



## LESSON 6

### Refugees and Asylum Seekers

*While every refugee's story is different and their anguish personal, they all share a common thread of uncommon courage — the courage not only to survive, but to persevere and rebuild their shattered lives.*

~ António Guterres, "Speech for World Refugee Day" (2005)

# LESSON 6

## Refugees and Asylum Seekers



### Goal

- » Understand the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers through a human rights perspective.

### Objectives

- » Students will learn basic facts about refugees and asylum seekers and the distinction between the two terms.
- » Students will examine the personal stories of refugees and asylum seekers.
- » Students will understand U.S. policy toward refugees and asylum seekers.
- » Students will analyze how well the U.S. refugee and asylum system protects human rights.

### Essential Question

- » Who are refugees and asylum seekers, and how can we protect their human rights?

### Key Skills

- » Comparing and contrasting (Activity 1).
- » Analyzing an issue through personal narratives (Activity 2).

### Teacher Advisory

Please read the Advisory on Immigration Status on page 20 before beginning this lesson.

Please also be aware that the refugee stories in Activity 2 contain some graphic descriptions that would be best to discuss with your students in advance of the lesson.





### Materials

- ☑ *Handout 1: Facts about Refugees and Asylum Seekers*
- ☑ *Ch. 6 PowerPoint: Facts about Refugees and Asylum Seekers* (Download online.)
- ☑ *Handout 2: Refugee and Asylee Stories*
- ☑ *Handout 3: Mapping the Journey*
- ☑ *Handout 4: Refugee Role-play Cards*
- ☑ *Handout 5: Asylum Application in Pig Latin*
- ☑ *Handout 6: Asylum Application in English*

### Time Frame

4-5 class periods

### Vocabulary

-  asylee
-  asylum
-  asylum seeker
-  refugee

## Refugee Basics

### Procedure:

**1. Brainstorm.** Ask students what the word “refuge” means to them. Write down key words on the board. Once they have finished contributing, explain that refuge, which means shelter or protection, is the root of the word “refugee.” Ask students if they have ideas of what refugees might be seeking protection or shelter from and write their answers on the board. Explain that asylum seekers are another group seeking protection or shelter and that the United States offers special protection to both groups because of the threats that they face. Once asylum seekers have been granted asylum by the government, they are called “asylees.”

**2. Distinguish.** Give students *Handout 1: Facts about Refugees and Asylum Seekers*. Have them read the first section silently and underline the parts that talk about the similarities between asylum seekers and refugees and circle the parts that talk about the differences. Some of the information in the fact sheet will be familiar to students who have completed *Activity 5.2* on page 75, but provides a chance to review the specifics about refugees and asylum seekers. Draw a line down the middle of the board. Write “similar” on one side and “different” on the other. Ask students to share what they read about the ways that refugees and asylum seekers are similar or different. Write their answers on the appropriate side of the board. Be sure to capture that the primary difference between refugees and asylum seekers is that refugees are given their status while they are outside the United States, and asylum seekers apply after they have arrived in the United States. Both groups are similar, however, in that they have faced persecution on the basis of race, nationality, political opinion, religion, or membership in a particular social group.

**3. Share facts.** Give students an overview of the basic facts about refugees worldwide and in the United States. Download the PowerPoint that accompanies Lesson 6 by visiting the online version of this curriculum at [www.energyofanation.org](http://www.energyofanation.org) and selecting “Education.” Students can also study the rest of *Handout 1: Facts about Refugees and Asylum Seekers*, which contains much of the same information as the PowerPoint. After the presentation, discuss the new information that students learned.

### Questions for Discussion

- ? What facts about refugees and asylum seekers surprised you the most?
- ? What events might be causing people to leave the top countries of origin for refugees and asylum seekers?
- ? Why might the United States offer protection to refugees and asylum seekers?
- ? Why might the U.S. government provide benefits to refugees and asylum seekers above what other immigrants receive?

## Stories of Survival

### Procedure:

**1. Read.** In this activity, students will get a chance to learn what the refugee or asylum seeker experience looks like from the point of view of an individual fleeing his or her country. Divide students into pairs and give each pair one of the stories from *Handout 2: Refugee and Asylee Stories*. Students should read their stories and then discuss them with their partner to make sure they both understand the events in the story.

**2. Analyze.** Give students *Handout 3: Mapping the Journey* and *Lesson 2 Handout 1: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (see page 37). In their pairs, students should fill out *Handout 3: Mapping the Journey* using the story they read. First, they should break down the story into the different stages of the journey that the person experienced. They should then use their copies of the UDHR to write down which human rights were affected at each stage, and whether they were being fulfilled or violated. Often, many human rights are affected by becoming a refugee, so tell students to concentrate on the most important rights at each step.

**3. Discuss.** After the pairs have finished filling in *Handout 3*, bring the class together to discuss the stories they read. Write on the board the three broad stages of the refugee or asylee journey: Fleeing Home (the decision to leave), Making the Journey (what happened on the way to safety), and Coming to the United States (receiving legal status in the United States). Ask students to volunteer some of the events that happened to the person in their story for each stage of the journey and write them on the board in the appropriate category. Then ask students to offer the human rights that they identified in the story and write those in the relevant stage of the journey as well. As a class, discuss the following questions:

### Questions for Discussion

- ? How did the people in your stories feel about what was happening to them? How do they feel now that they are in the United States?
- ? Did the people in the stories leave their countries for the same reasons? How might better protections for human rights worldwide have helped them stay in their homes?
- ? Did the people in the stories have the same kind of journey from their home country to the United States? What were some similarities? What were some differences?
- ? Based on these stories, what kinds of human rights protections do people need when they flee their countries as refugees or asylum seekers? How could we help provide those protections?
- ? Did the people in the stories have the same kind of experiences once they arrived in the United States? What were some similarities? What were some differences?
- ? Based on these stories, do you think the United States does a good job of protecting the human rights of refugees or asylees? What are we doing well? What could we be doing better?



### Featured Resource

The personal narratives used in this activity are taken from *This Much I Can Tell You: Stories of Courage and Hope from Refugees in Minnesota*, compiled by Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services. For more information on the book, including how to purchase a complete edition, visit: [www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices](http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices).

## Refugee Role-play

**Procedure:**

**1. Prepare.** Cut out identities from *Handout 4: Refugee Role-play Cards* for each of your students. Each family group has a different number of family members, so try to choose family groups such that every student can have a card and each family can have all of its members. If you have more students than cards, duplicate one or more of the family groups until there are enough cards for everyone.

**Teacher Tip**

This activity may be especially difficult or emotional for students with their own refugee experience. If you have students who may be reluctant to participate in the exercise, either skip the activity or offer an alternative, such as creating an artistic piece illustrating the refugee or asylee story they read in Activity 6.2.

**2. Set up.** Pass out an identity card to each student. Shuffle the cards so that students are not sitting near their family members if possible. Before beginning the activity, tell students that they will now be acting out the refugee experience. Remind them that though it may seem funny to imagine their state being invaded, this scenario has happened to many people who have suffered very real and serious consequences as a result. They should approach the role-play with those people in mind. Read the following scenario out loud and **replace the bold items with names and places relevant to your state:**

*Citizens of **[Neighboring State]**, wanting more land for their people, have invaded **[Your State]**. Entering the state through the city of **[Border City]**, the people of **[Neighboring State]** have now taken control of the Capitol Building in **[Capitol City]** and the police and National Guard throughout the state. There are snipers in the capitol buildings and **[Major Shopping Center or Stadium]** has been blown up. All interstate highways have been closed. The people of **[Neighboring State]** have taken over the main stadium and are using it as a staging ground for their troops. You have heard rumors that the invaders are going to be going door to door, and unless you can prove that you were born in **[Neighboring State]**, you will be arrested and taken to an undisclosed location. Fighting has begun in **[Capitol City]** and is spreading into the suburbs and rural towns across the state. You can hear the fighting from your house. Mobs of people from **[Neighboring State]** are roaming the streets and have set fire to your neighbor's house. You realize that you must flee **[Your State]** tonight. You have two hours to pack your belongings. Because all of the roads are blocked, you must head toward a refugee camp in **[Other Bordering State/s]**.*

**3. Imagine.** Tell the students to write down ten items that they would bring with them based on their identity, without talking to anyone else. Give them two minutes to decide. Time them and give a warning after a minute and a half has passed. They should write clearly so their list can be shared with others.

**4. Convene the family groups.** Ask students to form small groups with everyone from their assigned family. These small family units must now decide together what they can take with them. Each person can only carry three things. All the items recommended from individual lists must be considered, but with the interest of the family in mind. Each person should construct a list of the three items he or she can carry. The group must take into consideration any elderly, sick, or very young people in the group who cannot carry items. The groups should meet for 5-10 minutes. Time students and give them a warning when a minute remains. Do not let the groups use more than 10 minutes to make a decision; tell them they must leave now with whatever they have chosen at this point.

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## Refugee Role-play

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**5. Decide a route.** Once the time limit has passed, tell the families they now have to decide whether they will flee by foot, escape by boat, or find some other means of transportation. They need to think about where they will sleep, find food, etc. There are refugee camps in the surrounding states where they can stay.

**6. Present and discuss.** Come back together and have each group present their plan. Where did they decide to go? How will they get there? What did they decide to take and why? After each group has presented, discuss the following questions as a class:

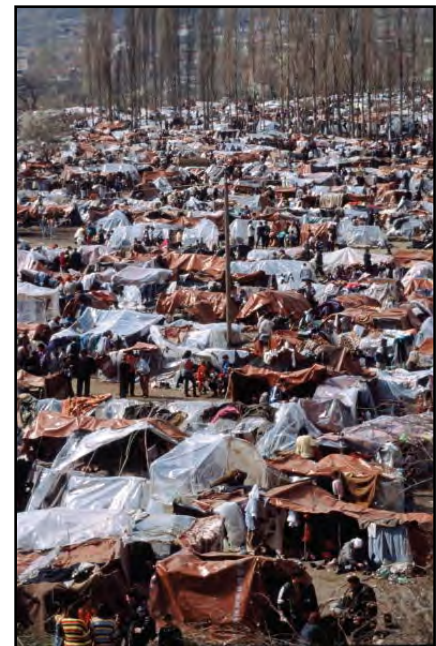
### Questions for Discussion

- ? Did you choose items based on what you thought you would need to survive or what would help you remember your life back home?
- ? Do you think you could realistically carry all of the items you chose?
- ? Who had the most say in the decision-making process? Why was that?
- ? How did you feel about what was happening?

**7. Regroup.** Ask students to reconvene with their “families.” The families have now made it into refugee camps. Explain to the students that in the camps, the refugees themselves handle a great many of the day-to-day responsibilities of keeping the camp running. Based on their identity cards, have students write down what kinds of help they would need, either from relief workers or from fellow refugees, while they are in the camp. They should copy the list onto a piece of paper, writing clearly in large enough letters for other students to easily read it. Then, they should make a second list of what they think they can offer to others in the camp based on their identities.

**9. Share.** Have the family groups post their list of needs on the walls of the classroom and then walk the room to read other groups’ lists. For each, have them look to see if they can meet any of the needs based on the skills and talents they have to offer. If they can meet a need, they should make a check mark next to that item on the list. After all the groups have looked at all the lists, go over the items that aren’t being met. Ask students how they think those needs may or may not be met in a refugee camp.

**10. Four years later.** After spending four years in the refugee camp, the families have been safely resettled in a “third country” — in this case, in your local community. Reassign Family #1 and Family #2. They will now play the role of families living in the chosen city. New refugee families (the other families in the role-play) have just been resettled in their neighborhood.



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## Refugee Role-play

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**11. Welcome.** Families #1 and #2 will play the role of host community. They should outline what they would do to welcome the new families. They should be encouraged to include ideas at the individual, school, and community levels. They should also offer suggestions for the new families on how they can start integrating themselves into their new community.

**12. Integrate.** The other families continue to play the roles of refugees. These students should list what they would do to start adjusting to their new school and community, and what their school and community could do to welcome them.

**13. Compare.** Draw a line down the middle of the board. Write “Welcome” on one side and “Integrate” on the other. Have students share the ideas they generated in their small groups. Once they have offered their suggestions, have students identify any of the ideas that might be particularly easy to carry out and circle them on the board. Have students identify ones that might be particularly difficult and put a star next to them.

**14. Debrief.** As a class, discuss how students felt about the role-play.

**Questions for Discussion**

- ? Based on your experience in the role-play, what do you think it would feel like to be a refugee?
- ? What do you think the hardest part of being a refugee would be?
- ? During the role-play, did you ever feel that your character’s human rights were being violated? When? What rights?
- ? What are ways that governments could better protect the human rights of refugees? What are ways that individuals could better protect the rights of refugees?

**Teacher Tip**

To adapt this activity for younger grades, do not use the role-play cards. Simply have students write down what they would bring independently, and then put them in families to agree on a set number of items.

Be sure to tell younger students that they will be pretending and that the scenario you read at the beginning of the exercise has not really happened. Repeat that the scenario is fictional before, during, and after reading it.

## Applying for Asylum

**Procedure:**

**1. Review.** Remind students of the difference between refugees and asylum seekers (that refugees receive their status outside the United States, while asylum seekers first come to the United State and then apply for their status). Explain that asylum seekers, like refugees, must prove that they fear persecution in their home country, such as torture, imprisonment, or physical abuse, on the basis of one of the following: race, nationality, political opinion, religion, or membership in a particular social group.

Just as with refugees, the burden of proof is on the asylum seeker. This means that the person who is seeking protection must prove who they are, what or who they fear, and that their fear is reasonable. Applying for asylum is a complex and difficult process, especially for people who are not fluent in English or who are still upset or traumatized by their experiences.

**2. State the rules.** Tell students they will now be applying for asylum in a country that speaks Pig Latin. Provide students with a quick explanation of the rules of Pig Latin: 1) Move the first letter of the word to the end, and then add "ay." 2) If there are two or more consonants together at the beginning of the word that combine to make a sound, they are moved together (e.g., "sh"). 3) If the word starts with a vowel, simply add "hay" to the end of the word.

For example, "refugee" becomes "efugeeray," "should" becomes "ouldshay," and asylum becomes "asylumhay." Answer any questions that students have before moving on to the application. You may write a few examples of Pig Latin words on the board to help students understand how the "language" works.

**3. Apply.** Give students *Handout 5: Asylum Application in Pig Latin*. Give them 15 minutes to fill out the form. Remind them that their answers must be in Pig Latin as well. If they need extra assistance, you may give them *Handout 6: Asylum Application in English*.

**4. Evaluate.** After 15 minutes, have students switch applications with the person sitting next to them. Each student should now grade the application they received, using *Handout 6* to help them see if the person has answered the questions correctly. If any of the answers are wrong, have students write "Denied" in big letters at the top and return it to the original author.

**6. Discuss.** Once students have evaluated their neighbor's form, discuss their reactions to the exercise.

**Questions for Discussion**

- ? How easy was it to make mistakes?
- ? How might you feel if you had to fill out the real asylum application, which is more than 20 pages long?
- ? How might mistakes impact the success of a genuine asylum application?
- ? What are the consequences if an applicant is denied?
- ? Do you think this application process is a fair way to judge whether someone should be allowed to stay in the United States?



## FACTS ABOUT REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

Refugees and asylum seekers are people who are fleeing persecution in their own country. On average, 12% of legal immigrants to the United States in the past decade were either refugees or asylum seekers.<sup>1</sup> The United States extends protection to them as a reflection of its commitment to political and religious liberty and racial tolerance. The difference between refugees and asylum seekers is that refugees apply for their status while they are still outside the United States, and asylum seekers apply once they are in the United States. Both refugees and asylum seekers must prove that they fear persecution in their home country, such as torture, imprisonment, or physical abuse, on the basis of one of the following:<sup>2</sup>

- Race;
- Nationality;
- Political opinion;
- Religion; or
- Membership in a particular social group.

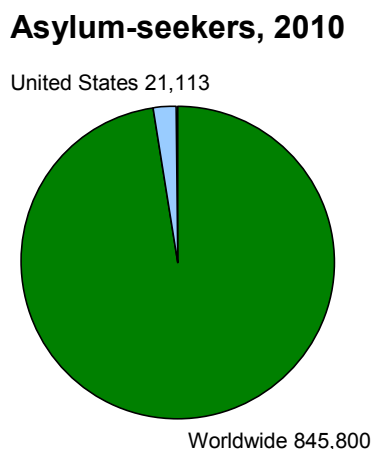
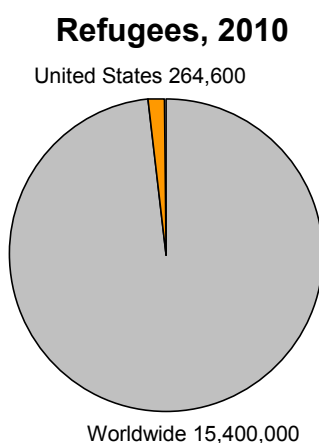
### Examples of social groups protected under U.S. law:<sup>3</sup>

- Women in cases of domestic violence
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender individuals
- HIV+ individuals

In a refugee or asylum case, the burden of proof is on the applicant, who must be able to provide objective evidence or credible testimony (such as government records or media reports) to support their claim.<sup>4</sup>

Not everyone who suffers persecution is eligible for refugee status. The U.S. caps the number of refugees it will accept annually. For 2011, the maximum was 80,000 refugees.<sup>5</sup> Also, the U.S. only accepts refugees who have either been referred by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or another refugee protection organization, or when the person is a member of a designated group or from a designated country. In 2011, for instance, the U.S. accepted applications from Burmese minorities living in Thailand or Malaysia, among others.<sup>6</sup> People who belong to these groups still have to prove that they individually qualify as a refugee because of a fear of persecution on one of the five grounds previously mentioned.

People who are not from one of the designated groups or countries and who cannot get a referral from the UNHCR can only receive protection if they travel to the U.S. and claim asylum once they arrive. Asylum seekers can either make an affirmative asylum claim by filing a form within a year of arriving in the U.S. or they can make a defensive asylum claim once they have been placed in deportation proceedings. Anyone in the U.S. can claim asylum whether they are here legally or not.



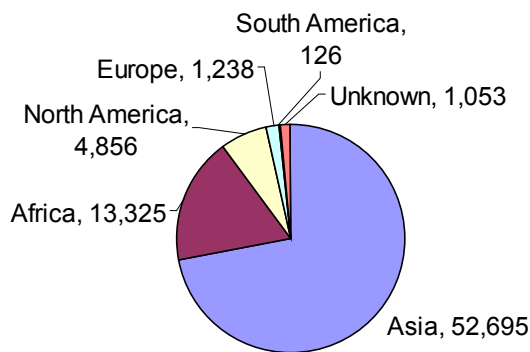
### Top host countries for refugees worldwide (2009):

1. Pakistan (1,740,700)
2. Iran (1,107,500)
3. Syria (1,054,500)
4. Germany (593,800)
5. Jordan (450,800)
- ...
9. United States (275,500)

Sources: UN High Commission for Refugees, "UNCR Global Trends 2010," June 20, 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/4dfa11499.html>; Office of Immigration Statistics, 2010 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, US Department of Homeland Security, August 2011, Table 16, [http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2010/ois\\_yb\\_2010.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2010/ois_yb_2010.pdf).

## FACTS ABOUT REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

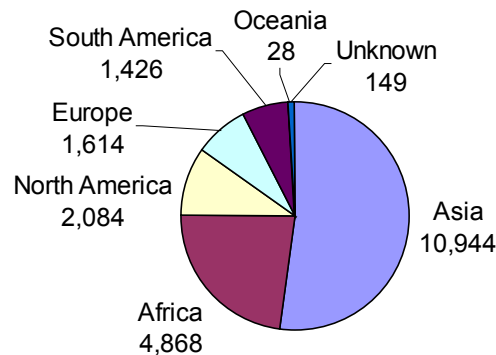
### Refugee Arrivals by Region, 2010



### Top Five Countries of Origin for Refugees (2010)

Iraq (18,016)  
 Burma (16,693)  
 Bhutan (12,363)  
 Somalia (4,884)  
 Cuba (4,818)

### Individuals Granted Asylum by Region, 2010



### Top Five Countries of Origin for Asylees (2010)

China (6,683)  
 Ethiopia (1,093)  
 Haiti (832)  
 Venezuela (660)  
 Nepal (640)

Office of Immigration Statistics, "Tables 14 and 19," Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2010, Department of Homeland Security (August 2011), [http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2010/ois\\_yb\\_2010.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2010/ois_yb_2010.pdf).

### The Application Process: Refugees

Most refugees work with a non-governmental agency overseas to prepare their applications for refugee resettlement in the United States. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) then interviews each refugee to verify that she or he has a legitimate claim to refugee status.<sup>7</sup> All applicants go through background security checks and a health screening. The U.S. government also provides everyone who is granted refugee status a cultural orientation to the United States. Not everyone with a legitimate refugee claim is granted entrance. Refugees can be excluded for public health, national security, criminal, and other reasons.

Once a refugee has been admitted to the United States, a private voluntary agency arranges initial resettlement services. The refugee receives a loan to cover the costs of their travel to the United States, which they must begin repaying within 6 months of arrival. The U.S. government provides cash grants to the private agencies to help refugees find food, housing, clothing, employment, and medical care during their first 90 days in the United States.<sup>8</sup> During the first eight months they are in the United States, all refugees are eligible to receive cash assistance and medical care. After the first eight months, however, refugees must meet the same eligibility requirements for public assistance as any legal resident of the state in which they live.<sup>9</sup>

### The Application Process: Asylum Seekers

Any person can apply for asylum affirmatively by filing a form within a year of arriving in the United States or defensively once they are in deportation proceedings. Some asylum seekers are held in detention for months or years while they wait for their application to be processed. Affirmative applications are reviewed by an asylum officer, who can choose to grant or deny asylum. If the officer denies asylum, the case goes before an immigration judge. All defensive asylum cases are heard by an immigration judge. The judge can choose to grant or deny asylum. If the judge denies the asylum claim, the applicant can appeal this decision. Asylum cases can take many years to make their way through the courts. Once someone has gone through all of his or her appeals without being granted asylum, that person cannot usually reapply.

Asylees are eligible for many of the same benefits as refugees, including short-term cash assistance and certain social services. Like refugees, asylees are eligible for public assistance if they meet the same eligibility requirements as any legal resident of the state in which they live.<sup>10</sup> The U.S. government also funds torture treatment centers for victims of torture, which include many asylees.<sup>11</sup>

# THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

## Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, Table 6, 2009 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, (August 2010), [http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2009/ois\\_yb\\_2009.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2009/ois_yb_2009.pdf).
- 2 The Advocates for Human Rights, "Pro Bono Representation Manual: An Overview of Asylum Law and Procedure," (2010), [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/ahr\\_pro\\_bono\\_asylum\\_manual.pdf](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/ahr_pro_bono_asylum_manual.pdf) (accessed December, 2010).
- 3 The Advocates for Human Rights, "Pro Bono Representation Manual: An Overview of Asylum Law and Procedure," (2010), [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/ahr\\_pro\\_bono\\_asylum\\_manual.pdf](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/ahr_pro_bono_asylum_manual.pdf) (accessed December, 2010).
- 4 The Advocates for Human Rights, "Pro Bono Representation Manual: An Overview of Asylum Law and Procedure," (2010), [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/ahr\\_pro\\_bono\\_asylum\\_manual.pdf](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/ahr_pro_bono_asylum_manual.pdf) (accessed December, 2010).
- 5 "Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2011: Report to the Congress," (Submitted on Behalf of the President of the United States to the Committees on the Judiciary United States Senate and United States House of Representatives), September 30, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/148671.pdf>.
- 6 Ibid
- 7 National Immigration Forum, "Refugees and Asylees," (June 29, 2010), <http://www.immigrationforum.org/research/display/refugees-and-asylees/>
- 8 Ibid
- 9 U.S. Department of State, "Refugee Resettlement in the United States: Fact Sheet," (Sept. 16, 2010), <http://www.state.gov/g/prm/rls/147254.htm>
- 10 Public Law, 05-320 Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998
- 11 Ibid

## REFUGEE AND ASYLEE STORIES

### Abdul and Dunia

"I'm Abdul H. Mali. I'm working currently for the University of Minnesota. I'm called an asylee [and I've been] in the United States for almost four years now. I am coming from — I almost said the United States of America! — coming from the Democratic Republic of Congo. And my spouse and kids just joined me, for a year."

"[In the DRC] I was working as a journalist for six years. Now, as a journalist, I ended up having a contract with the PBS, an American channel. And I helped them to issue two documentaries. The first assignment was about the politics in the Congo, in general. Our democracy was still very, very young. There is a semblance of democracy. Sometimes people can say these things on the radio, like question what the president is doing and have never really been arrested or threatened. But the major issue is firstly with me, in my case, was my collaboration with external media."

Abdul explains that he had been working on the documentary for a whole month, and even though it was progressing successfully, the work was intense and time consuming. So they took some time off and Abdul went with his coworkers to Minnesota. "As soon as I moved to Minnesota, they broke into my house on a Sunday morning." Abdul explains that the men tried to force his wife to tell them where he was hiding. They searched the house and accused Abdul of being with the CIA. Abdul says they took Dunia to their office and questioned her for hours. Dunia continues, "We had first to hide. His mother had to hide. My father, too. So it was me, my father, and his mother. We all separated, changed our places a couple times, and then came back."

Abdul explains why he did not return to the Congo. "The United Nations went to my radio station, tried to find out why they were trying to arrest me, And the UN got in touch with this arrest warrant that was issued against me. Coming from the high court! You know, saying that I had endangered the country. I had insulted the president. So the arrest warrant said wherever place they could see me, I should be arrested on the spot. The UN just called me in Minnesota and said, 'You just can't come back, because we're not able to ensure your safety and security. And we're trying to protect your family, but you need to look for asylum.'"

Meanwhile, Dunia was back in the DRC. "I had most of important things in my house taken away when they came and said, 'We are searching for proof of his betrayal.' They took the car. They took all his ... journalist stuff we had. And when I've been questioned by those people. You know, they take you for hours. Questioning you the same questions. I had my baby. They take your baby in the other room, and you are listening to him crying! and you are answering those silly questions. And they are menacing you. 'You're never going to back outside again!' It was stressful."

Abdul continues, "The first thing was when I was granted asylum. I was not really prepared for that. I didn't even know if it was going to be possible. When I got asylum, that was the first time that I felt like, 'Well, at least I'm sure that I can, for a couple years at least, be here and make sure I get my family out of that place.'" Abdul was in Minnesota for three long years before his family was able to join him. Dunia says she feels safer in Minnesota, but it is hard to forget her family back home. Her siblings, parents, and in-laws are all back in the DRC, and it is impossible to know if they are in danger of being threatened again by the people seeking Abdul.

Abdul says, "I feel like America is a place where you can undertake your own business; as long as you respect the rules and pay your taxes you are good to go. You won't see anybody trying to get in your way, forcibly. You feel free. The opportunities are immense. I'm very happy for my kids. Especially they can go to grade school and study. I have some smart boys. I want them to push hard and get ahead and become real guys. This is something great. This is something great."

Excerpted from "Abdul & Dunia," in *This Much I Can Tell You: Stories of Courage and Hope from Refugees in Minnesota*, compiled by Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services (Edina MN: 2011), [www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices](http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices), p. 106-122.

## REFUGEE AND ASYLEE STORIES

### Bayongson

"I am Bayongson. I was born in West Cameroon, [which is] different from East Cameroon. West Cameroon is English, British. But East Cameroon is guided by the French culture. West Cameroon was an independent entity until 1961, when we had a historic merger with East Cameroon." Since then, a repressive single party, dominated by French speakers, has ruled the country. English speakers claim systemic discrimination. "So now we are fighting for our independence, for the sovereignty of West Cameroon. The East Cameroonian French, want to eliminate us. That is why you see those escaping to come here to the U.S...."

"Before I came, I was a politician. I was preaching a democratic rule. There is no democracy in Cameroon — not an ounce of democracy. When I was there, you would be arrested, dumped in the prison, in the cells — I had been to the cell more than forty-two times, can you imagine? Not for any crime, only because I was agitating for democracy and the sovereignty of southern Cameroon. It reached a time when the search for me was just to eliminate me. They had tortured me and discovered that I could not give up. They said to me, 'If you don't advocate for West Cameroon, everything will be good.' I told them that is over my corpse. So many times they told me, 'You will be made somebody; you will be an important person in society. You are knowledgeable, educated — look how you are wasting your education.' I told them no. Finally they saw that I was not bendable. So the only alternative was to eliminate me.

"When I was arrested next, I was in West Cameroon and transferred to East Cameroon, to a place called Kondengui. When you are transferred there, your family members know that if you are not fortunate, that's it for you. I was arrested along with most of the friends I had been with. We sat in a room like this, about fifty people. They would come and call out names, five names in a night. Those people go, and the following morning you discover that you are only forty-two in the room. You cannot ask where the other people are. You don't know where they have gone or whether they are alive. They keep taking them out and they are gone, just like that."

"One of my Francophone friends from the university went to the army and became a general in East Cameroon. I think he saw my name, or maybe he saw me moving around in this detention camp. One evening, he sent his subordinate to come and call me. He has called me here for this: 'You only have one option now, not two. You move to an unknown.' He said he was going to aid me and if I was successful, good; but if I was not, that was the end of my luck. I only had on slippers, so he gave me canvas shoes and some money, which was in the equivalent of around one hundred dollars. I hid myself somewhere, and then the following morning, I got a vehicle to the neighboring village and I crossed to Nigeria.

"I found my way back to Cameroon, because I could not move anywhere without a passport. I had to bribe my way around in Cameroon. I had to bribe to get my passport and travel documents. I contacted a family friend in America; he was Cameroonian, and told him my plight, that I am now a dead man. The friend now built up a letter to invite his friend to come to a political meeting in Minnesota. I took it to the embassy. I saw the visa, saw it stamped, and my friend here had paid my ticket, a two-way so it would look like I was coming back."

"When I arrived in America, I knew that I was safe. I had the shortest asylee [petition] ... there was not any hitch — no hitch. In total, it did not take me up to one year. When I had my asylee documents, I applied now to bring my family. That was another process; it takes a long time. I was struggling to get the money — tickets were getting dearer and dearer. It was not an easy thing. I tried and tried until my family came." Bayongson finished his training as a nursing assistant and began working in an assisted living home. He works hard to preserve his connection to his culture and politics: "I strongly believe that no matter how long my children stay here, they will adapt to American culture but will still identify themselves as Cameroonians. I am teaching them to grow up in their background."

Excerpted from "Bayongson," in *This Much I Can Tell You: Stories of Courage and Hope from Refugees in Minnesota*, compiled by Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services (Edina MN: 2011), [www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices](http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices), p. 162-173.



## REFUGEE AND ASYLEE STORIES

### Kaw Lah

Kaw Lah was born in Burma in 1981. He is Karen, a minority ethnic group that has been the target of persecution and repression by the Burmese government. “When military troops came to attack our villages, we had to run away. During that time I was five, maybe six years old. I just knew we were not eating or playing. The old people would say, ‘We have to go,’ and we would go and sleep in the cliffs. We could not study during that time. Some days, the teacher told me, ‘Today you cannot come because the situation is not good.’”

“When I was five or six years, maybe four or five years old, we moved because of too much military troop activity in my village area. We moved to the taller mountain to find a safe place. But one year later, the military troop activity expanded to there, too. During that time, my father was caught — we can say arrested. We didn’t know when he would return ... we waited and we waited. The military troops arrest the Karen because they need more porters to carry the food for the military. My father and his friend tried to run away. The Burma military — the soldiers — tried to arrest them back. And the shooting ... the target that they shot was my father. [After my father was killed], my mother’s face was not well, like she felt sad, something like that, and after one year or two years, she got sick. She passed away after two years from illness, maybe disease. But I still had my grandma.”

“We didn’t want to live in the refugee camps, but we had no choice to stay in Burma. Village after village was attacked. My grandmother and I took a boat. I was eight years old after we crossed the river. We stayed in a temporary resettlement place, a place with tents and small buildings. It was quite small, and the Thai soldiers make sure the people stay there: you can’t leave. We later moved into Thailand, to Mekong Ka Refugee Camp. This refugee camp is quite permanent, and I was there maybe seventeen years. I started my education properly. I graduated high school. We had good support from [refugee assistance organizations]. The building construction in the refugee camp was better than other countries, I have heard.”

“The first time I got an opportunity to resettle in Norway. But I did not feel confident; I think, ‘Oh, I don’t want to go.’ So I answered my grandma, ‘No, I prefer to stay in Thailand. I can look after myself.’ So she said ‘Okay, not a problem; sure.’ She went. After one year alone I think ‘Oh! What is going on?’”

“My understanding of the U.S. was ... what is the big, what is the best, what is the good, what is the challenge? I think the most powerful country in the world is the U.S.. And the process is easy and fast. The young people are encouraged to come here to the U.S. to find a new world and for the challenge. I was not scared. I was confident to come. I believe that I can progress, can arrive at my ambitions. I want to have a degree. I want to study. I don’t want the time to pass away for nothing. I want to be active. I want to go. I don’t want to stay at home and sleep and eat. At the first training provided by [the International Office of Migration, which helps refugees through the resettlement process], one of the trainers asked, ‘What do you want to be?’ I said I want to be secretary of the United Nations; I like Kofi Annan.” Kaw Lah laughs.

“Before I came, I communicated with other Karen who had come to Minnesota. I asked them, ‘How is life?’ They answered, ‘Oh, not well yet; it is hard. And there are a lot of strong hurricanes [snowstorms]’ ... I thought, Is not safe for me! But I decided to come.” When he arrived, Kaw Lah was lucky enough to speak English fairly well; he had studied in school in the camp. He says, “I have no idea to go back. Yes, we should list now what we want to do: I want to see snow. Soon that will be completed — then I have to complete another thing: education. I have to work. I want to have a house. Yes, I have many plans. Although it is very cold, and I walk outside for a few minutes and I think, ‘Oh, am I wrong to go here!’ But I am still here.”

Excerpted from “Kaw Lah,” in *This Much I Can Tell You: Stories of Courage and Hope from Refugees in Minnesota*, compiled by Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services (Edina MN: 2011), [www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices](http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices), p. 49-53.

## REFUGEE AND ASYLEE STORIES

### Krishna

Like the majority of the Bhutanese refugees coming to the U.S., Krishna grew up in southern Bhutan. His family members were farmers who grew crops typical for the region: “Rice, wheat, and all the crops. Also I had a cow, many cows. The cows slept at home. Cows, buffalo, sheep, goat, and chicken.”

“In Bhutan there are no human rights [for the Lhotshampa people]. They asked for the human rights. The government sent military to all the houses. They came in the nighttime and the daytime and they beat the people. They killed like that. In daytime, we worked in the field; at the nighttime, the military came and captured Lhotshampas, took them and beat them. So at night, we went to the forest to sleep. There is too much rain in Bhutan and we sit in the [forest] in the raining time also. It was very difficult. One time, they captured me. When they came to the house, I say that I have not done anything and they leave, but another group came. They do not ask questions. Many other people they shoot and they killed. I was not. Sometimes when the Bhutan military — army — attack, they cut off one leg. Sometimes they cut off the hand and they throw it to the truck. Many people are dying in Bhutan.”

“We moved at night. Januka was six, Prakash was four, Shailesh was two, and Renuka was one and a half years old. We did not take anything from our house when we moved, because I carried Prakash and held hands with Januka. Nar Maya carried Shailesh and Renuka. We walked and walked. I had some money, but there is place called the Asum where there were men with guns. They asked for the money and I gave it to them.” After walking for hours and hours, they arrived in India where they joined other Bhutanese families, and local villagers provided the group with some food. “We sit there for five days. [Then] the Indian army came and put us in the truck. They took us and they threw us to the Bengali state. And when morning time came, at 5:00 a.m., again the Bengali police came. They took us to the Nepal border and at 9:00 p.m. they threw us to Nepal.”

“There is a long bridge [between] India and Nepal. After we crossed, the Nepal police captured us and asked, ‘Where you are coming from? Why are you coming?’ The Nepali police brought [us] to a temporary camp called Mai. There was one small house [for everyone] and there was nobody to cook the food. There were no tents. After some days, the Red Cross provided food and some tents. We lived in small tent. The wind blew and the fire would go out. We spent six months in the Mai camp. Many people there died. Too much cholera. So we went to the Goldhap Camp. When we moved the UN High Commissioner for Refugees provided us with some food. They saw that we are refugees and countries like the United States, Canada — they helped the refugees. They gave a little food for the family and I worked outside the camp.” Krishna and his family lived in the camp for seventeen years.

A fire in the camp happened just before the family came to the United States. Krishna lost all of the family’s possessions and money. “All were gone from the fire. When I came from Bhutan to Minnesota, I did not bring anything, because all was gone by the fire. The different organizations, they helped us, and after four months, we came to the United States. We came with only one bag each, with some clothes. After the fire happened in the camp, we were in the forest for a month, so when we came to the United States, I was very happy to sit in a house.”

“In the United States, it is so expensive and sometimes Januka and Prakash have only three or four days of work a week. This week, they have done only three days. It is difficult to pay the rent, water and electricity, gas, and travel loans. [Despite the difficulties], I will become a citizen of the United States, and grow old in the United States, and die in the United States. If I am well, I will work. When I was in Nepal, I used to work, but because I am not well, it is difficult. I hope that I will buy a house and a car, be a citizen, and sit in the United States.”

Excerpted from “Krishna,” in *This Much I Can Tell You: Stories of Courage and Hope from Refugees in Minnesota*, compiled by Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services (Edina MN: 2011), [www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices](http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices), p. 141-147..

## REFUGEE AND ASYLEE STORIES

### Senan

"I was born in the south of Iraq; it's Basrah. After the [U.S. invasion in] 2002, I went to the U.S. embassy. They test me and they hire me as an electrician and interpreter with the U.S. embassy." Senan explains that he liked his job and his coworkers liked him, too. He was making good money and getting professional experience with a U.S. company. But one day, "I went inside [my work] and they said, that there is a big news. They said, 'There's a letter saying if you work today not tomorrow, if you don't quit today, you get killed.' After three hours, they say that militia, they are outside with guns, waiting for us just to go out. And the military inside, they heard about it and they take like Humvees and tanks outside. And they start shooting between the British and the American soldiers and them till they became very safe for us and they let us go." So Senan quit his job that day.

"One day, we are sitting outside in the street, just in front of my gate and we saw a white SUV just out in front of me. And we know this car is the specific for militia or the government. I did like I was going to jump, and he said stop. And I didn't stop. He just pull his gun and shoot one time; he hit the wall. I run and he shoot the front gate and he come after me. And he shoot three times, like after me in the garden, but he didn't touch me."

Senan ran to the neighbor's house, but they wouldn't let him in because they were afraid of what could happen to them. So Senan went to the next house and was finally given a hiding place, under their bed. Senan called his cousins and asked them to drive him away to safety without suspicion. "They come after one hour. I jump in the car and we went far away from the city. We just continue driving until I get to a farm; it's for our family. I stay there and they give me a gun, just to make me feel better. I said I cannot forget. It's just ... scary. We stay at the farm for fifteen days. My brother got me a passport and a new ID and stuff. After the fifteen days, they got a ticket for me to go to Syria. From there I fly to Syria and stay there for three years and a half."

"In Damascus I applied for [refugee assistance from the International Office of Migration]; they give you a bed and pillow and they tell you go ahead and find your house or apartment; we aren't going to help you with anything more. You have to sit there and somebody help you from your country. My dad send me three hundred every month just to go through the month and pay my bills and everything." Senan says his passport was stamped when he entered Syria, which meant he was unable to work in that country. If somebody catches you working, you could be deported.

"One day, I thought 'okay; I have friends in United States. His name is Randy and he said, 'this folder has all my information: my phone, my address in United States. If something happen and you want to come to the United States, you're free to come to visit.'" So Senan emailed Randy, and explained everything that happened to him, how he was forced to quit his job for fear of being killed and that he had fled from Iraq to Syria. "He said, 'Anything I can do for you?' I tell him to just write me a letter that supports me, because they don't trust that I'm working with United States." Senan returned to the International Office of Migration. "I believe that there's a visa for us just to go to the United States just to become safe," Senan told an administrator. "She said, 'Yeah, we can help you.' She did the process within nine months."

"When I came here, I speak English and know a little bit about the culture. But you have to apply for Social Security card, ID, and driver's license. I was just confused and confused and confused, and scared to go out, also, because I don't know the roads. Every time I wanted to buy something or go to the market, I called Randy to come pick me up and take me to this market. [Now that I have adjusted], I want to apply to a bank to get a house, and not be paying the rent to the landlord. Always my wife, she asks, 'Do you think to go back to Iraq?' I said, 'I am never going to Iraq.' The country that brought me and said, 'This is your life, you can live here and do anything you want in here' — that is my country."

Excerpted from "Senan," in *This Much I Can Tell You: Stories of Courage and Hope from Refugees in Minnesota*, compiled by Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services (Edina MN: 2011), [www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices](http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices), p. 124-138.

## REFUGEE AND ASYLEE STORIES

### Sharmake

"I remember I was a kid in Somalia. I was younger. I was living with my family, with my mom and my two brothers, before the civil war." Sharmake explains that his parents owned a grocery store, which supported their family. Sharmake is the middle of three brothers. As a child, Sharmake remembers the fun he had with his friends. "We played on the beach. I remember that it was fun to play soccer."

"When we fled, I was seven years old. One morning, I was hearing some guns, the sound of guns saying that people are fighting together. Earlier in the morning, some bandits came to our home. And then they killed my father. I woke up and my mom was crying over there, outside the apartment. She said what happened and was crying and she held us. We left that place the same evening. Oh, I was tired. We would go from neighbors, to neighbors' homes, and we would feel comfortable. But we weren't going a direct route. We were going through the bush."

"I remember when we come to border, there was army people who had guns. I think it was the government of Kenya. In the morning, I remember we took a big van and a big truck, my mother and brothers and two of my neighbors traveled with us. And then we come all the way down, ninety miles inside to the country of Kenya. And there were houses already prepared with roofs and trees. There wasn't any wall; the house was only tree and a roof. And Mom picked one; it was nice. I was there for eighteen years. It was four meters by three meters and there was a roof."

"When you come to the camps, people in United Nations was giving food. Then they told people they didn't have firewood or a machine to cook the food. So the mothers and fathers are going to the bush to take the firewood to cook the food. And you know, when the fathers go out, he would be killed by the bandits. When the women go there, they're going to rape the women. At the same time they were coming at nighttime to the camps and they were killing. I just remember one night, it was midnight, and I said, 'Mommy, I wanna go outside. I wanna go to bathroom.' And then the mom saw a light in front of the other apartment. She said, 'Oh, my son, there's something wrong. Let's go back.' After an hour, my mom went out and she see that one of our neighbors was just shattered in his back. They killed, you know."

"That was the life in the refugee camp. There was no fence, but you can't go outside the border. If you go to Somalia, people are killing people. If you go to Kenya, the government of Kenya will arrest you. They don't have enough food. They don't have enough water. They don't have enough health care even. Kids are malnourished. Kids, you know, need milk, vegetables to grow up. They are not getting that."

Sharmake says that the UN gave people a lot of hope [with the resettlement program], offering them the possibility of leaving their harsh lives and moving on to something new. After his mom was interviewed, Sharmake went in for his own interview. "I just told him this process I have been waiting a long time, you know? Long years, you know? I tell him, 'I think you are the only one who can decide my case to make me pass and you know everything I told you was about my life.' So I said, 'Can you do me a favor? Give me approval.' He just laughed, he just told me, 'Okay, you'll be alright.'"

"I come all the way down to the airport in Minneapolis MN, I see the mom and my sister, they run to me, 'Oh, Mom, you're here!' Now, I just finish my ESL class. I can go now to college or I can go anywhere. I was approved to start my nursing classes, to be nursing assistant. After that I can be a full nurse, [and then] I can take four years for doctor. That's my dream, you know. I wanna be a doctor."

Excerpted from "Sharmake," in *This Much I Can Tell You: Stories of Courage and Hope from Refugees in Minnesota*, compiled by Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services (Edina MN: 2011), [www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices](http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices), p. 7-19.

## MAPPING THE JOURNEY

### Fleeing Home

Why did the people in your story leave their home? What threats or harms were they fleeing? Why had they been targeted?

Human rights affected in home country

### Making the Journey

Where did they go after leaving their home? Did they travel to multiple places? What were the problems with those places that inspired them to come to the United States?

Human rights affected during the journey

### Coming to the United States

How did they come to live legally in the United States? Are they refugees or asylees? What were some experiences they had adjusting to their new home?

Human rights affected during arrival



## REFUGEE ROLE-PLAY CARDS

### Refugee Identities:

The refugee identities can be added to and adapted as necessary. You may want to cut and laminate the refugee identity cards for future use. Be sure that you have one identity card for each student in class.

### FAMILY #1: Grandmother

- 60 years old
- Teaches 5th grade
- Enjoys cooking

### FAMILY #1: Grandfather

- 65 years old
- Retired farmer
- Collects valuable coins

### FAMILY #1: Grandson

- 12 years old
- Parents have died
- Likes to help his grandfather garden

### FAMILY #2: Father

- 43 years old
- Dentist
- Likes to jog

### FAMILY #2: Mother

- 44 years old
- English teacher
- Competitive runner

### FAMILY #2: Daughter

- 13 years old (twin)
- Good swimmer
- Likes to text with friends

### FAMILY #2: Daughter

- 13 years old (twin)
- Very athletic
- Just got a kitten

## REFUGEE ROLE-PLAY CARDS

### **FAMILY #3: Father**

- 40 years old
- Works at local paper mill
- Expert handyman

### **FAMILY #3: Mother**

- 39 years old
- Stays at home with children
- Skilled at sewing

### **FAMILY #3: Daughter**

- 18 years old
- Looking forward to going to community college
- Has a boyfriend who attends the same school

### **FAMILY #3: Son**

- 14 years old
- Likes to play soccer
- Straight-A student

### **FAMILY #3: Son**

- 9 years old
- Has health problems and needs regular medication
- Has a golden retriever

### **FAMILY #4: Mother**

- 55 years old
- Works as a doctor
- Specializes in family medicine

### **FAMILY #4: Father**

- 56 years old
- Works for a newspaper as a business reporter
- Loves to cook

### **FAMILY #4: Daughter**

- 18 years old
- Computer whiz
- Makes apps for her friends

## REFUGEE ROLE-PLAY CARDS

**FAMILY #4: Daughter**

- 16 years old
- Wants to be an actress
- Enjoys hanging out at the mall

**FAMILY #4: Daughter**

- 12 years old
- Very studious
- Loves to read
- Uses a wheelchair

**FAMILY #4: Aunt**

- 70 years old
- Not able to walk easily
- Loves to tell stories

**FAMILY #5: Mother**

- 35 years old
- Divorced
- Works as a city bus driver

**FAMILY #5: Cousin**

- 21 years old
- College student staying with family during school
- Helps with child care

**FAMILY #5: Son**

- 10 years old
- Loves to play basketball
- Always listening to his iPod

**FAMILY #5: Son**

- 6 years old
- Likes animals
- Shy

**FAMILY #5: Daughter**

- 10 months old
- Has been crying a lot lately
- Allergic to milk

## ASYLUM APPLICATION IN PIG LATIN

### DHS - USCIS

#### U.S. Department of Homeland Security - EOIR

#### Application for Asylum and for withholding of removal

**TARTSAY EREHAY. Ypetay orhay rintpay inhay lackbay inkhay. Eesay ethay instructionshay orhay informationhay abouthay eligibilityhay andhay owhay otay ompletecay andhay ilefay isthay applicationhay. Erethay ishay onay ilingfay eefay orhay isthay applicationhay.**

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#### Artpay A.1. INFORMATIONHAY ABOUTHAY OUYAY

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3. Ompletecay Astlay Amenay		4. Irstfay Amenay	
		5. Iddlemay Amenay	
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Reetstay Umbernay and Amenay		Apthay. #	
Itycay		Atestay	
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13. Esentpray Ationalitynay		14. Ationalitynay athay Irthbay	
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		16. Eligionray	
17. Eckchay ethay oxbay, A roughthay C, atthay applieshay: <b>A:</b> Ihay avehay evernay eenbay inhay immigrationhay ourtcay roceedingspay. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>B:</b> Ihay amhay ownay inhay immigrationhay ourtcay roceedingspay. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>C:</b> Ihay amhay <b>otnay</b> ownay inhay immigrationhay ourtcay roceedingspay, utbay lhay avehay eenbaay inhay ethay astpay. <input type="checkbox"/>			
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		21. Expirationhay Ateday (mm/dd/yyyy)	
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24. Atwhay otherhay anguageslay oday ouyay peaksay luentlyfay?			
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## ASYLUM APPLICATION IN ENGLISH

### DHS - USCIS

### U.S. Department of Justice - EOIR

### Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal

**START HERE. Type or print in black ink. See the separate instruction pamphlet for information about eligibility and how to complete and file this application. There is NO filing fee for this application.**

Note: Check this box if you want to apply for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture.

#### PART A.1. INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

1. Alien Registration Number(s) (A#'s) (If any)		2. Social Security No. (if any)	
3. Complete Last Name	4. First Name	5. Middle Name	
6. What other names have you used? (Include maiden name and aliases.)			
7. Residence in the U.S.		Telephone	
Street Number and Name		Apt. No.	
City	State	ZIP Code	
8. Mailing Address in the U.S., if other than above		Telephone	
Street Number and Name		Apt. No.	
City	State	ZIP code	
9. Gender: ___ Male ___ Female	10. Marital Status: ___ Single ___ Married ___ Divorced ___ Widowed		
11. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	12. City and Country of Birth		
13. Present Nationality	14. Nationality at Birth	15. Race, Ethnic or Tribal Group	16. Religion
17. Check the box, a through c that applies: <b>A:</b> I have never been in immigration court proceedings. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>B:</b> I am now in immigration court proceedings. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>C:</b> I am <b>not</b> now in immigration court proceedings, but I have been in the past. <input type="checkbox"/>			
18. Complete #18 A-B: A. When did you last leave your country (mm/dd/yyyy) _____ B. What is your current I-94 number, if any? _____			
19. What country issued your last passport or travel document?		20. Passport #	21. Expiration Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
22. What is your native language?		23. Are you fluent in English? Y ___ N ___	What other languages do you speak fluently?
FOR EOIR USE ONLY	FOR USCIS USE ONLY <b>Action:</b> Interview Date: _____ Asylum Officer ID#: _____ <b>Decision:</b> _____ Approval Date _____ Denial Date _____ Referral Date		



