

The New School Practicum in International Affairs Terms of Reference

Client: The International Rescue Committee – Project SOAR Outreach
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Project Description:

The United States has historically accepted more refugees for resettlement than all other countries combined, becoming home to nearly two million refugees since 1983. Many of these refugees have founded *ethnic community-based organizations* (ECBOs) to address the challenges encountered by refugees building new lives in the United States. ECBOs provide a variety of social services and tools to assist in the resettlement and integration in the US.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC), as an NGO concerned with refugee aid and resettlement, has a strong commitment to aiding the work of ECBOs in the US. To this end, the IRC's *Project Strengthening Organizations Assisting Refugees* (Project SOAR) was created to share its expertise in technical assistance and organizational development with ECBOs around the US.

Since its creation, Project SOAR has worked with dozens of ECBOs in providing technical assistance training and maintaining ongoing relationships, improving their capacity to serve their intended communities. The goal of the New School's GPIA consultant team is to devise strategies to further broaden awareness of Project SOAR to ECBOs not yet aware of its services.

Practicum Project Objectives:

There are two crucial questions we seek to answer:

1. How has Project SOAR's previous work with ECBOs been successful?
2. Why have many ECBOs not yet availed themselves of Project SOAR's free technical assistance?

The answers to these questions will help us recommend to the IRC how better to reach and work with the many target ECBOs it has yet to serve.

Methodology & Activities:

1. Literature review of ECBOs in refugee affairs
2. Evaluation of prior SOAR outreach

- a. Conduct field work with ECBOs already served by SOAR
 - i. Questionnaires/Surveys to assess ECBO needs
 - ii. Interviews with ECBO staff and service providers
 - iii. Photograph ECBOs visited
3. Establish contact with potential ECBO key audiences
 - a. Web research
 - b. Personal Networking
 - c. Possible In-Person or Teleconference interviews with ECBOs not yet served by SOAR
 - d. Determine why such groups have not used IRC/SOAR resources
4. Produce communications plan and web content for SOAR
 - a. Draft outreach assessment and communications strategy paper
 - b. Evaluate and recraft SOAR print material
 - c. Provide web content in the form of ECBO profiles and possible blog entries

Deliverables:

Outreach Assessment and Communications Strategy Paper:

1. An analysis of the interests of each of SOAR's key audiences and the benefits that IRC can offer them.
2. Key messages for each of these key audiences
3. Develop an outreach plan and timeline including an analysis of IRC's target audiences for training services, how the IRC should position these offerings to national and international ECBOs.
4. Recommendations on (and content for) specific websites, university-sponsored conferences, town hall meetings, and other vehicles where IRC can educate its target audience of refugee-led organizations in the US and overseas about its services.

Web & Outreach Content:

5. Copy and design for Project SOAR's pages on the IRC website and blog.
6. Content for additional communications materials (e.g. flyers and brochures) depicting SOAR's impact, engaging its target audience, and providing commonly requested information.
7. Documentation of the project and its impact on the project team and SOAR partners via blog posts to the IRC's blog and articles in the IRC weekly update.

