

# Refugee Community Integration Lab Compilation Report



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## Mission Statement

*We seek to facilitate the integration of refugees into their community in Utah County by designing interventions that will provide them with support upon arrival.*

## Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the many individuals and organizations whose support made this project possible.

First, we are deeply grateful to the Ballard Center for Social Impact for providing the framework, mentorship, and guidance necessary to carry out this work. We would especially like to thank Jill Piatchitelli for connecting us with our “One” and for her continued mentorship throughout the project. We also extend our appreciation to William Thomas and Nils Bergeson for their valuable feedback and expertise.

We gratefully acknowledge the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship for their financial support, which enabled us to implement and test our interventions.

We are especially indebted to the Syrian refugee family we worked with, who welcomed us into their lives and trusted us with their experiences. Their openness and willingness to share their journey were foundational to this project.

We would like to thank Utah Valley Refugees for their partnership and support. We are grateful to Amanda Nelson, Leonard, Best, and Kayla for their guidance, collaboration, and dedication to the refugee community. We also appreciate the insights and support from Jennifer Hau and other caseworkers working directly with refugees and asylum seekers.

We would like to extend our gratitude to Mayor Marsha Judkins, City Councilmember Jeff Whitlock, and other members of the Provo City Council for their time, feedback, and willingness to engage with our policy recommendations. Their insights were valuable in helping us understand the practical constraints of municipal-level implementation, including considerations of funding, timing, and administrative capacity. Although the policy intervention ultimately evolved differently than initially planned, their input was instrumental in shaping our understanding of what is feasible within local government systems.

We extend our thanks to Adam Turville of FinLit, as well as Kimberly Sorensen-Bezerra and other educators and professionals who provided critical feedback that strengthened our financial literacy materials.

We are also grateful to our translators and collaborators who helped make this work more accessible, including Haifa Reyes of the Kuwait-America Foundation, Jarob Moss, and Katie Sandburg. Their efforts were essential in expanding the reach of our workbook.

Finally, we would like to thank all refugees, asylum seekers, community members, and pilot participants who engaged with our materials and provided feedback. Your insights, experiences, and perspectives were invaluable in shaping this project.

## 1. Executive Summary

This report outlines a social impact project aimed at improving the integration of refugees in Utah County. Guided by the Social Impact Cycle from the Ballard Center for Social Impact (Appendix A), our team worked closely with a recently resettled Syrian refugee family to better understand the lived experiences of newly arrived refugees. Through relationship-building, mapping tools, and systems analysis, we identified economic integration as the core barrier to successful resettlement.

Our research revealed that challenges such as unemployment, language barriers, transportation limitations, and financial insecurity are deeply interconnected. Among these, three key gaps emerged as the most actionable and foundational: lack of financial literacy, limited access to transportation, and difficulty navigating community support systems. These insights informed the development of three interventions: a policy (Welcoming City Certification), a program (financial literacy education), and a product (transportation access).

Throughout the implementation process, each intervention underwent multiple iterations. Due to institutional constraints and limited feasibility, the policy intervention was ultimately discontinued. However, the program and product evolved into two scalable and impactful solutions: an Interim Transportation Program and a Financial Literacy Workbook.

The Interim Transportation Program provides refugees with both material access to public transportation and guided mentorship to build confidence navigating transit systems. Evaluation results showed that participants experienced a significant increase in confidence and ability to independently navigate their communities.

The Financial Literacy Workbook was developed as a practical, accessible resource covering key topics such as banking, taxes, budgeting, and financial planning. It was translated into multiple languages and adapted into both print and digital formats to

maximize accessibility. Feedback from refugees, educators, and professionals confirmed its relevance and potential for broader use across the United States.

A key finding across both interventions was that accessibility and guided support are critical to successful implementation. Additionally, strong partnerships with organizations such as Utah Valley Refugees (UVR) and support from the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship were essential to both development and sustainability.

Ultimately, this project demonstrates that community-informed, iterative interventions—grounded in strong relationships and focused on root causes—can create meaningful, scalable solutions that support refugees in building stable and self-sufficient lives.

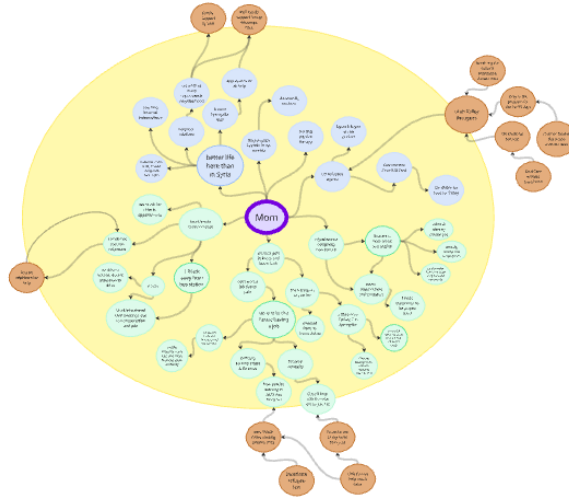
## 2. Loving the One

Jill Piatchitelli, our supervisor for this project, was the person who connected us with “the One”. She is the Relief Society president in her local ward and met this family when they moved into her neighborhood; she also was a key facilitator in connecting the family with resources and services. This placed her in a position to recognize problems and provide a valuable perspective as we worked on the project.

To love them, we spent time with the family. We attended birthday parties and holiday celebrations. We watched movies and shared meals with them. We also attended English classes with them and took them to doctors' appointments. Through all of this, we had in-depth conversations about their lives. These conversations allowed us to begin mapping their situation.

### 2.1 ISAM

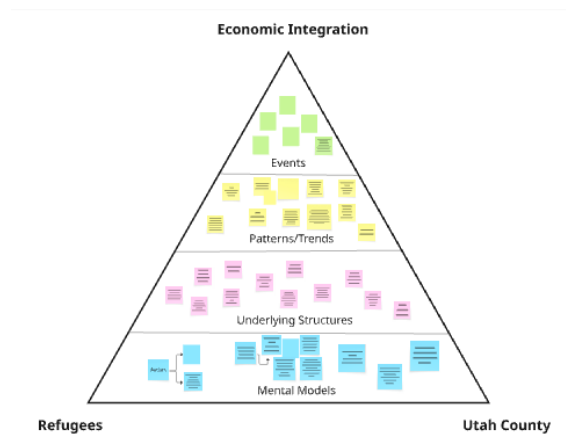
The first map we created was the individual situation assessment map (ISAM). This challenged us to view the family holistically. Not as a problem, but as individuals in the center of a much larger web. Within our map, we broke it down into strengths (blue), weaknesses (green), and resources (brown). From this, we began to see how nuanced the situation was. This also helped us identify gaps in resources that could be addressed to help this family, and families like them, thrive.



### 3. Loving the Problem

#### 3.1 Iceberg Model

Next, we began compiling an iceberg model. Like an iceberg, this map dove below the surface, exploring the underlying trends, structures, and mental models that contribute to what we observed through the ISAM.



Through this mapping, we began to see the refugee landscape. At the top of the iceberg, we see current events, such as the Trump administration’s pause on refugee services. Next, we dove into patterns/trends. We saw high levels of unemployment, low understanding of financial systems, reliance on public assistance, low standards of living, and burnout experienced by most refugees and immigrants to the United States.

There are structures that contribute to these patterns such as limited chance for upward economic mobility, multidimensional poverty, credentials not being recognized, feelings of isolation, cultural miscommunications, language barriers, and low digital literacy. These are also impacted by underlying mental models. The refugees themselves see America as this land of opportunity. They think that coming

to America will automatically give them a better life. However, when they arrive, it is often an uphill battle that can lead to greater stress. They also experience racism, especially those from the Middle East, being seen as a threat: for instance, that they are “stealing jobs” or labeled as terrorists. In Utah, you also have LDS teachings that impact the landscape; we value caring for one another, which impacts how we engage with refugees. This was clear in the case of the family we worked with; however, this also led to fewer social services, as the system is built on interpersonal support—which is ultimately unsustainable.

### 3.2 Players of Power

With this map, we broke the issue down into 8 sub-fields and researched what organizations/groups are within the sphere. This helped us recognize stakeholders. These 8 sub-fields are business and economy, religion, communities of focus, politics and government, criminal justice, education, healthcare, and media.



Within these fields, we identified employers, banks, Deseret Industries (DI), The Church of Jesus Christ, the Utah Valley Islamic Center, Catholic Church, the Hindu temple, the Krishna Temple, Awakening Valley Sangha, USRAP, local schools, Utah’s Muslim Civic League, USCIS, the Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs, PRM, the US Welcome Corp, ORR, the Salt Lake City branch of the International Refugee Committee (IRC), Utah Valley Refugees (UVR), CCS, ICE, RJL, ESL services, community classes, Medicaid, KSL, Deseret News, etc. as key players.



Next, we developed a matrix to determine where these stakeholders fell in terms of their power and level of interest. The refugee families have high interest but low power. Resettlement Agencies have more power, but not ultimate power. In contrast, the U.S. government and ICE have high power, but low interest in the individual lives of refugees.

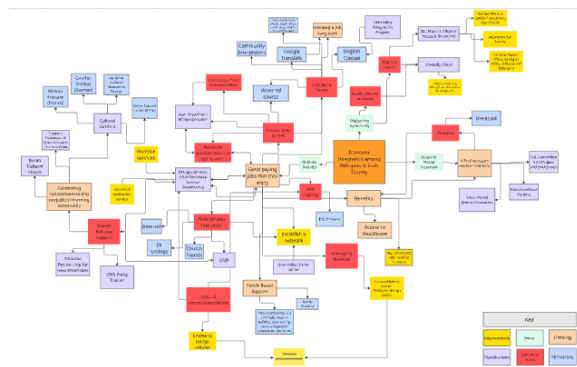
Some additional stakeholders with higher power are Governor Cox and the Salt Lake City branch of the IRC. We need to consider each of these stakeholders as we move forward in analyzing the problem.

### 3.3 Feedback Loops

Now that we had information on underlying structures and stakeholders, we began looking for cycles that occur as part of the refugee experience. We focused especially on cycles that were hardest to break, specifically those related to language, reliance on neighbors, job skills, and housing. We found that having a neighbor could help break the cycle of poor English but still results in continued reliance. Neighbors can also help with skills and finding jobs as well as affordable housing. But once again, these aren't sustainable solutions.



### 3.4 Ecosystem Map



This was the final step of our research. The ecosystem map is a final compilation of our earlier research. This map combines stakeholders, identified issues, metrics for success, resources, and potential interventions that could lead to flourishing. From this map, we recognized that barriers for refugees were multi-layered, and that there were significant gaps in the system.

For instance, they cannot have financial security because they can't find high-paying jobs, partially because they can't get to work or classes to increase their skills. They also have limited language and literacy skills; transportation was once again a barrier, as they could not make it to classes. Furthermore, they experience isolation, loneliness, and stigma, which needs to be addressed due to lack of transportation and poor English skills.

### **3.5 The Core Problem**

Through our research, we began to see how complicated the refugee experience is. As evidenced in the ecosystem map above, the foundational gaps keeping refugees from flourishing had to do with integration. This manifested itself in multiple ways, including lack of transportation, employment opportunities, language fluency, financial literacy, and overall comfort level upon arrival. By recognizing that integration has multiple facets, we were able to identify key areas we needed to work on to help refugees overcome barriers, helping them begin their journey in their new home with stability.

## **4. Research Conclusion and P's**

After we triangulated our problem as integration of refugees in Utah County, we began thinking about possible interventions: a policy, program, and product. In considering the various contributors to the poor integration of refugees, we concluded that the three issues that we would address were lack of financial literacy, lack of access to transportation, and difficulties accessing community resources.

### **4.1 Policy - Welcoming City Certification for Provo**

As we began researching potential government and community resources available to aid in refugee support, we stumbled upon the Welcoming City Certification through *Welcoming America*. Welcoming America is a nonprofit organization that works to build inclusive communities across the nation: "a network of communities fostering economic integration for immigrants and refugees, driving local development and neighborhood revitalization" (Welcoming America). The Welcoming City Certification criteria provides an exhaustive list of actions that cities can take to make their community a place of inclusion for immigrants. In conjunction with our research, UVR felt that the certification of Provo as a Welcoming City would be a benefit to the refugee community. We worked on this policy with their support.

### **4.2 Program - Financial Literacy Classes**

In working with our "One", we began to see that a central struggle was their lack of knowledge regarding the United States financial system. This manifested itself as an inability for them to have financial conversations. When we talked about money, they

would say they needed more money, they didn't have enough money, and that they were confused about money here.

We began working on a program to teach financial knowledge specific to the U.S. system. The aim of this program would be to educate refugees on the U.S. financial system through regular classes at UVR. Classes would start at the most basic level and be a place for participants to ask questions and voice concerns.

### **4.3 Product - Provision of Transportation**

Upon arriving in the U.S., refugees have no way to get around. They face difficulties finding resources such as bikes and scooters, as well as public transportation. These difficulties included a lack of funds to pay for these resources, lacking the skills required to use them, and distance.

Our goal in designing an intervention to remedy this lack of transportation access was to provide refugees with a reliable and self-sufficient way to get around. We researched various methods, such as providing scooters, bikes, ridesharing networks, and free public transportation access. However, bikes and scooters were subject to individuals' physical conditions and the weather, and ridesharing was too expensive to be a realistic option. This led us to determine that public transportation would ultimately be the most attainable, reliable, and accessible.

### **4.4 Theory of Change**

These facets of integration are what we chose to focus on because we felt that they were the issues that we could address and were at the root of other issues identified; such as English fluency, medical care, and job training.

## **5. Initial Implementation**

Once we designed our interventions, it was time to implement them.

### **5.1 Policy**

As we began implementing our policy, we first got in contact with the Welcoming City coordinators in Salt Lake City. We wanted to learn about the process from

people who had already gone through it. From this interaction, we realized how important it was for every actor in the sphere of refugees and immigrants to know each other. So, we dove into further research to understand more of these organizations. Once this list was compiled; we compared all their services to the Welcoming Standard.

We had assumed that Provo would already meet the 1-star certification; however, this was a false assumption. So, we pivoted. Our policy shifted to a comprehensive report of changes needed for the city to qualify for the 1-star certification. This list became exhaustive (appendix D).

As a result of the gaps being extensive, we sent a list of recommendations to address these gaps to Provo policymakers. We received some responses and were able to schedule follow-up meetings with (then) mayor-elect Judkins and incumbent Jeff Whitlock. These conversations were very informative. Unfortunately, they led to the realization that the city was not prepared to make any of our suggested changes. As we recognized that any policy we developed would not be adopted, we dropped this element of the project to focus on the other areas.

## **5.2 Program**

During the design process, we recognized that there are online financial literacy courses available, for immigrants, but none in Arabic, which meant they could not be beneficial for our "One". Furthermore, due to our "One"'s lack of digital literacy, a digital course was not the best format, so we intended to use an online course as a template for ours. But make it an in-person and on paper course. As our "One" was already heavily connected to UVR, and they do not have a financial literacy course, we hoped to make this an in-person program taught at UVR.

Language remained an issue as we planned for implementation. UVR doesn't have translators at their disposal for us to implement with, and we don't speak Arabic. So, we began to brainstorm ways to overcome this. This led to the decision to shift from a course to a workbook.

This workbook would be physical, on paper, that would be given to refugees upon arrival in their native tongue. It incorporated all the same information that we found would be beneficial from our research and what would have been covered in a course. They would then be able to discuss the content with their case workers and ask any questions. This allows refugees to take responsibility for their own learning and have a resource they could continue to reference.

## 5.3 Product

As previously stated, the goal of our transportation product was to provide refugees with a means to get around. This intervention was originally focused solely on the material aspect of this problem. Early versions of the design involved simply providing refugees with bus passes as soon as they arrive. This was most sustainable as within the first month of arrival refugees qualify for Medicaid benefits which include subsidized public transport. We would then be able to fill the gap while paperwork was processing. However, as we attempted to give our “One” bus passes, we realized that the issue also involved their lack of knowledge and comfort in using U.S. public transportation.

This led to an expansion of the intervention from simply providing bus passes to designing and implementing an interim transportation program. This provides the refugees with support in the form of a mentor to help them gain the skills and confidence needed to be mobile. This shift allowed us to more fully address the issue.

## 6. Final Implementation

After multiple versions and receiving and implementing feedback, we were finally reading to scale up our program and policy to see if it could benefit the many.

### 6.1 Program: Interim Transportation Program

The final Implementation of the Interim Transportation Program was largely facilitated by UVR and the Rollins Center at BYU. We recognized that in order for this program to be used beyond this project, we would need to prepare materials for future mentors. Thus, we designed a program guidebook and brochure to be used by the mentors (see Appendix E). The program guidebook outlines what the program is and how it functions. The brochure provides instructions for volunteer mentors that they can take with them while they work with refugees: it serves as a reference guide, answering frequently asked questions, and giving tips and tricks to volunteers.

With the completion of these internal resources, we were then able to begin testing with participants. This was done in two waves. For a time, no refugees were entering the U.S. and so we tested with community members. To compensate these

individuals, we provided them with gift cards, purchase through a validation grant we received from the BYU Rollins Center. This first wave was very helpful as it helped us work out any kinks in the process and make improvements to the program before working with our target population.

Once refugees began arriving, we worked closely with UVR to implement it within the first week of arrival. Again, the Rollins Center validation grant was helpful as it allowed us to purchase the bus fare for those we tested it with, who didn't already have a bus pass. When a new refugee arrived, Amanda, Best, or Kayla from UVR would reach out to us with the family's arrival date, address, and phone number, so we could set up a date and time to implement. In the end, we managed to implement it with over fifteen refugees.

## **6.2 Product: Financial Literacy Workbook**

The workbook went through numerous iterations based on feedback from financial professionals, resettlement professionals, educators, and refugees themselves. This iterative design process ensured that the final product was not only accurate, but also practical, culturally relevant, and adaptable to real-world use.

The final version of the workbook was organized into five main sections: (1) bank information, (2) taxes, (3) expenses, (4) budgeting, and (5) building a strong financial foundation. Each of these sections was further divided into subsections, allowing the content to be more easily digestible and making it easier for individuals to find specific pieces of information. These sections include explanations of key financial concepts, real-life examples, and practice activities designed to reinforce learning and encourage active engagement.

A key improvement in the final implementation was the intentional balance between technical knowledge and accessibility. Based on feedback received in the first round of implementation, we refined explanations, clarified concepts, and incorporated further examples. We also expanded language accessibility by creating versions in Farsi and Spanish (in addition to the original English and Arabic). For this final round, we were able to distribute 15 copies of the workbook to new refugees and asylum seekers through community partners UVR and Jennifer Hau.

In addition, during initial implementation we received feedback to develop a complementary digital version (including all the same content and exercises) in the form of a website. So, we designed and published that as part of this phase of implementation. (The website can be accessed at:

<https://sites.google.com/view/bridges-of-stability/home>.) This format increased accessibility, enabling both refugees and service providers to have access to this information.

## 7. Evaluation

Effective evaluation was crucial. Our principal data collection strategy was the use of surveys and qualitative feedback, all of which we took very seriously and used to continually improve our interventions.

### 7.1 Program - Interim Transportation Program

Evaluation of the program was done through surveying and candid feedback from program participants and our contacts at UVR. Feedback collected from participants revealed overall satisfaction in the program. This was evident through the fact that 100% of participants who took the post-participation survey rated the program a 5 out of 5 stars. A further statistic captured in the survey was that on average, participants felt 62% more confident navigating Provo and using public transportation after having completed the program.

A common comment made by participants was that they were grateful for the chance to become connected with another member of the community. Another common phrase we heard was 'that was easier than I thought it would be.' Many of these individuals' main barrier was fear. Mentored training allowed them to overcome this fear and gain confidence in their ability to get around.

We also collected secondary feedback. UVR employees noted that their clients had less trouble finding the UVR office in Provo after having completed the program. In addition, they expressed that this program reduced the caseworker's loads. We also gained valuable insights as we reflected on our experience as mentors. We recognized what was possible to accomplish in our trip, the importance of planning ahead, what questions were frequently asked, and how we could streamline the process to make it the best possible experience for refugees.

The insights from our experiences were then incorporated into the guidebook and brochure. For instance, when a new caseworker would reach out to us, we realized that we had to ask for more information. So, we included a list of information that a volunteer should request, to reduce the amount of back and forth. We also recognized that we didn't just need to teach about how to use public transportation

but also about pedestrian safety, general rules of the road, and how to renew passes. There were also occasions where an individual lived far from a bus stop. This caused us to improvise and change the mentored experience into a walking tour and report back to UVR to see what other transportation could be provided for them (i.e. bikes or car donations).

## **7.2 Product - Financial Literacy Workbook**

To evaluate the effectiveness and scalability of the workbook, we gathered feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders. This multi-perspective approach allowed us to assess the workbook across dimensions of usability, accessibility, cultural relevance, and practical impact.

We distributed the workbook to individuals across several categories: refugees and asylum seekers, staff at UVR, financial literacy professionals, educators, and students with relevant expertise. Key recipients included Amanda Nelson, the program director at UVR; Adam Turville, CEO of FinLit; and newly arrived refugees at UVR.

Unfortunately, not every individual who received a workbook utilized it. This represents a limitation of the product. You can disseminate information but cannot control who utilizes it or how.

Nevertheless, across nearly all respondents, there was strong agreement that the workbook addressed critical and under-served needs. Practitioners working closely with refugees emphasized that financial systems in the United States are often unfamiliar, complex, and intimidating and that the workbook broke them down in a meaningful way.

Feedback from those directly supporting refugees was particularly encouraging. They expressed enthusiasm for the workbook's potential. Jennifer Hau specifically requested additional copies to distribute to more of her clients. She also noted that the resource could scale beyond Utah and be useful for refugee agencies nationwide; and was one insight that led to the creation of the website mentioned earlier.

While the workbook was widely praised for its content, one of the consistent themes across feedback was the challenge of language accessibility. Kimberly Sorensen-Bezerra gave us valuable advice on how to simplify language; she noted that there were several abstract phrases and idiomatic expressions that could hinder comprehension and translate poorly. Furthermore, Nils Bergeson, who worked abroad with various international populations, emphasized that some topics (such as

banking) may be unfamiliar in refugee-producing countries. Thus, more explanation and encouragement may be needed. In response to this, we found parallels in systems that we incorporated to help the system feel less foreign.

Once we made these changes, we also recognized the need for further expansion. Our “One” was a native Arabic speaker, and the other refugees we implemented with spoke English, and so we hadn’t needed to expand earlier. But we recognized that there were asylum seekers who could use the resource whose mother tongue was Farsi, and that many of UVRs clients are Spanish speakers. This led to the creation of versions in English, Spanish, Arabic, and Farsi. This required finding individuals who would be willing to take the time to translate for us, as the only language our team was fluent in was English.

Overall, the process of implementation and evaluation was fluid, with adjustments being made in response to feedback. Much of this feedback was informal in nature, through conversations and follow-ups. Due to the ‘hands-off’ nature of implementation.

## 8. Conclusion

This project sought to improve the integration of refugees in Utah County through the development of targeted interventions. Through research, iteration, and direct engagement with stakeholders, our work resulted in two primary outputs: an interim transportation program and a financial literacy workbook. The process of designing, refining, and implementing these interventions yielded several important insights regarding both impact and approach.

One of the most significant lessons from our implementation process was how external factors can impact the quality of interventions. This was most apparent with our failed policy. While such interventions offer the potential for large-scale impact, they also introduced constraints related to time, funding, and political priorities. All parties must be on the same page in order for change to occur.

Due to the smaller scale of our program and product, they proved to be more adaptable and immediately actionable. A central factor in our success was our continued partnership with organizations and individuals already embedded within the refugee support system. Collaborating with UVR, as well as community leaders such as Jennifer Hau, provided critical support regarding feedback and implementation. These partnerships have also enabled a smooth transition as we are exiting this project, but the interventions are continuing.

## **8.1 Final Steps and Handoff**

To ensure sustainability beyond the duration of this project, we developed a clear handoff plan with UVR for both interventions.

For the Interim Transportation program, all materials were prepared and delivered to UVR. The final step in our handoff is helping to establish a pool of volunteers for the program through YServe.

For the Financial Literacy Materials (workbooks and website), the final pdf versions have been distributed to UVR. They will be able to print these as needed, selecting the language that best fits the needs of the refugee.

## **8.2 Additional Conclusions**

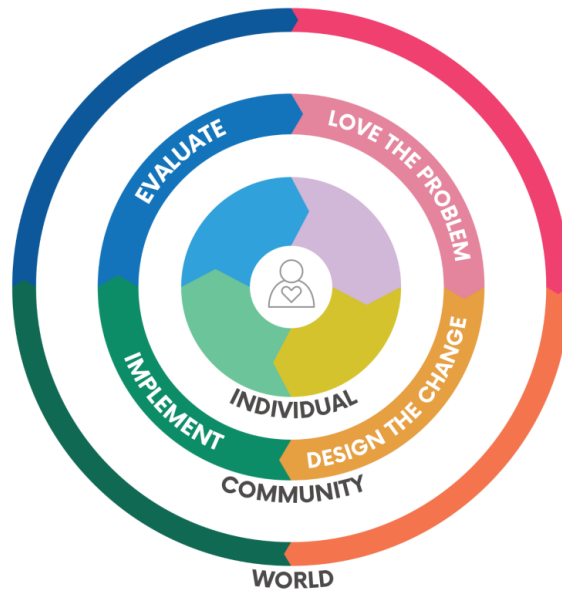
Beyond the interventions, one of the most valuable things we gained from this experience was the network we developed. Engaging with professionals, nonprofit leaders, city officials, and refugees enriched our understanding and increased both the quality of, and our confidence in, our interventions. It became clear to us that successful interventions require a strong foundation and collaboration with both co-creators and community stakeholders. You need them every step of the way.

Furthermore, we recognized that rigorous research is necessary in the beginning to ensure that you can maximize your time when developing and implementing interventions to ensure you have the best possible product(s) by the end.

Finally, this work highlights the ongoing need for expanded support systems for refugees. We were able to tackle transportation and financial literacy, but there are other gaps that could be addressed by future projects.

## **9. Appendix**

### **Appendix A: Social Impact Cycle**



Social Impact Cycle. You begin with loving the one at an individual level, move toward designing the change for them, then implement and evaluate. Next, you scale up to the community level and repeat the stages.

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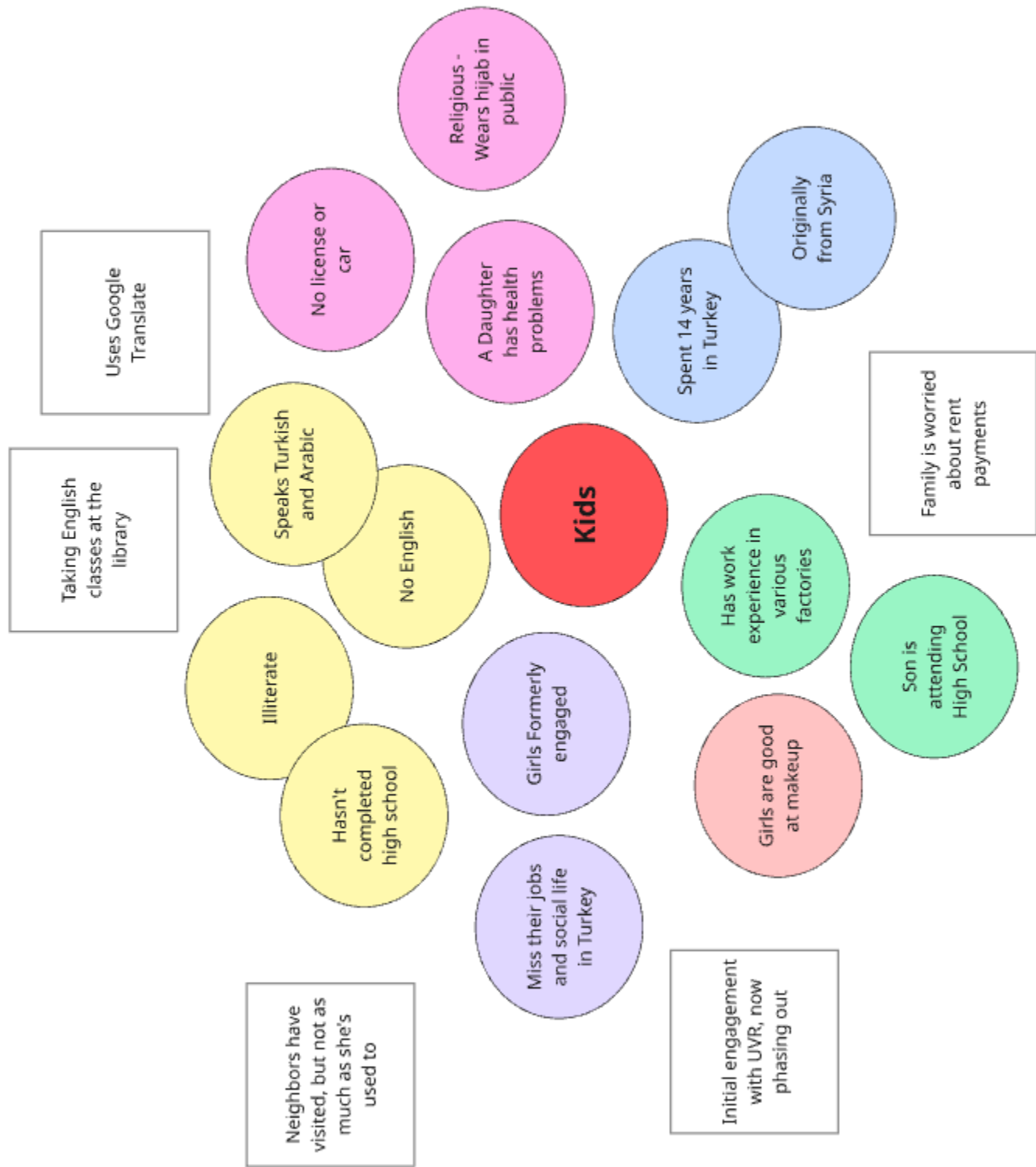
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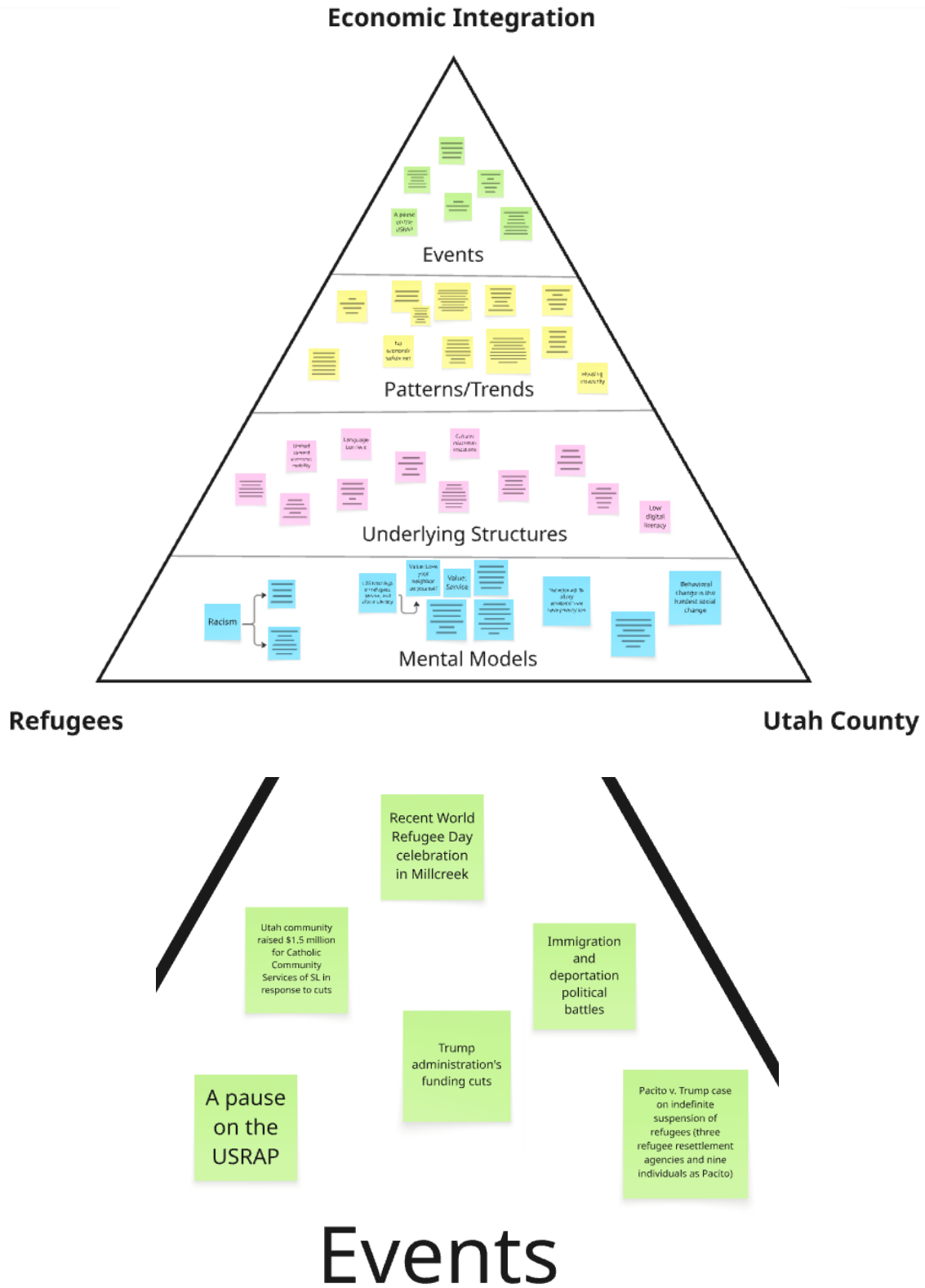
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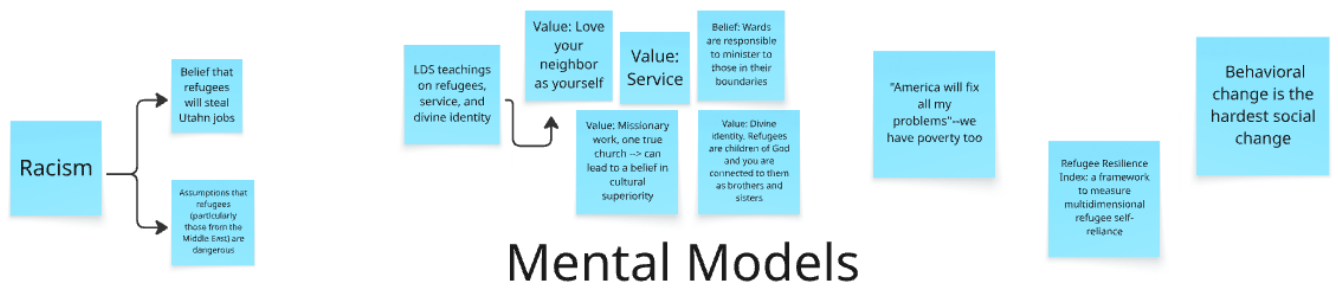
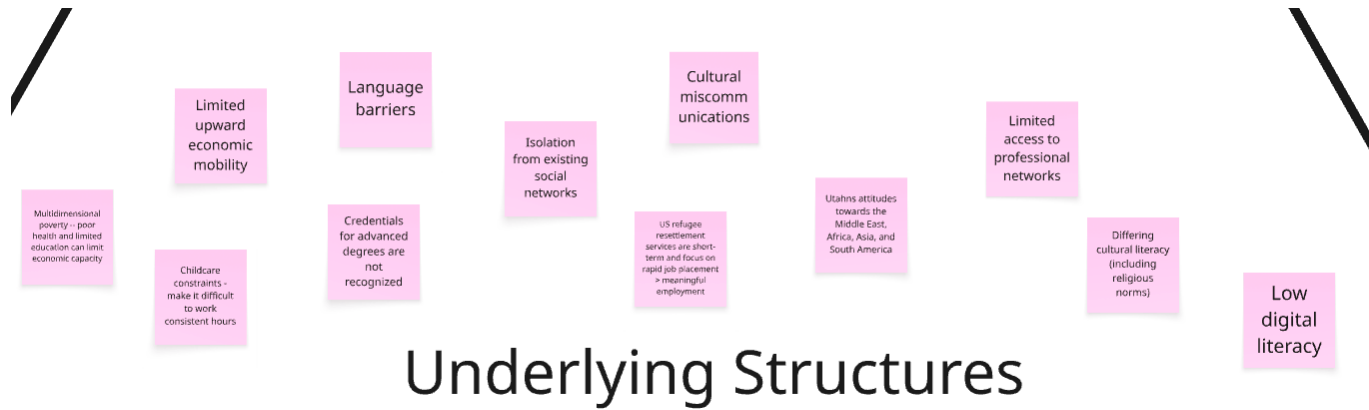
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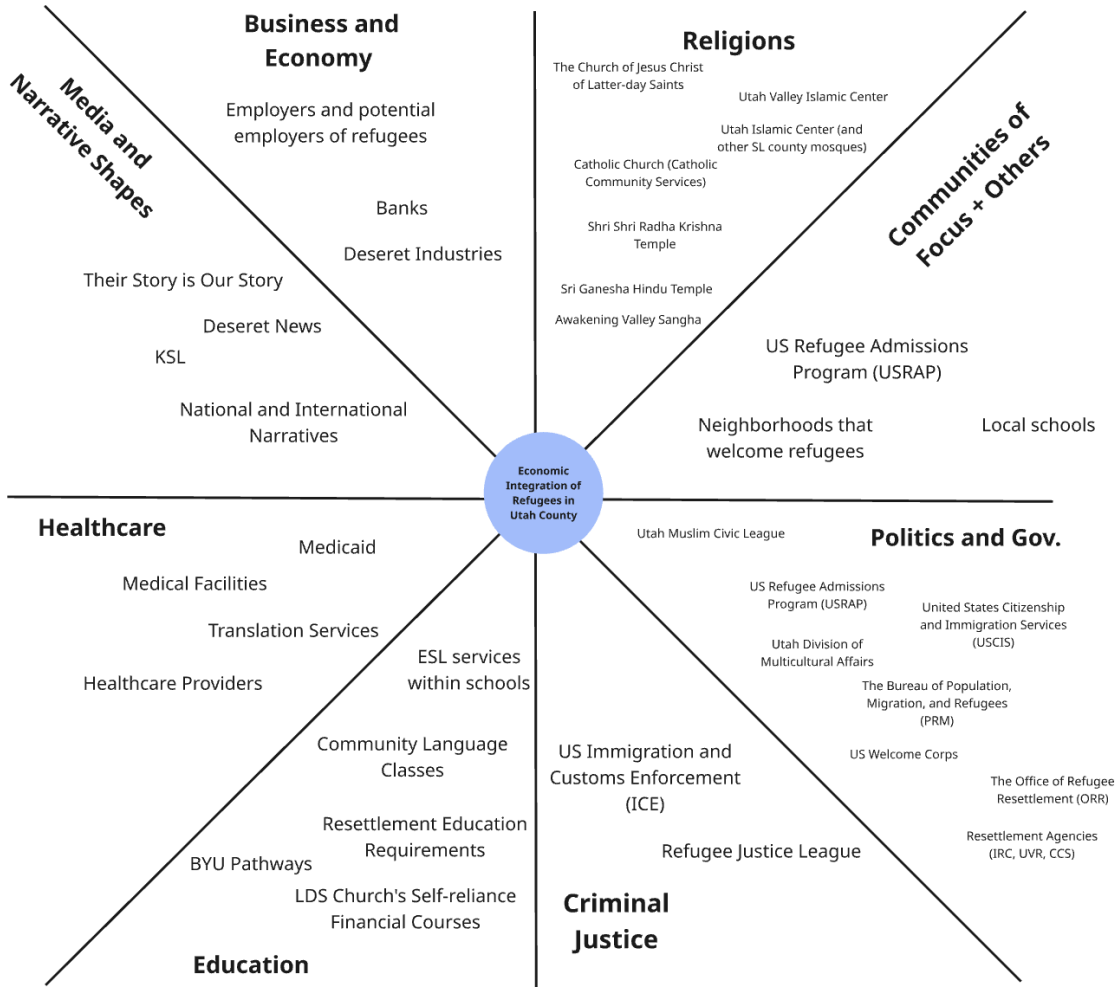


# ICEBURG





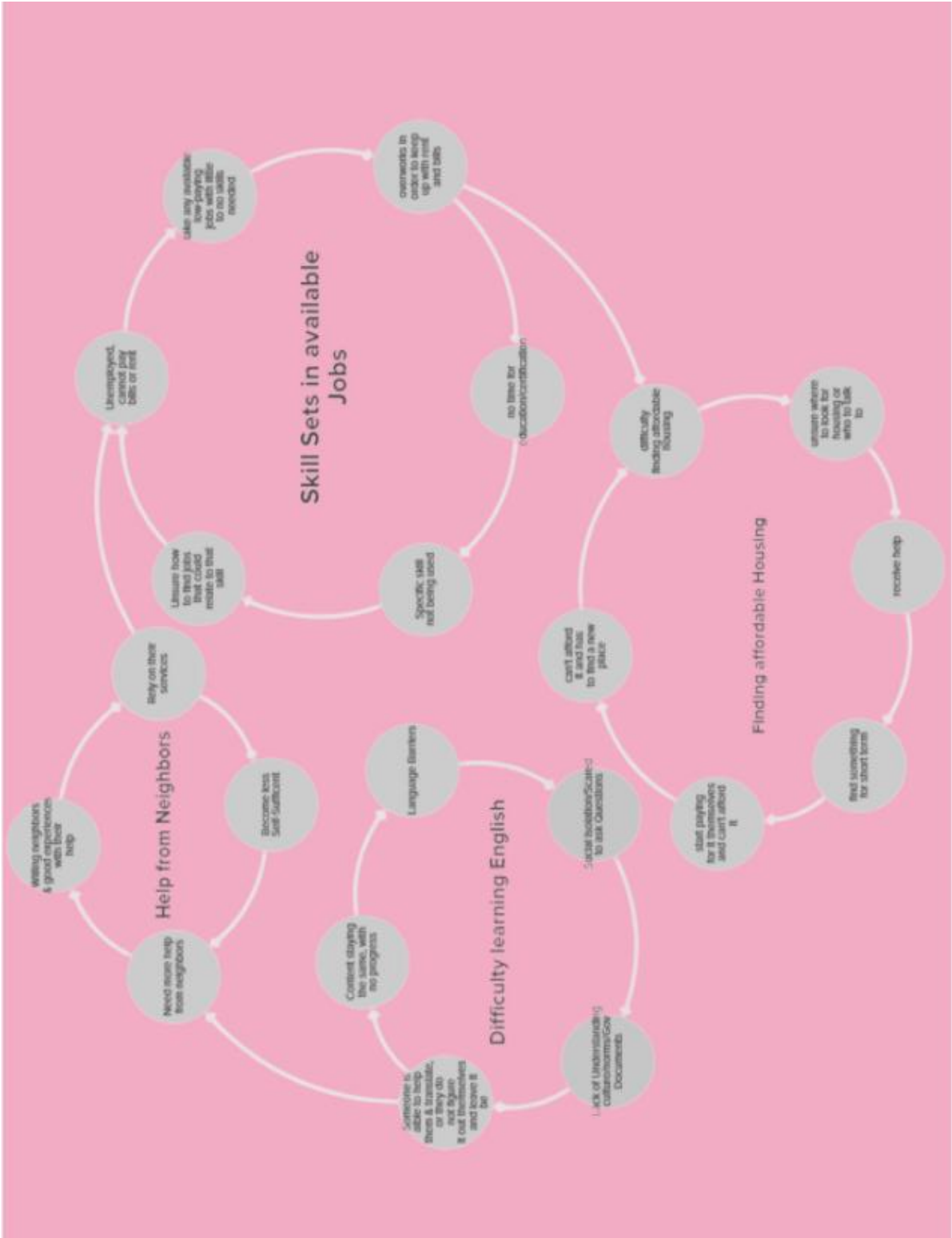
PLAYERS OF POWER

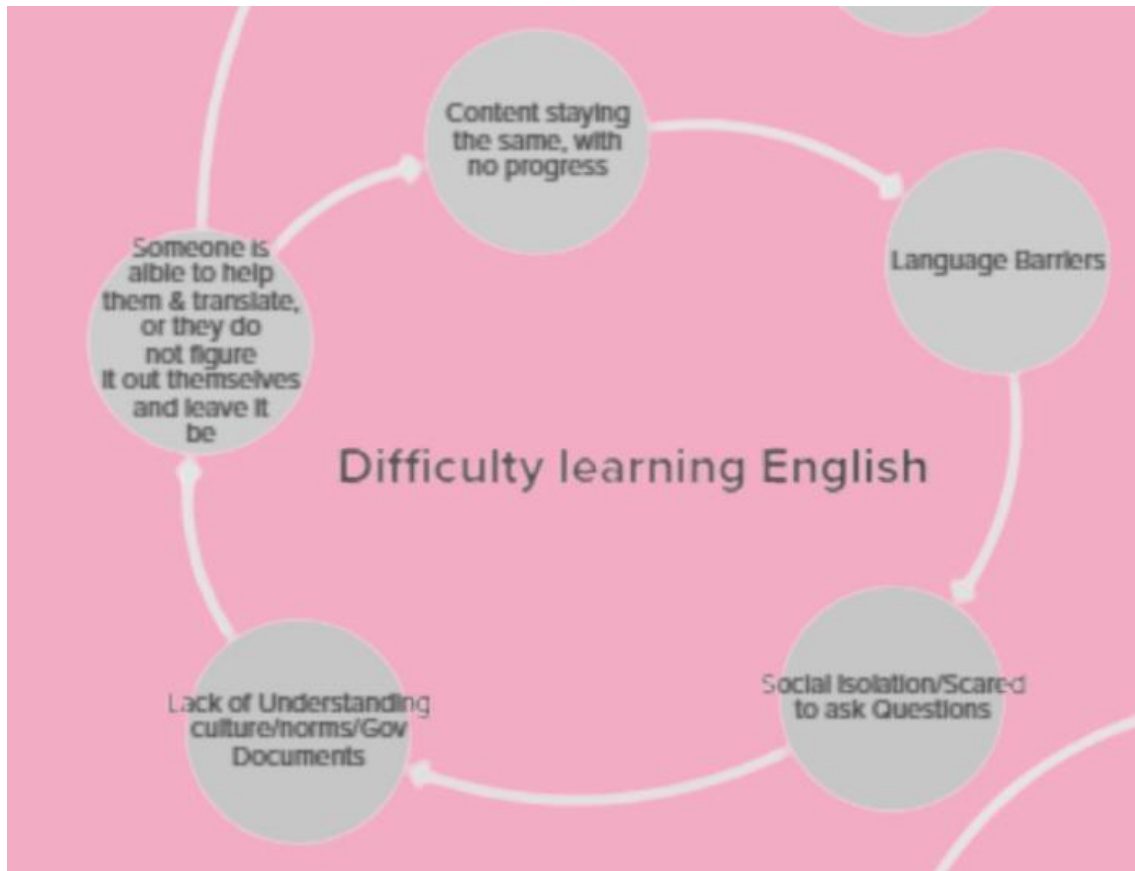






# FEEDBACK LOOPS

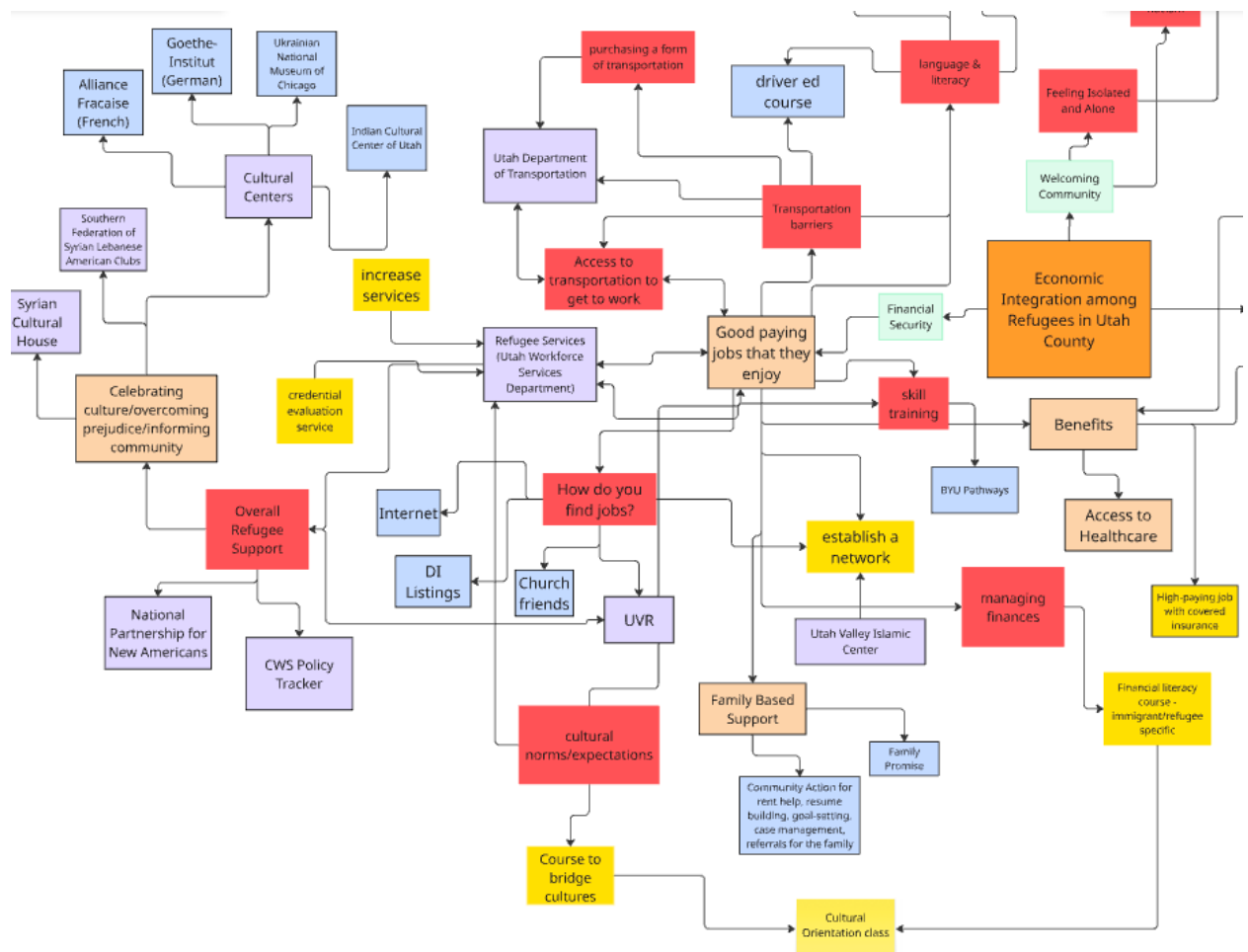












# Appendix D: Welcoming City

## FRAMEWORK

Framework Area	Goal
<b>Government &amp; Community Leadership (GL)</b>	Build institutional infrastructure and partnerships to support inclusion.
<b>Safe Communities (SC)</b>	Promote trust and safety for all residents.
<b>Connected Communities (CC)</b>	Foster cross-cultural relationships and civic participation.
<b>Economic Development (EC)</b>	Ensure all residents can fully participate in the local economy.
<b>Education (ED)</b>	Support student success across language and cultural barriers.
<b>Equitable Access (EA)</b>	Guarantee access to services and resources for all residents.
<b>Civic Engagement (CE)</b>	Encourage participation in civic life and governance.

## GAPS

Criterion	Current Status
<b>GL 1.0:</b> Local government has one or more staff positions whose responsibilities include advancing immigrant inclusion.	Not Currently in Place
<b>GL 1.1:</b> Local government has a process in place to ensure regular communication with immigrant residents.	Partially Met
<b>GL 1.2:</b> Public libraries implement an immigrant inclusion strategy.	Not Currently in Place

<p><b>SC 1.0:</b> Local law enforcement agencies have programs in place to build trust and mutual understanding with immigrant communities and organizations.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p><b>SC 1.1:</b> Local law enforcement agencies do not have policies in place where the primary purpose is to detain or deport immigrants.</p>	<p>Conflict</p>
<p><b>EA 1.0:</b> Local government departments disseminate information on government services, resources, and public benefits with the goal of expanding access to immigrants.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p><b>CC 1.0:</b> Local government leadership does not make public statements discouraging immigration or immigration inclusion.</p>	<p>Mixed</p>
<p><b>CC 1.1:</b> There is ongoing public communication from local government leadership about its commitment to welcoming immigrants.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p><b>CC 1.2:</b> Local government leadership does not make public statements directly attacking individuals based on their immigration status, national origin, religion, ethnicity, race, gender, etc.</p>	<p>Met</p>
<p><b>CC 1.3:</b> The local government participates in celebrations of immigrant cultures, customs, and beliefs.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p><b>EC 1.0:</b> Programs support immigrant job seekers in finding and obtaining employment.</p>	<p>Met (via partners)</p>
<p><b>EC 1.1:</b> Programs support immigrant business owners in starting, sustaining, or growing their businesses.</p>	<p>Met (via partners)</p>

<p><b>ED 1.0:</b> Programs address barriers to navigating local K-12 school district(s) for immigrant families.</p>	<p>Met (via partners)</p>
<p><b>ED 1.1:</b> Local K-12 school districts provide language-accessible information about the school system and services available to immigrant families.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p><b>ED 1.2:</b> Programs work to address barriers to adult English language classes.</p>	<p>Met (via partners)</p>
<p><b>CE 1.0:</b> Programs support immigrants in obtaining U.S. citizenship.</p>	<p>Met (via partners)</p>

# Appendix E: Interim Transportation Resources

## BROCHURE

### Program Description:

This program gives newly arriving refugees the resources and training needed to competently use the public transportation in their community. Upon their arrival, a day will be organized where they might be shown how to use public transportation with the help of a mentor. The mentor will take them to an essential location in the community that is determined beforehand (often with the help of the mentee's caseworker). The mentor will share all the details they need in order to successfully manage the transportation on their own.

### Your Responsibility:

Facilitate your mentee's understanding of and confidence in using the public transportation in their community. Your responsibility will also be to provide them with the technical, social, and cultural insights they will need in order to continue their progression to integration.

## FAQs

### Can I take the train with my bus pass?

No. But you can buy a train ticket at the station.

### How can I renew my bus pass?

Talk to your caseworker about renewing your bus pass!

### More Questions?

Manon Damp: Eowyn Collins:  
 (480)-662-0445 (559)-309-3710  
 mdamp@byu.edu ejc531@byu.edu



# MENTOR GUIDE

Interim  
 Transportation for  
 Newly Arriving  
 Refugees

## GUIDE DAY PREP

Once you have your mentee's contact information, reach out to them to set up a day and time for the guide day.

Determine where the refugee would like to go. You can do this by calling the refugee themselves or asking their caseworker which locations might be beneficial for them to learn to navigate to.

Map out a bus route from their home to the location to which they would like to visit for the time you will be doing the guide day.

## GUIDE DAY



Take the first 10-15 minutes to get to know them, help orient them to google maps, pull up the route, and explain where you will be going.



As you come to the bus stop, show them how to ensure they are taking the bus in the correct direction and how to signal for the bus to stop for them.



On the bus, explain when and how to request a stop and keep track of your location on the map.



Once you arrive at the location, take them around to see what it's like. (i.e.- if you are at the grocery store you can walk around together and show them products you enjoy and answer any questions they may have).



Check the route back and be sure to make it back to the bus stop on time to get back to the refugee's home.



On the way back, try to leave as much space as possible for the refugee themselves to lead the way.



Once back at their home, ask them how their experience went and tell them to reach out with any questions.

## EXTRA HELP, TIPS, AND TRICKS

Ask the mentee where they might like to go in the future and send them the link to that location.

Consider explaining/pointing out differences in traffic/pedestrian laws to be aware of.

Consider letting your mentee lead the way back from the guide day. This will help you identify more common mistakes or questions they may have.

Some common guide day destinations include: The grocery store, UVR, School, Parks, and Religious meetinghouses

# Program Guidebook: Interim Transportation for Newly Arriving Refugees to Utah County

October 2025



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## Project Overview

### What:

Program that provides interim public transportation for newly arrived refugees to Utah County. This program provides mentors to help orient new refugees on the transportation system and how to best use it, as well as various check-ins to answer questions and clarify how to optimize public transportation use.



### Why:

Refugees receive a discounted pass through Medicaid after approximately 2 weeks in the country. These first two weeks without transportation can be isolating and discouraging. In order to facilitate refugees' seamless assimilation, we are providing them with a program that will help orient them to the transportation system, providing them with more opportunities for autonomy and independence as soon as possible after they arrive. This will also help them establish a foundation for further growth and smoother transition as they progress in their general economic assimilation.



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## Materials

### UTA Daily Passes

- 100 daily passes for \$125 (\$1.25 per pass).
- Each newly arriving refugee will need approximately 12 daily passes before receiving their Medicaid and receiving their own passes.
- Given to refugees through UVR upon arrival in Utah County.

### Mapping Service: Transit App

- Ensure that the app is downloaded on refugees' device.
- Help generally orient refugees on how to use application.
- Identify main bus lines that refugees will use.

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## Materials

### Integration Guides/Mentors

- Drawn from pool of volunteers from UVR/ BYU/MyHometown Initiative/community.
  - One volunteer fluent in the refugee's native language to assist in comprehension.
  - One volunteer familiar with the UTA system and what information to relay to refugees.
- Mentor guidebook used for training Volunteers. This will allow each refugee to receive the same comprehensive training.
  - Addressing common mistakes.
  - Routes to show refugees.
- Guided Integration Days
  - Gives refugees the choice of where to go, facilitating their independence.
  - Shows refugees most important personal and community locations to facilitate community integration.
  - Answers any questions that may arise.

## Implementation/Timeline

Step 1

UVR  
Reception

Step 2

Guided  
Integration  
Days

Step 3

Evaluation

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## UVR Reception

Once UVR is aware that a new refugee family will be arriving in Utah County, they will notify volunteers to begin planning for the refugee's guided integration days.



Upon arrival in Utah and reception through Utah Valley Refugees, new refugees will receive 10-15 daily bus passes, sufficient to provide them with the needed transportation while they wait for their Medicaid to process and they can get their reduced fare passes. UVR will inform refugees about what guided implementation days are, how they can help and who their mentor will be. They will also connect refugees with their mentor so they can plan their guided integration days as soon as possible after arrival.

## Guided Integration Days



- On these days, refugees will spend time with a one-on-one transportation guide and translator who will help them learn to use the UTA system.

### 4 days of guided transportation

- Purpose of these days is to allow refugees to get oriented with public transportation and feel more integrated in the community after having become more familiar with various landmarks (grocery stores, schools, bank, UVR).
- When refugee arrives at UVR, they will plan these days to align with mentors' availability.
- For each integration day, the mentor meets the refugees at their house at a pre-designated time, decided upon by both the refugee and mentor (facilitated through UVR).



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## Day 1

- Led by mentor.
- Refugee is shown how to get from their home to the UVR office. This will be important for future meetings.



## Day 2

- Led by mentor.
- Refugees are shown how to get to the nearest grocery store where they can get food, medicine and potentially clothes, etc.

## Day 3

- Refugee finds route and is guided by mentor.
- Refugees are given the choice between being shown the way to their children's school or the bank.



## Day 4

- Refugee chooses route and leads guide day, mentor shadows and answers questions as they go.
- Refugees have their choice of location for this day. Choices may include:
  - Library, Recreation Center, Downtown, Place of Worship, etc.

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## Mentor Role

- **Address common mistakes**
  - Requesting stops
  - Taking the bus in the correct direction
  - Orient yourself on Transit app
  - Taking the correct route to your intended destination



- **Community Integration**
  - Mentors will emphasize the importance of various locations and how they can be of benefit to refugees.
  - Mentors will look for community connections that would be beneficial to individual refugees

## Evaluation

When refugee has their check-in to receive their Medicaid and purchase their personal pass with UVR, they will also complete a general survey and objectives checklist.



This will help to improve future transportation guides and evaluate transportation usage of new refugees (i.e. adjust the amount of passes refugees receive at beginning of interim).

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### • General Checklist:

- What went well?
- What was challenging?
- Were passes during this time helpful?
- How often did you use your bus passes?
- What can we do better next time?
- Were there any places you felt you couldn't access with only your bus pass?



### • Objectives Checklist (for UVR to assess if refugee knows how to...)

- Use Transit app, including finding locations they've never been to before.
- Feel confident using the UTA system in general.
- Feel comfortable navigating the community and know general resources available to them in the community.

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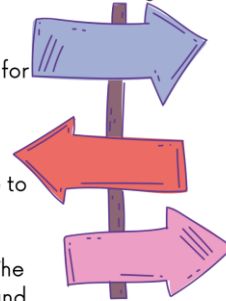
## Mentor/Guide Training

Specific mentors/guides will be pulled from a pool of available volunteers at UVR, BYU, & the community. Volunteers should be available to be called on at the reception of new refugees by UVR. UVR will notify volunteers when a new family is scheduled to arrive and organize guided integration days.

**Days 1 & 2**, mentors will have routes mapped out beforehand for getting to UVR and the grocery store.

**Day 3**, refugees will be responsible for finding the route to their chosen location.

**Day 4**, refugees will be the primary people finding routes. The guide will be there to observe and assist when needed.



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## Mentor/Guide Training

Mentors should pass onto to refugees:

- General Knowledge of UTA bus systems
- Main bus lines
- Main bus stops for most important locations
- Frontrunner information
- Address the most important points:
  - Waiting at the correct bus stop (correct time and direction)
  - Tapping bus pass at the beginning of each ride
  - Requesting stops
  - Getting oriented with the Transit app



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