults: ESL and training for job skills & farming
- ▶ For Women: home-based child care business
- ▶ For Youth: better education and leadership
- ▶ For Children:
 - ▶ Head Start programs by age level 1-4
 - ▶ Learning at home with good materials

CDA: Orientation Provision

How do I provide orientation?

- ▶ Hands-on experiences & workshops; home visits
- ▶ Targeted at youth, but adults encouraged to participate

Benefits of orientation

- ▶ Young people enjoy being together with their friends. They listen to teachers, they want to learn more from each other, and they want to play together. They know that education is important for their future life.
- ▶ Adults realize that English is a basic requirement to become good citizen of the USA.
- ▶ Home child care system is very effective. Mothers are baby sitters of their own as well as of other families.



CDA: Successes and External Challenges

Successes and challenges for CDA

- ▶ Some young people graduated from college; they will be future leaders of the community
- ▶ Leaders at this point of time need to lay down good foundations for the community
- ▶ Education at all level for the community is needed
- ▶ The city of Lewisville does not welcome refugees warmly
- ▶ Community development program for refugee is less
- ▶ Mainstream organizations should pay attention to new organizations like ours

CDA: Future plans and strategies

- ▶ Introducing the organization to others
- ▶ Getting 501©(3) status
- ▶ Recruiting volunteers and making good use of time
- ▶ Prioritizing project and grant writing
- ▶ Implementing projects: main concern
- ▶ Building relationships with government agencies, social organizations, individuals, and companies
- ▶ Building trust within the community
- ▶ Promoting self-sufficiency and long term integration

Community-Based Organizations in Orientation

Presentations:

Chum Awi

Pastor, Chin community – Lewisville, TX

Colleen Mahar-Piersma

Associate Director, Cultural Orientation Resource Center

Bhadra Rai

Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston – Houston, TX

Djimet Dogo

Africa House, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization – Portland, OR

Phuong M. Do

Director of Training and Technical Assistance, SEARAC

Cultural Orientation Resource Center at CAL

Funded by the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration to:

- ▶ Research, develop and disseminate **resources** about refugee training and resettlement
- ▶ Provide **technical assistance** to refugee service providers regarding refugees' cultures, languages and orientation needs
- ▶ Develop a globally linked network to **exchange** refugee orientation information, concerns, and best practices

Funded by ORR to provide technical assistance on:

- ▶ **enhanced and extended orientation** for **ORR-eligible clients** (refugees, asylees, entrants, etc.)
- ▶ **characteristics, resettlement, and integration** of these groups

To strengthen domestic orientation

- ▶ Assess current practices
- ▶ Assess desired outcomes
- ▶ Assess support and resource needs
- ▶ Develop tools to support effective delivery of orientation



Domestic O&I: Methods

Tools include:

- ▶ Survey
- ▶ Focus groups and interviews with refugees and service providers
- ▶ Group feedback sessions with agencies



Key questions

What do refugees need to know to successfully resettle?

- ▶ Knowledge, skills, attitudes
- ▶ Before resettlement, during the R&P period, and during eligibility for ORR-funded services

Key questions for domestic CO survey:

- ▶ How is CO delivered?
- ▶ What topics are covered?
- ▶ Gaps in current practice
- ▶ Successes and challenges of CO
- ▶ Availability and use of resources



Survey (non-resettlement agencies)

On average, how many refugees does your organization serve annually?

of Responses (N=29)

1-50	3
51-100	4
101-500	15
More than 500	7

What topics do you address?

Topic	# of Responses (N=29)
Health	14
Employment	10
Housing	9
Education	9
Transportation	8
Your new community	7
Government/public assistance eligibility and application process (including welfare and food stamps)	6
Cultural adjustment	5



Former refugees; same background

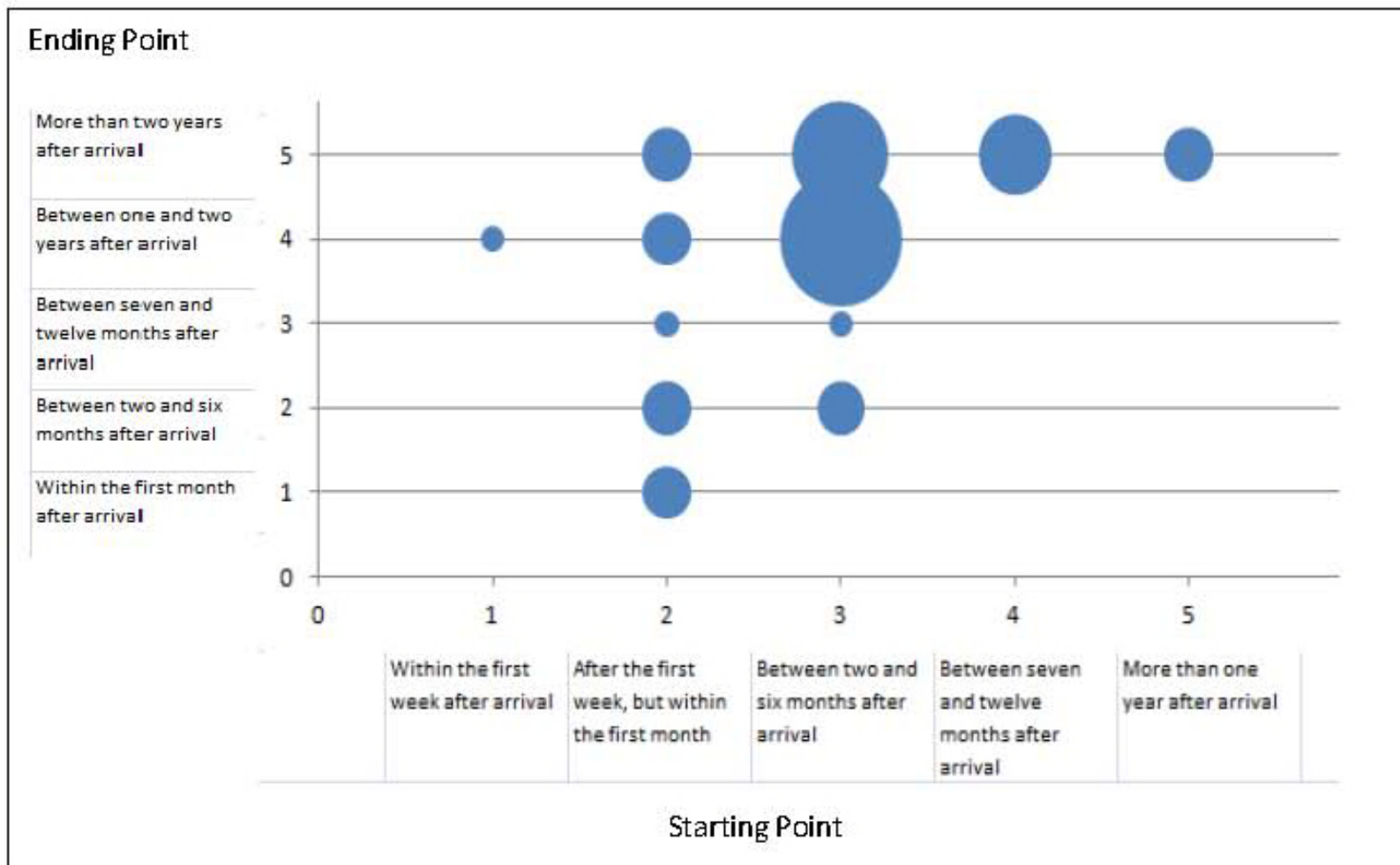
What proportion of your agency staff who provide CO are former refugees?	# of Responses	
	CBOs + ECBOs (N=19)	Identified Others (N=28)
All	3	2
Most	4	4
Half	5	0
Some	5	8
None	2	14



What amount of time are refugees provided with CO by staff from the same ethnic/language background?	# of Responses	
	CBOs + ECBOs (N=20)	Identified Others (N=28)
Always	2	5
Usually	8	3
Sometimes	7	6
Rarely	1	7
Never	2	7



When do they start, and when do they finish?



Funding; Partnering

How does your organization fund CO?	# of Responses (N=21)
State funding	13
Foundation grant	9
Donations	11
Other: No special funding (operates through other programs)	1
Other: City/local funding	1

Partnering with other organizations	# of Responses (N=20)
Resettlement agencies	15
Other community-based organizations (CBOs)	15
ESL providers	12
Religious organizations (including churches, temples, mosques)	12
Medical/public health services	13
Vocational/employment services	11
Schools or school districts	11
Public safety departments (police, fire department)	9
Other: Other non-profit assistance providers	1



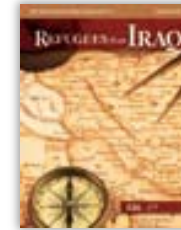
Level of Satisfaction with Various Aspects

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of CO as conducted at your organization.	% Satisfied + Very Satisfied	
	CBOs + ECBOs (N=20)	Identified Others (N=25-27)
The amount of time available for CO	60%	78%
The selection of topics addressed in CO	90%	93%
The amount of funding provided for CO	40%	41%
The amount of materials for use with refugees	45%	67%
The quality of materials for use with refugees	65%	74%
The amount of training offered to staff who provide CO	35%	65%
The amount of materials for use in training staff to provide CO	30%	65%
The quality of materials for use in training staff to provide CO	35%	64%

COR Center: Current Resources

New groups:

Backgrounders and Culture Profiles, videos, etc.
(gathered in resource packages)



CO overseas:

CO program profiles, highlights, and photos

Resources for refugees:

Welcome to the United States set, videos



Tools for trainers:

Training for the Non-Trainer: Tips and Tools

Cultural Orientation for Refugees: A Handbook for U.S. Trainers

Videos and related lesson plans

For all service providers:

Refugee Discussion group: questions, answers, and resources



Community-Based Organizations in Orientation

Presentations:

Chum Awi

Pastor, Chin community – Lewisville, TX

Colleen Mahar-Piersma

Associate Director, Cultural Orientation Resource Center

Bhadra Rai

Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston – Houston, TX

Djimet Dogo

Africa House, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization – Portland, OR

Phuong M. Do

Director of Training and Technical Assistance, SEARAC

Mr. Bhadra Rai, Bhutanese Community of Houston, Texas

- ▶ Bhutanese Community of Houston (BCH) was founded by Mr. Bhadra Rai and with other Bhutanese senior adults.
- ▶ BCH was established on July 1, 2009.
- ▶ The purpose of the organization is to address and help preserve social, cultural, health, education, and charitable issues of the community in order to facilitate wellbeing.
- ▶ When we saw our people, we don't have rice cooker in refugee camp. We don't know how to use it. There are many problems we saw in our community for newly arrived refugees. So, our board started Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston.

BCOH: Differences in cultural orientation

- ▶ The Cultural Orientation given in refugee camps is different from what we face here. There are different rules and regulations in different states. We arrange our cultural orientation on the basis of what we face in reality in our individual lives, after we came to Houston, Texas.
- ▶ There are orientation classes in resettlement agencies but we provide orientation in our own language from our own deep experience



BCOH: Orientation Class

- ▶ We focus especially on adults and youths.
- ▶ We have family from 0–3 months after arrival in Houston area.
- ▶ The orientation class is 3 hours in duration.
- ▶ We use hands-on experience and lecturing.



BCOH: Orientation Topics

There are many topics that we discuss in Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston. They are:

1. How to introduce yourself
2. About our health, as in, “Health is wealth”
3. How to become ready for job interviews
4. How to ride metro and to find an address
5. Importance of personal documents
6. Safety in home and outside the home
7. How to use kitchen wares as oven, gas stove, fire extinguisher and so on...

8. Benefits from resettlement agencies and government:

- Food Stamps, Medicaid, Gold Cards & Chips

9. About Money (\$)

- Cents, quarters, dollars, and so on
- Opening bank accounts (debit and credits)

10. Importance of being on time for appointments

- In office; in jobs; at the hospital
- For any other interview appointments like food stamps, Medicaid,...

11. Education systems in Houston

- ESL
- GED
- Houston Community College

BCOH: Orientation Classes



BCOH: Orientation Successes and Challenges

- Orientation is one of the main things to help newly arrived families reach a turning point.
- After orientation, people know how to ride metros, and 70% will not miss appointments. They know to keep their documents in a safe area, and so on.
- Still, our people have many problems in our community, that they are not able to make appointments and apply for Medicaid and food stamps due to language challenges.
- We want to continue such orientation for new refugees in Houston but we lack resources such as funding, materials, space and so on..

- ▶ We are looking for funds to run such orientation for newly-arrived refugees in different areas just to make themselves as their own home in the future.

**Thank you for your
attention**

Community-Based Organizations in Orientation

Presentations:

Chum Awi

Pastor, Chin community – Lewisville, TX

Colleen Mahar-Piersma

Associate Director, Cultural Orientation Resource Center

Bhadra Rai

Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston – Houston, TX

Djimet Dogo

**Africa House, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization – Portland,
OR**

Phuong M. Do

Director of Training and Technical Assistance, SEARAC

Community-Based Organizations in Orientation

Presentations:

Chum Awi

Pastor, Chin community – Lewisville, TX

Colleen Mahar-Piersma

Associate Director, Cultural Orientation Resource Center

Bhadra Rai

Bhutanese Family Cultural Orientation in Houston – Houston, TX

Djimet Dogo

Africa House, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization – Portland, OR

Phuong M. Do

Director of Training and Technical Assistance, SEARAC

- ▶ SEARAC's technical assistance and training approach.
 - Individualized TA Support
 - Technical Training
 - Seed Granting

- ▶ Examples of work with refugee communities from Bhutan and Burma

▶ Individualized Support

Assessing/learning/sharing – continual loop

- Help community members to recognize organizational and community leadership dynamics
- Help community leaders/volunteers to recognize the scope of their activities in relation to their resources and capacity
- Help community leaders/volunteers to prioritize needs and activities within the scope of resources and capacity
- Help community leaders/volunteers to problem solve
- Facilitate relationships between local leaders and local resources

▶ Technical Training

- A training curriculum is developed to meet training needs of a cohort of participants
- Work with trainers who have expertise in the topics and skills building areas to customize the trainings
- Webinars and on site trainings

Phuong Do
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)



Bhutanese Community, Houston, TX. (training, September 2010)



Training at Project SOAR Annual Workshops, March 2011

Phuong Do
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)



Training at Project SOAR Annual Workshops, March 2011

Phuong Do
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)



Bhutanese Community, Atlanta, GA. (August 2011)

Phuong Do Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)



Bhutanese, Chin, & Karen Communities, Dallas, TX. (training, July 2011)

▶ Seed Granting

- Resources are needed to test ideas and service activities
- Help community leaders/volunteers to put into practice their learning
- Enable new organizations to develop strong systems from the start

▶ Examples of work with refugee communities from Bhutan and Burma

1. Bhutanese American Association of Houston, Houston, TX
2. Bhutanese Community of Houston, Houston, TX
3. Bhutanese Association of Georgia, Atlanta, GA
4. Bhutanese Community of Georgia, Atlanta, GA
5. Organization of Bhutanese Society, DFW, Dallas, TX
6. Burmese American Community Initiative, Indianapolis, IN
7. Karen Community of Dallas, Dallas, TX
8. Chin Development Association, Lewisville, TX
9. Karen American Community Foundation (KACF) – Contracted to work with 3-5 local Karen communities in its network
 - Karen Community in Camden, Camden, NJ
 - Karen Community in Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA
 - Karen Community in Hartford, Hartford, CT

Phuong Do Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)



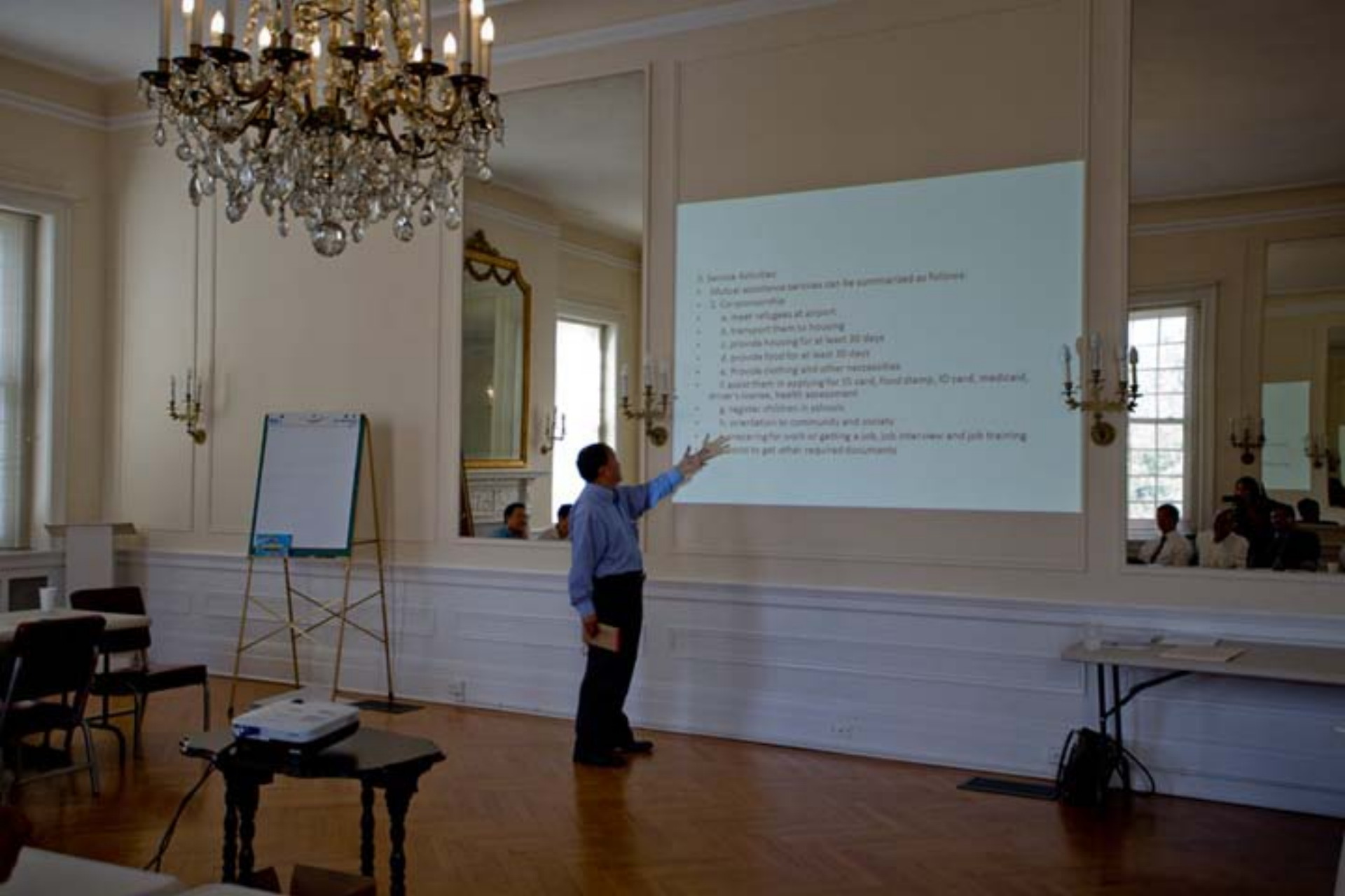




On going ESL classes







- 3. Service Activities
- 4. Mutual assistance services can be summarized as follows:
- 5. Core components
 - a. meet refugees at airport
 - b. transport them to housing
 - c. provide housing for at least 30 days
 - d. provide food for at least 30 days
 - e. provide clothing and other necessities
 - f. assist them in applying for SS card, food stamp, ID card, Medicaid, driver's license, health assessment
 - g. register children in schools
 - h. orientation to community and society
 - i. searching for work or getting a job, job interview and job training
 - j. assist to get other required documents



Phuong Do Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)



Thank you for participating in today's session on *Community Based Organizations in Orientation!*

For further resources and information regarding refugee orientation and refugee groups, see the Cultural Orientation Resource Center website, at <http://www.culturalorientation.net>

Contact the COR Center at cor@cal.org