

**General Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)**

Tuesday, April 18, 2017 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

International Rescue Committee (IRC) – 5348 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105

1. Opening.
   1. Call to order at 10:33 am.
   2. Rebecca Paida (Chair) opened the Forum meeting and welcomed attendees.
   3. Refugee Forum Officers: Rebecca Paida (Chair), Bridget de la Garza (Secretary), Oren Robinson (Treasurer) were present.
   4. Forum participants introduced themselves.
   5. Membership and Financials. Oren Robinson (Treasurer) reported that there are currently 24 paid members (15 organizations and 9 individual members). Oren encouraged attendees to complete the 2017 Feedback Survey.
2. Community & Task Force Updates.
   1. **Advocacy Task Force:** No updates.
   2. **Asylee/Asylum Seeker Task Force:**  A meeting will be held at 2-1-1 in May.
   3. **Domestic Violence Task Force**: No updates
   4. **Employment Task Force:** No updates.
   5. **Health Task Force.** Will participate in World Refugee Day by providing information or items related to oral health. Next task force meeting: May 9, 2017, 1-3 p.m. at Nile Sisters Development Initiative.
   6. **World Refugee Day Task Force:**  This year’s World Refugee Day event will be Saturday, June 17th from 12 to 4:00 PM at the Officer Jeremy Henwood Memorial Park, 3700 Fairmount Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105 with performances at the City Heights Library Performance Annex.
3. County Agencies & Committees.
   1. Reception & Placement. Resettlement Agencies Arrival Data and Updates
      1. Alliance for African Assistance: 11 arrivals in March 2017. April 2017 projected 40 arrivals.
      2. Catholic Charities: April 2017 45 arrivals scheduled.
      3. International Rescue Committee: April 2017 35 arrivals scheduled,
      4. Jewish Family Services: No updates.
   2. County of San Diego (Oren Robinson reported for Abdi Abdillahi)
   3. UPDATE
      1. Total number of refugee arrivals for the month of April 2017 was 137
      2. Refugees were from Iraq (37%); Syria (15%); Afghanistan (17%); and Other Countries (30%).
      3. Total number of refugee arrivals in San Diego County so far (October 1, 2016-  
         April 30, 2017) during current federal fiscal year is 1,901.

c. State Advisory Council (Mohammed Tuama): Next phone conversation is scheduled for June 2017,

d. Refugee Health: No updates.

1. **Focus Presentation. Ethnic Community-Based Organizations (ECBO).**

Oren Robinson introduced the panelists: Mohammed Tuama, Newcomers Support and Development, Elizabeth Lou, Nile Sisters Development Initiative, Diana Rhodes, Development Manager, Karen Organization of San Diego, Jawra Mohamed, United Women of East Africa Support Team, Jake Young, RefugeeNet

1. Panelists shared their name, organization, and brief description of their organization’s services and communities served.
2. Panelist responded to questions: What is the role of your ECBO beyond the refugee resettlement and/or asylum process? What resources or support networks does your ECBO leverage? How has your work/community been affected by the current political atmosphere? What challenges do you face when attempting to gain resources for the communities you serve? What services are needed most? What opportunities/goals and/or challenges faced by your communities. What are some major upcoming events, initiatives, or legislation you would like to share with SDRF members?
3. **Community Announcements**

* Student at SDSU Business Dept. involved in a research project to explore ways to use data to help NGOs that serve refugees. If interested in participating in pilot program, contact Dalal Hal.
* “Honoring the Journey” conference for service providers will be held on June 1, 2017. Cost is $75. Contact person is Elisa Barnett, Academy for Professional Excellence

SDSU School of Social Work, [http://theacademy.sdsu.edu](http://theacademy.sdsu.edu/). This event will include a resource fair.

1. **Approval of Minutes**. Awichu Akwanya made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting (April 2017), and Jane Hoiberg seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.
2. **Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.**

Next Meeting: June 20, 2017 from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) - 5348 University Avenue, Suite 205, San Diego, CA 92105.