

Project Welcome Quick Guide

Public Libraries Serving Refugees



Since 1975, the United States has welcomed over 3 million refugees nationwide. While there are public libraries that provide a broad range of services to refugees, many are still looking for guidance to better support refugee resettlement and integration. The Project Welcome Guide was created to answer this need. It is a concise, professional guide for public libraries and stakeholders to welcome and effectively serve refugees. This “Quick Guide” (abridged version) as well as the full guide and additional resources are available at the Project Welcome website: <https://publish.illinois.edu/projectwelcome>. Through Project Welcome, librarians are learning from each other’s best practices. Moreover, libraries, collaborating with refugee resettlement agencies, ethnic library associations and refugee community members, can better serve and understand refugee needs.

An inclusive and sustainable approach is the cornerstone of the Project Welcome Guide. The needs of refugees may be met by general library services or services to newcomers and immigrants. Specific services that are sensitive and focused on refugee needs should be provided in collaboration with experienced and

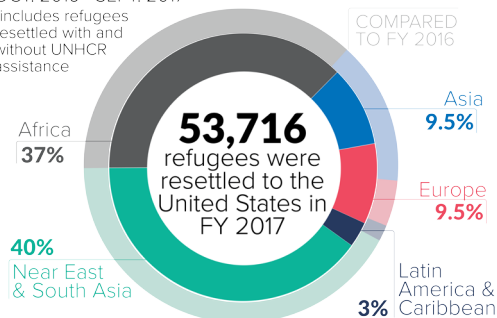
knowledgeable experts and institutions, such as programs on overcoming trauma. Sustainable library services for refugees require committed administrative leadership, consideration in mission development and strategic planning, inclusive policies and procedures, sustainable funding, trained personnel, community engagement and input, strong partnerships, and a welcoming library culture.

Any library can be welcoming for refugees! This guide is not meant to measure libraries’ progress toward becoming welcoming; rather, it is meant to encourage all libraries to recognize their potential as a community anchor that welcomes and continuously serves refugees. Libraries will need to develop their own set of measurement tools to gauge their success in attaining their goals and objectives. This guide can be adapted to the needs and budgets of every library. Whether it is adding or changing characteristics of the existing physical environment, policy, procedures or services based on the recommendations within this guide, we hope that refugees become active users and engaged in the library community.

REFUGEES RESETTLED TO THE U.S. IN FY 2017 BY REGION OF ORIGIN*

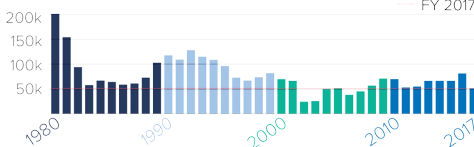
OCT. 2016 - SEPT. 2017

*Includes refugees resettled with and without UNHCR assistance



TOP ORIGINS: 1 DEM. REP. CONGO 2 IRAQ 3 SYRIA

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT TO THE U.S. FY 1980-2017



TOP U.S. STATES FOR RESETTLEMENT IN FY 2017

OCT. 2016 - SEPT. 2017

1 CALIFORNIA
2 TEXAS
3 NEW YORK
4 WASHINGTON
5 OHIO
6 MICHIGAN
7 ARIZONA
8 PENNSYLVANIA
9 NORTH CAROLINA
10 GEORGIA

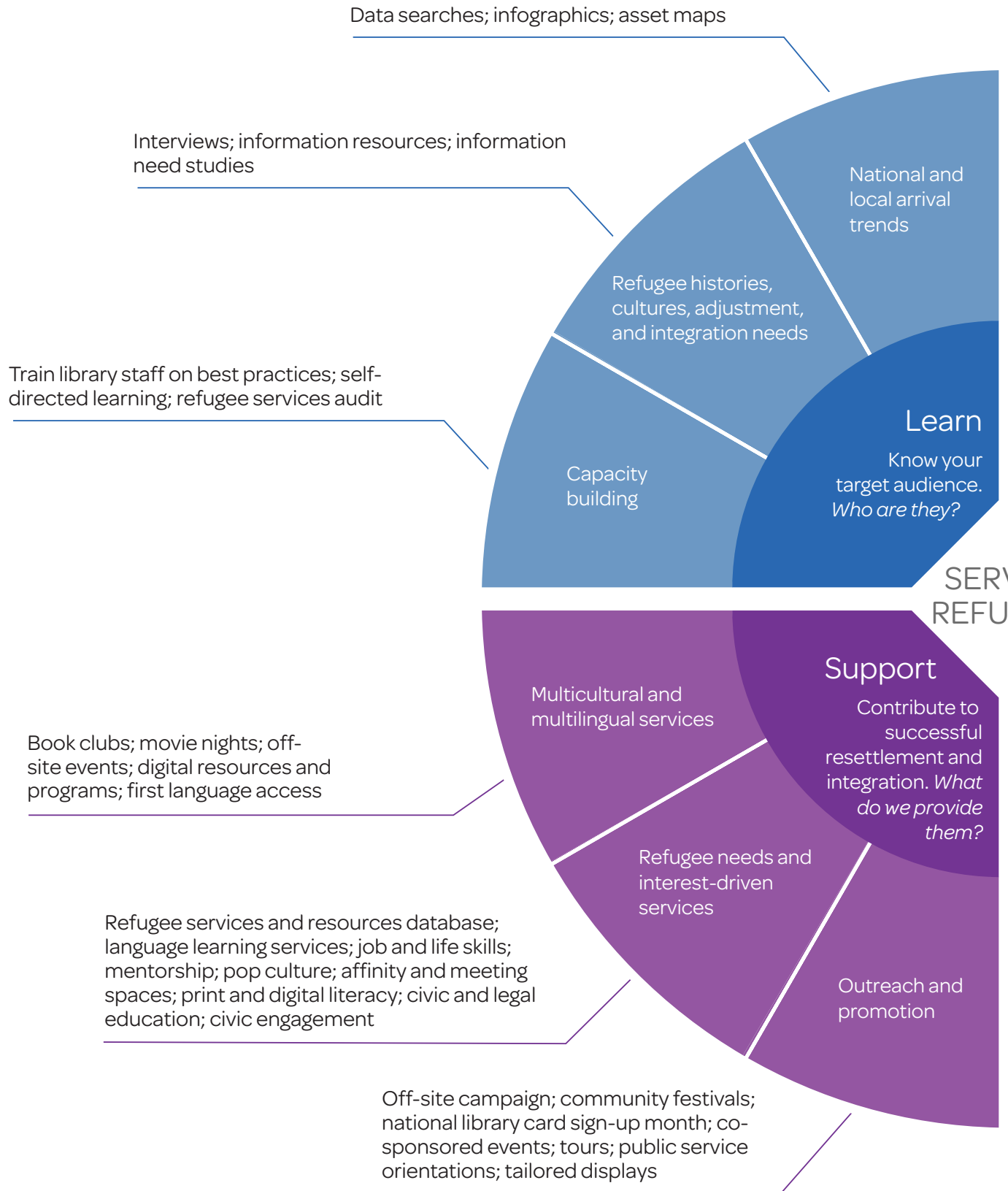
49 states (and the District of Columbia) received refugees for resettlement in FY 2017

Graphic source: UNHCR; Info Source: U.S. Department of State, UNHCR (January 2018)

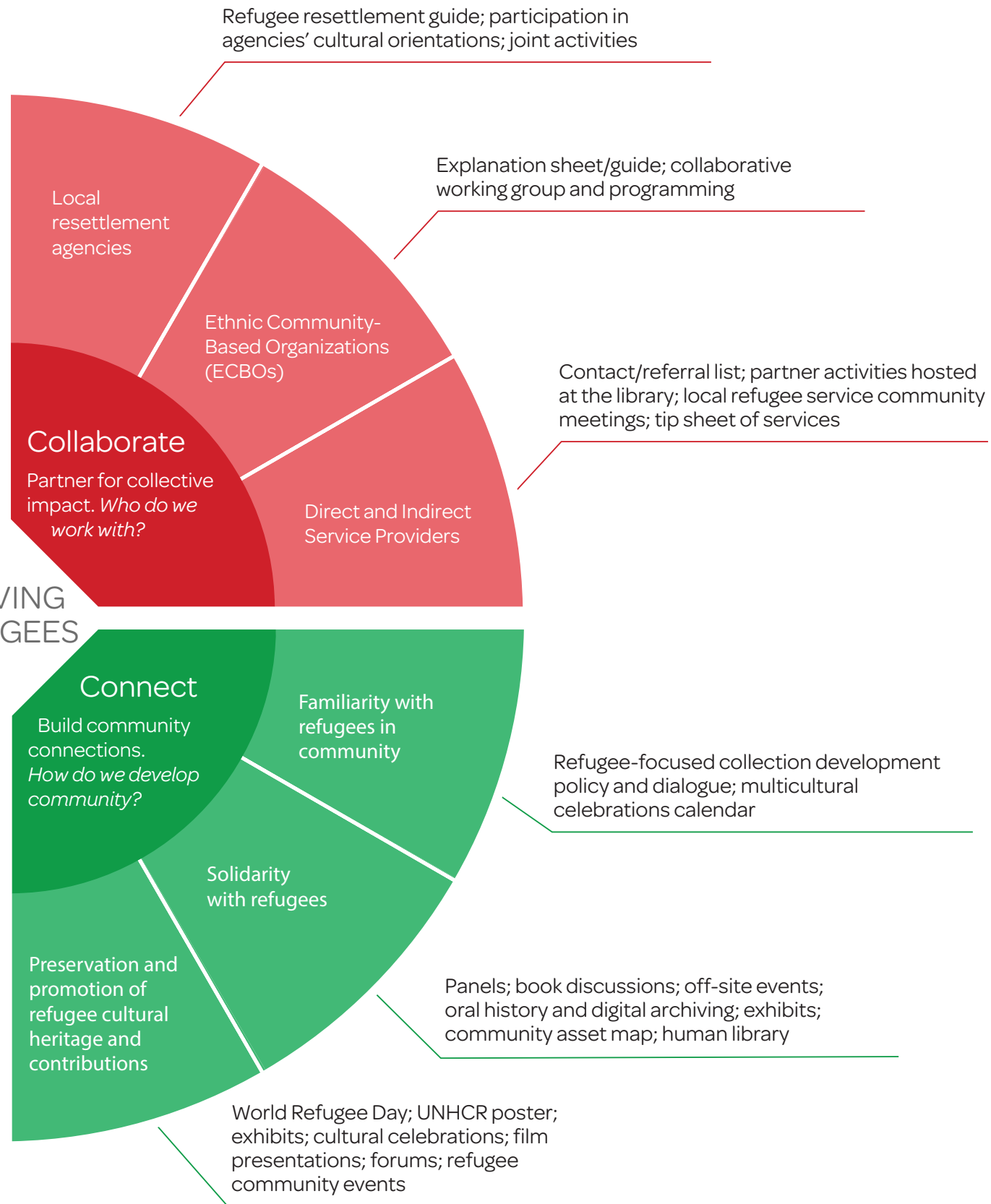


Photo: Denver Public Library

The Project Welcome Guide presents an integrated service-approach that engages refugees and non-refugees and promotes multilingual, inclusive, and engaging services. It is made up of four actions (**Learn**, **Collaborate**, **Connect**, **Support**) and relevant ideas.



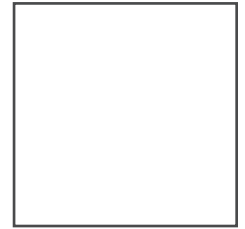
To learn more, check out the Project Welcome website at <https://publish.illinois.edu/projectwelcome>



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Please send questions and comments to mortenson@illinois.edu and visit our website: <https://publish.illinois.edu/projectwelcome>.