

Topic: Cultural Adjustment
(Church World Service, Overseas Processing Entity, Nairobi)

Activity: Cultural Adjustment Skit

Objective

This play was developed by the CO Trainers to be performed at the beginning of Cultural Orientation sessions throughout the region. The skit has been developed to examine the experiences of two refugees, one who arrived in the United States six months ago, and one who arrived one year ago. The skit is meant to help participants better understand the different processes of cultural adjustment for different individuals, and how attitude can affect the resettlement process.

Materials

- Copies of the skit

Practice

1. Trainers perform the skit for participants.
2. Discuss with participants using the questions and sample answers provided.

Discussion Questions

- What is the moral of the story?
- What would you advise Farhiya?
- What qualities does Zulekha possess?
- Who stayed longer in the U.S.?
 - a. Farhiya
- Who adapted faster than the other?
 - a. Zulekha
- Why did Zulekha adapt faster than Eva?
 - a. Zulekha was hard-working.
 - b. She understood what they were told in CO.
 - c. She was attending ESL classes.
 - d. Farhiya was not proactive.
 - e. Zulekha was prepared.
 - f. She took any job.
 - g. She made good friends.
- What lessons have you learned from Zulekha and Farhiya?
 - a. You need to make an effort to be successful.
 - b. You have to work hard.
 - c. You have to be self-sufficient.
 - d. You need to be flexible.
 - e. You have to be patient.

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Narrator: This play is about two refugee women who were together in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. Their names are Farhiya and Zulekha. Farhiya's family went to America earlier than Zulekha's family. They meet in the U.S. after some time and share their different experiences. Farhiya is a refugee who has been in America for one year, and Zulekha has been in America for six months.

(Farhiya sees Zulekha from a distance and runs towards her. They exchange greetings.)

Farhiya: Oh my God! Zulekha!

Zulekha: Farhiya!! I don't believe this...

Farhiya: Good to see you.

Zulekha: Good to see you, too. How are you?

Farhiya: I am fine, thank you. When did you come to America?

Zulekha: I have been here for six months now. And you?

Farhiya: I have been here for a year.

Zulekha: I thought I would never see you again....

Farhiya: Thank God, I am fine. I have been here for about a year now, but things are not easy. I know very few places. I don't have friends. I don't speak English. They didn't give me my nursing job. I feel so frustrated.

Zulekha: I have been here for only six months, but I feel settled. I am still attending ESL classes and I have a job as a house keeper. My children are already in school, and I am now preparing for my GED exam.

Farhiya: You are so lucky. Our caseworker did not give us enough assistance. Our food stamps have been stopped. We have been receiving notices but we don't understand what they mean. And the children have been coming with letters from school, but I do not know how to read them. I wish they would take us back to Dadaab.

Zulekha: Oh, I am so sorry to hear that. Do you remember what they told us in Cultural Orientation? The amount of assistance you will get is limited, and it's up to you to become successful. I started learning English while still in the camp. Have you been referred to ESL classes?

Farhiya: Yes, but I have a small baby. How will I go for ESL classes? I think the U.S. government should take care of us just like the way UNHCR took care of us while in the camp.

Zulekha: I am sorry. It's almost time for my shift; I can't be late for work. Let me advise you to find a way to attend ESL classes. Take any job, and work very hard in order for you to be self-sufficient. Nothing comes easy.

Farhiya: Thanks for the advice. I wish I had done that earlier. Bye.....

Zulekha: Here is my phone number. Keep in touch. Bye. And remember that **YOUR SUCCESS DEPENDS ON YOU.**

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