**Persona #1:**

Race/Ethnicity/Background: Afghan refugees fleeing Afghanistan due to the recent political climate. Trauma, physical, and mental distress are not uncommon due to what the refugees experienced in their home countries before arriving in the US. Many refugees wish they could stay in their home country but fear for their safety.

Family Structure: Parents with 2-6 children usually.

Head of Household Education Level: Head of households hold high levels of education in their home country, but unfortunately these degrees often don’t translate to direct use here. This is compounded with difficulty navigating the US job system due to language barriers, and many end up in entry-level minimum wage positions that do not require a degree or technical training. This is among the most unemployed groups as many non-native non-English speaking refugees struggle to find work unless they had that work lined up ahead of time before coming here. Education is pushed strongly among children due to the cultural significance of education in most of the middle east.

Struggles/Assistance Sought: Housing assistance is desired and they often have to live in more dangerous neighborhoods due to cheaper rent. This is the most economically stretched thin group as they have come to the United States very recently. English proficiency is at a low which is a major barrier to them navigating the US employment system, and many struggle finding jobs despite their qualifications in their home countries. There is difficulty navigating the healthcare system as well as it is very nuanced here. Furnishing their homes (which has cultural significance) is an issue. Transportation issues are major amongst this group as many can’t afford driving courses nor do they have guidance on how to get their licenses here.

Goals: Having their children seek higher education in oftentimes prestigious careers, raising children with an Islamic religious foundation, and finding employment/economic stability are common goals.

**Persona #2:**

Race/Ethnicity/Background: Somalian Muslim immigrants. A large number of which are from the Somali Bantu ethnic group, which has experienced marginalization in their home country.

Family Structure: Both parents are alive with 3-8 children (mostly young and in elementary through high school) with a patriarchal family structure with a strong local community. There is a strong community network of Somalians in the area, so these families may serve as a proxy for 5-6 other families. This means that these families pick up food for 5-6 other impoverished families that cannot travel to the pantry as they struggle with transportation.

Education Levels: In recent Somali history, a civil war in their home country has led to widespread famine which led to a mass exodus into other countries such as the US. During the civil war, their education system was dismantled, leading to low literacy and education rates. Head of household education is minimal as they quickly need to find work and rely on their technical skills in entry-level minimum wage positions that do not require a degree or technical training. Many are skilled in farming, but have yet to find employment relevant to these skills to provide for their families. Survival needs in the short-term and family integrity are often prioritized over long-term educational pursuits and health issues, especially mental health issues. Trauma from overseas is not uncommon.

Struggles/Assistance Sought: Having the time to raise all of their children with equal time, care, and attention is an issue, and children struggle with identity issues as they are wedged between the Islamic beliefs they were raised with and the Western values they grow around. Affording school supplies for their children is an issue, and language barriers are prevalent with parents, but children who grow up in American schools tend to speak better English than parents. Difficulty navigating the US healthcare system, especially with the language barrier. Anemia, malnutrition/vitamin deficiencies, and female genital mutilation are all common.

Goals: Raising children with an Islamic religious foundation and getting children into the workforce to increase financial stability are primary goals.

**Persona #3:**

Race/Ethnicity/Background: Arab Immigrant Muslims

Family Structure: Both parents are often alive with 3-8 children (mostly young and in elementary through high school).

Head of Household Education Level: Head of households hold high levels of education in their home country, but unfortunately these degrees often don’t translate to direct use here. Compounded with difficulty navigating the US job system and language barriers, many end up in entry-level minimum wage positions that do not require a degree or technical training. This is among the most unemployed groups as many non-native non-English speaking immigrants struggle to find work unless they had that work lined up ahead of time before immigrating here. Education is pushed strongly among children. There is a strong community network of middle easterners in the area, so these families serve as a proxy for 5-6 other families. This means that these families pick up food for 5-6 other impoverished families that cannot travel to the pantry as they struggle with transportation. Trauma from overseas among some of these families may be prevalent.

Struggles/Assistance Sought: Having the time to raise all of their children with equal time, care, and attention is an issue, and children struggle with identity issues as they are wedged between the Islamic beliefs they were raised with and the Western values they grow around. They struggle with affording school supplies for their children, and a language barrier is prevalent with parents, but children who grow up in American schools tend to speak better English than parents. They seek ESL courses, driving lessons/transportation assistance, and academic assistance for children via free school supplies & tutoring. They also want housing assistance, new appliances/furniture (especially with newer immigrants) and are typically among the most unemployed/economically unstable. Understanding the complex healthcare system here is difficult with language barriers.

Goals: Having their children seek higher education in oftentimes prestigious careers and raising children with an Islamic religious foundation are primary goals.

**Persona #4:**

Race/Ethnicity/Background: Hispanic immigrant families. In contrast to the previous immigrants, most hispanic immigrant families have been living in these disadvantaged neighborhoods for years and systemic issues have more deeply impacted these families' histories since they have immigrated here earlier than most the other immigrant groups. They came here seeking increased economic opportunities and economic survival which is their focus. There is a strong community network of hispanics in the area, so these families serve as a proxy for 2-3 other families. This means that these families pick up food for 2-3 other impoverished families that cannot travel to the pantry as they struggle with transportation. Car ownership is an issue as many do not own cars, but a strong proxy system helps to combat this.

Family Structure: Most parents are alive with just 2-3 children. Fortunately for this group, they are a very optimistic group with comparatively better mental health outcomes.

Education Level: Usually minimal as money is actively needed for children’s education, rent, and food. Entry level careers are commonplace. Goal is to live day by day. They seek to have children enter the workforce ASAP to help support the family.

Struggles: Having the time to raise all of their children with equal time, care, and attention when working many hours and occasionally working as a single parent is an issue along with affording school supplies for their children. A focus on short-term economic stability leads to children neglecting school over getting employment and working towards business ventures. Youth incarceration/homicide/deaths/violence implicates this group heavily due to gang involvement of youth. This again is a result of systematic disparities that have been impacting hispanics in the area for years. Fewer children are in school as many either work or elect not to finish studying up until graduation. Diabetes and obesity is prevalent in some families as well as difficulty navigating the complex American healthcare system.

Goals: Primarily survival and passing school to have children find a job as soon as possible are goals. Strong desire to get help in applying for jobs and to learn about running/managing businesses to help with financial stability.

**Persona #5:**

Race/Ethnicity/Background: African-American single mothers with 2-3 children. These families have been living in these disadvantaged neighborhoods for years and systemic issues have more deeply impacted these families' histories.

Family Structure: Most have just a mother alive with 2-3 children. Lack of a father figure as well as systemic disparities contribute to gang involvement among youth.

Education Level: Usually minimal as money is actively needed for children’s education, rent, and food. Entry level careers commonplace. Goal is to live day by day. They seek to have children enter the workforce ASAP to help support the family.

Struggles: Having the time to raise all of their children with equal time, care, and attention when working many hours as a single parent. This leads to children neglecting school. Youth incarceration/homicide/deaths/violence implicates this group heavily due to gang involvement of youth. This again is a result of systematic disparities that have been impacting African Americans in the area for years. Fewer children in school as many either work or elect not to finish studying up until graduation. While proficient in English, they understandably have mistrust of the medical system and have disproportionate levels of infant mortality rates.

Goals: Primarily survival and passing school to have children find a job as soon as possible are goals. Strong desire to get help in applying for jobs and to learn about running/managing businesses to help with financial stability.

**Persona #6:**

Race/Ethnicity/Background: White adult

Family Structure: Single adult woman or male but they are sometimes married. Sometimes they have a child who is already an adult.

Education Level: Entry level careers or minimal education. They are often the most educated in a relative sense as many have technical skills that do not necessarily require a college education but potentially trade school or an apprenticeship.

Struggles: Food assistance is sought primarily but not much else. They are typically a bit more well off than the other clients, but they still struggle with affording higher quality produce and grains that are necessary for nutritious meals. They also like to give food to struggling friends. They often have reliable transportation. Some struggle with heroin/drug issues. Prostitution & addiction are rampant in the area involves some of these adults. Transportation, housing, and rent are in a relative sense less of an issue with these individuals although it is still an issue.

Goals: Improve quality of life through food assistance. Some strongly strive to break free from drugs and addiction.