Refugee Knowledge Sharing and Networking Hub:

Access Alliance is creating a knowledge sharing and networking (KN) hub on refugee research to facilitate collaboration and synergy between current research projects on refugees in Canada, particularly those focused on Syrian refugee community. Please complete this form to let us know more about your current research project focused on refugees in Canada. We will use this information to (i) create brief summary of all the active research projects on refugee to be posted online in our Refugee Research KN Hub; and (ii) facilitate networking and collaboration between researchers with similar focus. Please submit completed form to njamil@accessalliance.ca.

Project Information Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title:</th>
<th>A Comprehensive Approach to Health Literacy: Validating the All Aspects of Health Literacy (AAHLS) scale in a representative sample of Arabic-speaking adult Syrian refugees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Objectives and Research Question(s):</td>
<td>This study aims to (1) determine comprehensive health literacy levels amongst Syrian refugees and identify correlates (2) validate an existing instrument which can assess functional, communicative and critical health literacy and can be used for screening for low health literacy in Arabic-speaking populations and (3) assess the feasibility of this instrument as a self-administered screening tool in clinical or community settings. It is hypothesized that the overall health literacy of Syrian refugees will be comparable to that of other newcomer groups and that correlates of low health literacy will include government-assisted status and educational achievement. Please note that this study has provisional approval from the Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Principal Investigator(s) | Raafia Siddiqui (MSc Candidate, Global Health, McMaster University)  
Supervisor: Dr. Bruce Newbold, McMaster University |
| Co-investigators, Collaborators and Partners | Low Income Families Together (LIFT)  
Auntie Amal Community Centre  
This study will be conducted in partnership with Low Income Families Together (LIFT), a human rights and education resource centre which facilitates sustainable development projects around food security and climate change resilience for youth, newcomers and the un/underemployed residents of St. Jamestown. LIFT is currently working on several community-based initiatives including a sustainable food security initiative (OASIS) and food needs assessment for which it will host several community events. LIFT volunteers provide ad hoc translation services and language classes to newly arrived Syrian refugees and work with community members to host clothing and food drives as well as celebratory events for Syrian refugees of all ages. This study will engage Syrian refugees who attend LIFT’s events and programs. In addition, a bilingual research assistant has been hired to aid in participant recruitment and obtaining consent. The research assistant is the founder and executive director of Auntie Amal Community Centre, a Toronto-based community organisation. |
organization that works directly with refugees to aid them in settlement and integration. By adopting a community-based research approach, this study can maximize its participant recruitment by building on the existing relationships local organizations have cultivated with Syrian refugees.

**Study Population/Community of Interest:**
*Tell us about which community and sub-population your study is focusing on e.g. Syrian refugee youth (age 15-24); Recently arrived GARs and PSRs; Service Providers*

This study focuses on adult Syrian refugees who identify Syria as their country of origin (not necessarily the country where the refugee claim was made) and are over the age of 18. Exclusion criteria include those under the age of 18, are unable to speak and understand Arabic or are physically or mentally incapable of providing consent and understanding the scope and requirements of this study.

**Research Methodology:**
*Tell us about what data collection instruments your study is using, and sample size for each. For example, longitudinal survey over five years with 800 participants; one-on-one interview with 30 participants; 4 focus groups with 8-10 participants per focus group, etc.*

This is a cross-sectional study of 50-100 eligible participants who will be asked to complete a translated version of the All Aspects of Health Literacy Scale (AAHLS). The 14 item scale, originally developed by Chinn and McCarthy (2012) as a quick and effective clinical measure of health literacy in London, UK has yet to be tested in a Canadian context in a language other than English. The scale items load on to 4 factors related to skills in reading or understanding health documents (functional literacy questions 1-4), communicating with health professionals (communicative literacy questions 1-3), managing health information (critical literacy questions 1-4) and the capacity to take civic or community action for one’s health (empowerment questions 1-3). The AAHLS has been translated into Arabic per the principles of good practice for translation and cultural adaptation for patient-reported outcome (PRO) measures as cited by Wild and colleagues (2005), as well as guidelines for the translation, adaptation and validation of instruments or scales for use in cross-cultural health care research as cited by D Sousa & Rojjanasrirat (2011).

Participants will complete Arabic version of the AAHLS and a short demographic questionnaire which asks their age, time in Canada, sponsorship status (government assisted versus privately sponsored), education level and employment status. Health-related variables will be obtained by asking participants to rate their own health status and identify any chronic health conditions. Using the AAHLS, an overall health literacy score will be generated for each participant along with overall scores in each individual health literacy component area. Responses in each component area will be responses correlated with demographic and health-related data. The feasibility of the AAHLS as a self-administered tool for Arabic-speaking individuals in community or clinical settings will be determined by the response rate (i.e. ratio of tests fully completed to those administered), as well as self-rated ability to complete the survey without any assistance.
| Project Timeline: | Sep-Dec 2016: Survey translation and pilot testing  
| | Dec 2016-Jan 2017: data collection and response tabulation  
| | Jan 2017-Mar 2017: manuscript preparation for publication and thesis defense  
| Geographic focus: | The study focuses on Syrian refugees who are settled primarily in the downtown core (St. Jamestown) but will seek out participants from the Greater Toronto Area as well.  
| Tell us the scale your study is focused on e.g. City of Toronto; GTA; National study focusing on Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. |  
| Community Engagement/Empowerment: | In addition to working with local organizations which champion community engagement and empowerment, this study has hired a research assistant who is a Syrian refugee herself and has her own organization which services refugees and other marginalized groups in Toronto.  
| Tell us if and how your study is involving members of the ‘community of interest’ beyond just study participants e.g. Are you engaging some of them as Advisory Committee members, Research Assistants or Peer Researchers. | A Syrian refugee was hired for the translation of the AAHLS into Arabic and the committee which pilot tested the initial Arabic version of the AAHLS also included Arabic-speaking refugees (although all were not from Syria).  
| Knowledge Translation (KT) Goals: | Mar 2017: AAHLS Arabic Tool- will be made available to clinicians and health promoters as a health literacy screening tool  
| Tell us how you plan to share the study results, to which stakeholders, and why. If possible specify timing of your KT events? | Feb-Mar 2017: Manuscript will be prepared for publication to be shared with the broader academic community  
| Contact Info: | Principal contact: Raafia Siddiqui  
| Name, Tel number and email of person who can respond to inquiries about your study | Phone: 647-787-7680  
| | Email: raafiasiddiqui901@hotmail.com  