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Institutional Structures of Opportunity in Refugee Resettlement: Gender, Race/ethnicity, and Refugee NGOs

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Previous research suggests that social welfare assistance can further subordinate already disadvantaged recipients. Refugee resettlement, essentially a social welfare program, offers a different perspective on how welfare assistance might exert social control. Using data gathered from 60 in-depth interviews with people working in resettlement and observations at refugee non-governmental organizations (NGOs), this paper argues that refugee NGOs provide a complex institutional opportunity structure that has the potential to reproduce the gender and racial/ethnic subordination embedded in refugee welfare policy while also providing opportunities for refugees to counteract subordinating gender and racial/ethnic relations through advocacy and cultural activities. These findings refine the conclusions of previous literature on the role NGOs play in incorporating refugees into American life, and point to the importance of NGOs for structuring opportunities for immigrants to challenge social inequality.

Key words: refugee resettlement, welfare, non-governmental organizations, gender, race/ethnicity

Introduction

When refugees enter the United States, one of their first interactions with American institutions is with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) administering the refugee resettlement program. Previous research on resettlement

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suggests that NGOs operate primarily as instruments of government control over refugees, sometimes destroying traditional culture and family ties. However, this research did not examine a range of different refugee assistance NGOs. Considering different types of assistance NGOs and their various orientations towards their refugee clients reveals conflicting dynamics. NGO employment services frequently channel refugees into low-skilled, ethnic niche, and feminized jobs, which can support existing gender and racial/ethnic hierarchies in the labor market. However, NGO cultural and advocacy activities also provide institutional avenues for refugees to resist racial/ethnic and gender subordination in other areas.

As several scholars of social welfare have made apparent, the government welfare services often act as a mode of social control (Cowger & Atherton, 1974; Day, 1981), particularly over poor, often non-white women deemed "unworthy" of public assistance (Abramovitz, 1996; Hays, 2003; Neubeck & Cazenave, 2001). Some scholars have suggested that refugees' access to state assistance, and therefore their vulnerability to state control, is what sets them apart from other immigrants, more than any differences in pre-migration exposure to political upheaval and violence (Bach, 1988; Hein, 1993). Given the centrality of NGOs in welfare assistance to refugees, examining the provision of resettlement services provides a window into the dynamics of state control and welfare assistance, and to the relationship between NGOs, the government, and immigrants receiving government assistance. By examining different kinds of NGOs involved in refugee assistance, one can see how it is not government funding alone, but rather welfare services themselves that likely lead to the type of social control enacted by NGOs that previous scholars have identified. Conversely, services outside the realm of welfare assistance, even those funded by the federal government, provide a different kind of opportunity structure for refugees.

The following review of the literature describes the social welfare assistance extended to refugees in the U.S. through the resettlement program, and how the existing literature on refugee resettlement conceptualizes NGOs as social institutions that reinforce the gender and racial/ethnic subordination of refugees. After describing the different types of NGOs

assisting refugees, qualitative data from interviews and fieldwork is used to illustrate how refugee assistance NGOs provide particular institutional structures of opportunity that can both support social inequality and provide avenues to challenge it. The term “institutional opportunity structure” is used to indicate the modes of opportunity and constraint presented by organizations. This is analogous to the definition used by Landolt and Goldring (2008) and a similar but more meso-level definition of the one used by other scholars (see Caponio, 2005 and Koopmans & Statham, 2000).

Social Welfare Assistance to Immigrants and Refugees

Refugees in the U.S. are immediately eligible for up to six months of welfare assistance, unlike most other immigrants who are denied assistance under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (Anderson & Gryziak, 2002). Contemporary anti-immigrant movements have frequently targeted poor immigrant women on the assumption that they and their children use too many public resources (Aguirre, 1997; Roberts, 1997), particularly undocumented immigrant women (Ana, 1999; Mehan, 1997). Refugees, because of their status as “deserving” poor compared to other migrants, have had more success maintaining access to welfare assistance (Fujiwara, 2005).

Resettlement assistance is administered through the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and subcontracted with NGOs which provide the mandated services. All NGOs contracted to resettle refugees offer what the government calls reception and placement services. These NGOs arrange housing for the new arrivals and ensure that it is stocked with food, clothing, and furniture. A case manager assigned to the refugee household shows the refugees where to buy groceries, how to apply for a social security card, and informs them about American laws and norms of behavior that will help them acquire jobs. The government’s goal of these services is to help refugees become economically self-sufficient. Most NGOs offer services beyond reception and placement, but it is the emphasis on finding and keeping a job that guides most of the resettlement assistance in the U.S.

Research across different resettlement regimes reveals

distinct outcomes from the various approaches. In Australia, an emphasis on mental health needs of refugees has encouraged refugees to take a passive approach to resettlement, in which refugees tend to think of themselves as helpless victims (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2003). In the U.K., the decentralization of the resettlement program allows for more active involvement of refugees themselves to determine what constitutes successful resettlement (Majka, 1991; Wahlbeck, 1998). The Canadian resettlement regime is also largely decentralized and incorporates ethnic organizations in its service delivery structure to refugees (Bloemraad, 2006; Lawrence & Hardy, 1999). In the United States, the resettlement program is funded mostly by the federal government but services are administered almost entirely by NGOs, with a primary goal of resettlement being to help refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible (Wright, 1981). Resettlement in the U.S. is administered under the umbrella of the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, the same agency that provides other federal social welfare assistance. The focus of the resettlement program reflects this institutional tie, and questions of how welfare assistance acts as a mode of government social control over other welfare recipients applies to refugees as well.

Are Resettlement NGOs Extensions of State Control?

Most research on resettlement indicates that resettlement NGOs do more to exert social control over their refugee clients than to offer opportunities for more efficacious agency. Scholars generally attribute this social control to the American resettlement program's emphasis on quick employment and economic independence from the state, a unique emphasis when compared to other resettlement countries (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2003; Lanphier, 1983; Majka, 1991; Tress, 1998). With decreasing financial support from a shrinking welfare state, NGOs are limited in the range of services they can offer refugees (Gold, 1992; Zetter & Pearl, 2000).

Ong (2003) critiques resettlement NGOs more severely, arguing that refugee assistance agencies disrupted Cambodian family relations through their social welfare services. In order for refugees to receive assistance from these agencies, Cambodian

refugees were required to adhere to cultural- and class-specific expectations of the welfare state. These expectations, Ong argued, disrupted the traditional Cambodian refugee families and led to the dissolution of Cambodian cultural community. Kibria (1993) and Bui (2004) make similar arguments that other types of social institutions, particularly those representing the state, such as social service agencies, have required refugees to adhere to cultural behaviors that undermine traditional family structures.

The question that emerges from this literature is, can social service NGOs act as independent social institutions through which refugees might resist subordination, or do they merely recreate social inequality? This study focuses on the NGOs rather than on individual refugees, examining the institutional opportunity structures they provide to their refugee clients. The data reveal that refugee NGO services potentially encompass more than social welfare assistance; they also include advocacy and cultural activities that create space for refugees to challenge their downward mobility in U.S. gender and racial/ethnic hierarchies. Because the focus for this project was NGOs, only refugees who were present at the NGOs were observed, and observation was not directly focused on how a representative sample of refugees experience NGO services. So while the findings illuminate the NGO context to which refugees are exposed shortly after their arrival, findings cannot be generalized to how all refugees experience that context.

Methods

Types of Refugee Resettlement and Assistance Organizations

There are three types of NGOs assisting refugees in the U.S.: voluntary agencies (referred to by people in resettlement as “volags”), mutual assistance associations (MAAs), and those identified for these purposes as support agencies. Volags are organizations that specialize in refugee resettlement. They have national offices that contract directly with the State Department to resettle a set number of refugees, and the national offices in turn assign those refugees to their local offices in various cities. All organizations that do resettlement need to be affiliated with a national volag, so even MAAs are

affiliated with at least one national volag. Local volags resettle most of the refugees in the U.S.

MAAs are organized primarily as ethnic organizations serving a particular immigrant group. A group of immigrants that has become more settled forms an MAA in order to assist others from that group adapt to life in the U.S. (thus providing "mutual assistance" to their compatriots). Not all MAAs serve refugees, and not all MAAs do resettlement. The ones that do resettlement do not specialize in it, so that while they resettle fewer refugees than volags, they tend to provide a broader range of services.

There are other organizations that provide assistance to refugees, but are not contracted to provide resettlement services. In this study, these organizations are referred to as support agencies. Support agencies include NGOs that provide any type of assistance to refugees (or any people in need, at least some of whom are refugees). Some support agencies provide cultural programs, including interceding between refugees and American institutions like schools or the police. Some recruit volunteers who collect items to furnish a refugee family's apartment, or provide refugees transportation to job interviews and other necessary appointments. In the best circumstances, support agencies work with MAAs and volags to provide a comprehensive social welfare net that not only helps refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency, but also supports their broader adaptation and development as members of the American polity.

Data Collection

This study used qualitative data consisting of 60 interviews with people who work or volunteer in 35 organizations that resettle or assist refugees. Fifty-seven of the interviews were with staff and volunteers at 20 volags, 10 MAAs, and five support agencies. These interviews focused on the origins of refugee clients, the services offered (including services geared towards particular populations within their clientele, such as women or men), interactions with government agencies, sources of funds and other support, and the organization's goals for resettlement. Three additional interviews with staff at three different government agencies were conducted (one county-level, one

state-level, and one federal level) to explore the interactions each agency had with NGOs.

The NGOs were located in four metropolitan areas; Los Angeles, Chicago, Sacramento, and Minneapolis/St. Paul. Observation of activities was conducted at some of these NGOs, totaling approximately 30 hours. These activities included support groups and orientation classes for refugee clients, fundraising events, volunteer training, and municipal forums with other refugee service providers. Attending these activities allowed the author to have some informal conversations with refugee clients, as well as to observe the operations of the NGOs. Almost all observations of refugee clients were during voluntary activities. Thus, it was less likely that refugees who felt negatively toward the NGO and therefore chose not to participate in the NGOs services or activities would be observed.

All interviews and coded transcripts and fieldnotes were transcribed using Atlas.ti. Inductive coding was used to analyze interview transcripts and field notes, using a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Characteristics of these NGOs and government agencies are described in Table 1. While the names and locations of organizations have been identified in this paper, pseudonyms have been given to individual participants.

Results

These data reveal two types of institutional opportunity structures in resettlement service provision. The first mirrors existing gender and racial/ethnic stratification in the labor market, and is tied to the social welfare mandates in the federal resettlement program. The second provides institutional avenues to challenge gender and racial/ethnic subordination outside the labor market, and emerges from optional services not mandated by the government. Volags, which tended to focus on government mandated services, more uniformly provided opportunity structures that supported labor market stratification. Conversely, MAAs and support NGOs provided more alternative opportunity structures that had more potential for empowering their refugee clients.

Table 1. Refugee organizations in qualitative sample

Location	Types of Organizations			
	Voluntary Agency (Volag)	Mutual Assistance Association (MAA)	Support Agency	Gov't. Agency
Chicago	4	4	2	1
Los Angeles	6	2	2	0
Minneapolis/St. Paul	6	2	1	0
Sacramento	4	2	0	1
Washington, DC	0	0	0	1
Total	20	10	5	3

Placing Refugees in Low-Skilled Niche Employment

In order to fulfill the mandates of the social welfare system, refugee NGO staff need to help refugees become economically self-sufficient quickly by having them take the fastest route to employment, rather than take the time to find meaningful employment with opportunities for advancement. Inadequate amounts and lengths of assistance mean NGOs must adopt the approach of other welfare agencies, which is to push clients to find work, any work, as soon as possible. Joshua, from the International Institute, described succinctly what all resettlement directors told me: "the focus [of resettlement] is of course very heavily on people leaving public assistance. That's the preoccupation with everything that is funded, basically."

The goal of getting a job, however menial, poses dilemmas for all people in poverty but particularly for refugees. Refugees from developing countries have difficulty finding employment because their educational credentials are not recognized by American institutions. Consequently, resettlement NGOs have trouble placing even highly educated refugees into jobs. Jane at International Rescue Committee described her struggle to find employment for one particular refugee client, a story that was repeated by many resettlement caseworkers:

I have a client from Bangladesh who is a doctor and he

also got a masters degree in public health. He's worked with the Ministry of Health in Africa, worked with Doctors Without Borders and he came here and he had to work in a hotel where he walked back and forth for a mile working the night shift...we did everything we could to help him but nobody is going to hire him as a doctor and his masters degree in public health, even though it was from Singapore, it just wasn't respected here, and we find that many degrees are not respected here if they are not from Europe or from the United States.

During a tour of a health clinic, staff at the Minnesota Council of Churches informed their refugee clients about the entry-level employment opportunities in health care that require minimal training, such as nursing assistant. An Ethiopian man who had been a pharmacist in his home country asked about getting more skilled work in the clinic's laboratory. The NGO staff person told him that while such work required a much longer certification process, he could consider getting that certification "in the future," after he was more economically established. Despite his high-skilled employment in Ethiopia, NGO staff presented low-skilled employment as his best (and only) option in the present.

Acquiring quick employment requires foregoing lengthy educational opportunities that would open avenues to better employment in favor of entry-level positions that require little skills or English language proficiency. A popular choice among NGO staff is ethnic niche employment. Few resettlement NGOs in the qualitative sample offered specific job training. What job training was available was often in ethnic niche employment that not only funneled refugees of a particular ethnicity into ethnic job queues but also funneled refugee women into feminized occupations. The International Institute in Los Angeles offered an employment program to train women to be licensed child care providers. This occupation provides low wages and little upward mobility, but it allows women, in particular, to enter quickly into employment. The Vietnamese Association of Illinois provided training in electronic assembly and manicurist work; both men and women enrolled in the electronic assembly program, but only women enrolled in the manicurist

program. Because there are a large number of Southeast Asian immigrant women working as manicurists, the Vietnamese Association found it relatively easy to train their refugee women clients and find them work in this occupation.

Moving Beyond Quick Employment

Refugee NGOs do more than place refugees into jobs; they can also provide non-employment services and resources that are separate from federal mandates. However, some NGOs are more likely to provide those types of services than others. Because MAAs are organized as ethnic organizations, they are more likely than volags to offer cultural services. They also act as cultural mediators, serving as cultural “translators” between refugees and other institutional actors. Many of the MAAs studied engaged in such activities as part of their advocacy services. But cultural and advocacy services were not the exclusive purview of MAAs; some volags also offered these services, providing a similar institutional structure of opportunity as MAAs.

Using Home Culture and Advocacy to Resist Subordination

Many NGO staff advocated in support of maintaining home cultural practices for individual refugees. Some government officials conflate economic assimilation with cultural assimilation, and they perceive the continuation of ethnic practices as problematic. Irene and Kelly at Heartland Alliance, a volag in Chicago, told me how representatives from the State Department were criticizing their Afghani refugee clients for not culturally assimilating. One State Department official in particular who observed an Afghani family during a site visit expressed concern about the family members eating with their hands instead of using utensils, and sitting on the floor instead of on chairs. Irene and Kelly had to advocate for the families’ right to maintain some practices of their home culture, explaining that maintaining such practices would not necessarily inhibit the family from economically assimilating.

In addition to advocating for individual refugees, many NGO cultural services were designed to educate people outside the refugee community about the refugees’ culture and to raise awareness about (and support for) refugees. The

Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago held an annual Ethiopian New Year celebration to share their cultural heritage with others in the Chicago area. The Sacramento Lao Family Community held a Hmong New Year celebration to share the Hmong culture with native-born people in Sacramento, and used to provide other cultural education programs with money from the city of Sacramento before that funding was eliminated. The Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota and Hmong Cultural Center in St. Paul also organized similar cultural events that are intended to educate native-born people about refugee cultures as well as provide an opportunity for refugees themselves to celebrate their cultural heritage.

Every year the International Institute of Minnesota organizes the Festival of Nations, a multi-cultural celebration that involves around 80 community-based organizations with attendance around 100,000 people. The International Institute was one of the few volags in this study that offered such cultural services. Michael explained how the Festival of Nations introduces cultural diversity to the young people constituting the majority of attendees:

It has a lot of exposure with young people in the community...when we talk to people from Minnesota, "Are you familiar with the Institute?" "No." "Did you ever go to the Festival of Nations?" "Yes." They will have knowledge of it and...it is a real source of diversity in the lives of these kids who don't have black faces or Asian faces in their small world towns. But they will see a lot of diversity here and it is a real fun event for them.

Empowering Refugee Women

About a third of the NGOs in this study offered services specifically for women refugees. These services were generally designed to expand women's access to health information, economic opportunities, or provide culturally-specific activities in a group setting. These services provided women with health and financial knowledge that allowed them to challenge patriarchal relations in their families. They also built on home cultural traditions that enable women to "rediscover" traditional feminine practices in ways that field work suggested

was not oppressive, giving them connection to their homeland that might protect them psychologically from their diminished status as refugees in the U.S..

For example, health education provided as a public health initiative served to give women greater voice within their families. Hoa at the Vietnamese Association of Illinois explained how her NGO educated Southeast Asian women about their health:

We discovered that there is a need to teach them about family planning and from family planning to their bodies. There is a need to teach them about cervical cancer, pap smears, breast cell exams, mammograms and those issues that came up after that...the women learn that they can choose and make their own choices instead of depending on their husbands.

By gaining access to information about reproductive planning and gynecological health, Hoa felt the women she worked with gained power within the family by having the knowledge necessary to make choices about reproduction, rather than depending upon their husbands' knowledge and the choices their husbands made with that knowledge. Hoa believed that body knowledge allowed women refugees to have more say in reproductive choices, which challenged patriarchal gender relations in their families. And since women frequently make choices about the health of their children and spouses, Hoa was able to provide health education to entire refugee families by educating the wives and mothers in those families.

Some MAAs taught economic literacy classes specifically to women refugee clients. Lan at the Center for Asian and Pacific Islanders explained to me how it is necessary for women refugees to gain financial knowledge in order to take on new economic responsibilities in their households:

We help them to be self-sufficient in ways that traditionally they're not used to...they're used to just stay home and care for their children...we have a financial literacy where we help them understand about managing their money, open a checking account, balance their checkbook, and looking at ways to invest versus do everything with cash.

By providing women with U.S.-specific economic information, rather than simply educating male household members, MAAs provided refugee women an opportunity to function independently of the men in their families.

While some NGOs provided knowledge to women that challenges home cultures, they also provided avenues for “rediscovering” female home cultural practices. The following excerpt from field notes provides an example of the opportunities for rediscovering home cultural practices in the activities of MAAs:

I sit with a group of 10 women from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are drinking strong Bosnian coffee and eating pie. The women are sewing doll costumes of traditional Bosnian dress for a cultural festival that will be held at a museum next month. Each woman fingers the fabric, picks out sequins and shiny beads to attach to the hems of the doll dresses. Their hands appear skilled with the sewing needle, and I express my admiration at one particular woman’s ability to make such small, delicate stitches in the slippery fabric. I comment that she probably did a lot of sewing in Bosnia before the war, and she laughs. “In Bosnia, I never sew,” she tells me. “I learn to sew the traditional dress after I come to United States.” (field notes, 2003)

As this vignette illustrates, NGOs that engaged in home cultural activities gave refugee women opportunities to reconstruct traditional cultural communities. Many of the Bosnian women sewing doll dresses had been professionals in the former Yugoslavia; now retired, they enjoyed traditional crafts that they had never learned in their home country. While one might argue that encouraging traditional feminine activities reproduces patriarchy, the women in this sewing circle expressed pleasure from this opportunity. They enjoyed sewing and talking with other women, sharing some of the culture they left behind and sharing it with native-born Americans.

Refugee Advocacy and Law Enforcement

Women were not the only ones who benefited from

cultural services and activities. Some NGOs provided opportunities for men to gain status in particularly ethnic ways. With the increasing surveillance of immigrant men following the terrorist attacks in 2001, refugee men from Southeast Asia and the Middle East are vulnerable to problems with law enforcement. NGO staff sometimes counseled young men to avoid getting into trouble in the first place, as Stella from St. Anselm's did with her clients:

I always tell them, if you go to a school, please if you see someone is making fun of you, just turn around and go or tell one of the teachers or principal. Don't get involved with anything because automatically without no hesitation they will get you and put you in jail...and especially after September 11, unfortunately I'm sorry to say they think that Iranians, Muslims, or not even Muslims. The ones that come from Muslim country, they are the terror people.

Other NGO staff took more proactive advocacy positions. For example, Beth at the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society in Chicago had her staff regularly do public education presentations to address "the terrible scapegoating and racial profiling that Muslims have in America today." Lan at the Center for Asians and Pacific Islanders worked directly with the Minneapolis police department to help refugees avoid altercations with officers:

We created this "I Speak" card. Because a lot of time when people get pulled over...because of the culture, they don't communicate with the police because they don't speak the language. So at the same time we told the police, it's because they don't speak the language. It's not because they have something to hide.

Communication gaps between officers and refugees were especially problematic for the East African refugees her NGO resettled, as Lan explained that they were sometimes subjected to both racial profiling (because they were Black) and anti-Muslim hate crimes (which they were afraid to report to police).

Southeast Asian MAAs reported that their Hmong youth also had trouble with police. Disproportionately poor, Hmong communities experience the same problems with economic hardship, inadequate schools, and gang influences that other poor minority communities in the U.S. face. In response, MAAs like the Hmong Cultural Center and the Sacramento Lao Family Community mediate between the police and Hmong youth, trying to bridge cultural misunderstandings police have about Hmong and enrolling Hmong youth into after-school programs intended to keep them out of trouble. The Hmong Cultural Center also provided counseling for incarcerated Hmong men in prison because, as the director Kha Vang stated, they are in prison because "they forgot who they are." The cultural counseling his NGO provided was designed to help Hmong men re-integrate into society by strengthening their connections to the Hmong community, with the hope that those cultural ties will help them stay out of prison.

Conclusions

Because much of their service provision was geared toward quick employment, most volags provided an opportunity structure that reproduced gender and racial/ethnic hierarchies in the job market. That is not to say that volag staff intended or wanted to support those hierarchies. Rather, their mandate to help refugees achieve independence from the welfare state left them little choice. For their part, refugees might have been grateful for the assistance to find employment, even in low-skilled occupations. However, based on the research of Gold (1992, 1996) and Ong (2003), it is likely that refugee clients felt more frustrated than appreciative of the low-paying jobs that their case managers found for them.

But the story of resettlement NGOs is not just one of limited occupational opportunities. Some NGOs also provided alternative opportunities for empowerment when their services included culture and advocacy. NGOs' cultural services provided opportunities for refugees to express their ethnic identity and affirmed refugees' ethnic practices. Cultural services also provided women refugees with new knowledge and the opportunity to embrace traditional female practices from their

home country, which in turn allowed them to experience and celebrate their home culture rather than being oppressed by those traditions. While not all refugee women would want to challenge patriarchal family relations (see Kibria, 1993, and Bui, 2004), NGOs offered this opportunity voluntarily. Therefore, these services might be experienced differently from the normative requirements imposed upon refugees as part of resettlement welfare services. Many NGOs also did advocacy work, educating the public about refugee cultures and mediating between the police and young refugee men in trouble with the law. NGOs' advocacy work with law enforcement attempts to challenge the gendered and racialized image of refugee men as dangerous. What effect that challenge has had in local or national discourses on the threat that refugee men face in the post-9/11 context is difficult to say, but it clearly presents an alternative structure of opportunity from the one provided through the mandate of quick employment.

This paper does not argue that refugee NGOs are the only institutional structures of opportunity available to refugees. Refugees certainly have agency independent of refugee NGOs. But because these NGOs are among the first institutions with which refugees interact after arriving in the U.S., the particular ways in which they structure opportunities for refugees is relevant to their later adaptation experiences. These findings are limited to the services that NGOs provide, and thus one cannot definitively state whether or not refugees on the whole feel subordinated or liberated by refugee NGOs. Because the author was only able to observe the experiences of refugees who chose to participate in NGO activities, there are no data from refugees who chose otherwise. Additional research will be needed to determine what effect the institutional structure of opportunity provided by NGOs has on refugees. But these findings make apparent the constraints that the social welfare system puts not only on refugees but on resettlement NGOs. They also point to the possibilities within immigrant culture and advocacy to provide alternative avenues in response to those constraints. Considering that demographic characteristics, such as education and household composition, remain the biggest factors in predicting refugees' economic success (Potocky-Tripodi, 2003), refugee NGOs should consider what

their organizations might offer their clients beyond the very limited scope of social welfare assistance. Such a move would require refugee NGOs to establish relationships with their clients that extend beyond the six-month resettlement period, and would be consistent with the present day settlement house (Koerin, 2003) and ethnic organization (Hein, 1997) approaches of building community and individual resources while still administering government-funded problem-based services.

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