

# Voices of Seattle's East African Communities

An Overview of Community Issues and Opportunities

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# With Appreciation, from the Author

It is with deep appreciation that I give thanks to the 138 members of the East African and African community who gave of their time and expertise, and trusted me with the honor of telling their story. (Please see Appendix A for more details.) I would also like to thank members of the community review panel Mergitu Argo, Sahra Fahra, Michael Neguse, and Ethiopia Alemneh for guiding me. And thanks to Devon Alisa Abdallah, PhD for her data expertise and to Nicole Ramirez for the final report design. Lastly, many thanks to Cuc Vu, Aaliyah Gupta, Joaquin Uy, and Mohamed Sheikh Hassan from the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs for their strategic advice and encouragement.

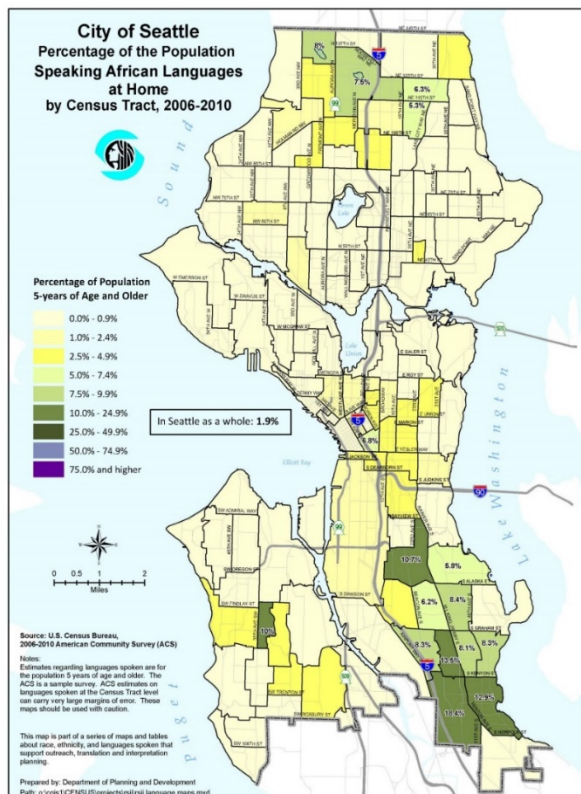


## Background and Purpose

The Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) and the City of Seattle commissioned this report to capture an overview of the present issues and opportunities in Seattle's East African communities. The overall results for this report were threefold:

1. To inform and guide OIRA and the City of Seattle in order to better analyze policy and to improve services and support to the city's diverse East African communities.
2. To inform and guide community-based organizations (CBOs) serving East African individuals in their ability to more efficiently and effectively serve their communities, particularly in today's nonprofit climate.
3. To educate and inform community, public, and private partners of the current issues and opportunities in East African communities.

Towards the overarching goal of immigrant integration, OIRA's work focuses on strengthening communities, engaging communities, fostering connections, increasing access, and building equity for Seattle's immigrants and refugees. Mayor Edward B. Murray encouraged the creation of this report because of its ability to expand our shared knowledge and a common framework from which both the community and the City of Seattle could work towards collective action. The hope is that this report can serve as a foundation from which efforts focused on more specific strategies can be successful.



In Seattle, the growing East African population is visible and increasingly more organized. Based on American Community Survey (ACS) data, East Africans make up 1.7 percent or 11,261 of Seattle's population. (See A Closer Look at the Data on page 9.) This is likely an underestimate given ACS sampling methods. OIRA uses a population figure of 27,000 East Africans in Seattle/King County based on estimates from the 2012 ACS. Based on ACS data from 2006-2010, Seattle residents who spoke African languages at home totaled 1.9 percent. The neighborhoods with the highest concentration of African language speakers include Rainier Beach, Brighton, Rainier Vista, and High Point.<sup>1</sup> This is consistent with other data analyzed from ACS showing that 70 percent of the East African community lives in South Seattle north only to Capitol Hill. There is a growing population in parts of North Seattle, too, as seen in the map to the left.

In King County and based on 2014 Census Data, 40,617 residents were born in East Africa. Among all U.S. counties, King County ranks sixth for the number of people born in Africa and in the top three for Ethiopia and Kenya, amongst other individual countries.<sup>2</sup> And according to the Department of State, of the nearly 33,000 refugees who've settled in Washington State since 2003, those from Somalia rank third (4,143), those from Eritrea rank ninth (813), and Ethiopian refugees rank tenth (746). Generally, more East African refugees settle in the greater Seattle area than any other place in Washington—nearly one-third of the total. Somalis, numbering 2,560, are the largest refugee group in the city and continue to grow.<sup>3</sup> (Please note, this number does not capture East Africans born in the United States.)



## Looking Back to Move Forward

As relatively new arrivals to Seattle, East Africans are a tight-knit community that turns inwards, towards each other, to navigate their new American lives. The proverbial, “It takes a village” concept rings true and remains the community’s strongest asset. Stories of family support during times of hardship and times of joy are common. Word-of-mouth referrals, donations, and connections provide lifeline support to newcomers. Small businesses, faith-based organizations, and nonprofit organizations provide culturally appropriate and competent services.

Yet when a new culture inevitably clashes with different American systems and institutions, the challenges of poverty, violence, education access, and discrimination take root and disrupt families and their abilities to prosper in their new country. Many of these issues are common to the experience of other immigrants and refugees. We can potentially learn from that history. But East Africans also have a unique history that policymakers and service providers should understand to best respond to emerging issues and opportunities.



East Africa is defined as the countries in the eastern region on the African continent, typically consisting of countries like Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya and Tanzania. For the purposes of this report given Seattle’s population, the communities surveyed are primarily from the so-called “Horn of Africa” countries, namely Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Although the facilitator also spoke with interviewees from other smaller East African com-

munities, such as Somali Bantu and South Sudanese. Additionally, the countries of Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea contain hundreds of ethnic groups. And even within a few of these ethnic groups, many prefer to identify with their tribal/clan affiliations. Thus, language, ethnicity, tribal/clan affiliation, and national origin all influence community identity. Sometimes terms are interchangeable.

For example, throughout this report, the term “**Oromo**,” represents both a spoken language and specific ethnic heritage. They are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, but Oromo can also be found throughout the other Horn of Africa countries. For instance, their ancestral homeland is located in parts of Ethiopia, specifically in the Ethiopian state of Oromia. They also inhabit areas in northern Kenya and northern Somalia. People who identify as Oromo usually not only speak the Oromo language, but also speak Amharic and Tigrinya, two other East African languages.

**Ethiopia** is the largest country in the Horn of Africa and 10th largest on the continent. It is the only African country that has never been colonized, but its diversity is staggering: 80 languages and approximately 200 dialects are spoken here. Many of the ethnic groups and associated languages include Amhara, Oromo, and Tigre. Smaller groups include Afad-Isa, Somali, Wolaita, Sidama, Kimbata, and Hadiya. Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia. It is also the mother tongue of

the Amhara people, an ethnic group inhabiting the northern and central highlands of Ethiopia, also known as the Amhara State.

**Eritrea** is a country made up of nine recognized ethnic groups, including the largest, **Tigrinya** (55%) and **Tigre** (30%). Tigrinya language (also spelled Tigrigna) is spoken by the majority of the country and is thus the de facto language of Eritrea. Tigrinya is also spoken by the Tigrayans and Tigrinyas, two ethnic groups that inhabit the Horn of Africa region and who have also settled in the Seattle area. The Tigrinya language should not be confused with the related Tigre language. Tigre is spoken by the Tigre people.

**Somalia**, unlike many other African countries, has a largely homogenous ethnic population that speaks a universal Somali language. Due to war, political unrest, and famine, many Somalis have been forced from their homelands as refugees into neighboring African countries and abroad.

**Somali Bantu** are an ethnically and culturally distinct ethnic minority group in Somalia. They are descendants of people sold into slavery from Tanzania and Southeast Africa into Somalia as part of the 18th and 19th century Arab slave trade. Not belonging to a formal Somali clan or tribe, war and conflict has marginalized and displaced many Bantu into neighboring African countries and abroad. They traditionally speak Mushunguli and other Bantu languages.

**South Sudan** is a country located directly west of Ethiopia and is comprised of 28 states. It gained its independence from Sudan in 2011. The Dinka are the largest ethnic group in South Sudan, followed by the Nuer, Azande, and Bari. The **Kuku** people are an agrarian tribe who reside in the southern region of South Sudan, and many Kuku refugees now reside in the Pacific Northwest. Recognized national languages of South Sudan include Arabic, Bari, Dinka, Luo, Nuer, and 60 more languages.

Throughout this document, I refer to not only Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Somali communities, but also to other ethnic affiliations, such as Oromo, Somali Bantu, and South Sudanese Kuku communities.

According to the Horn of Africa Services website, a series of traumatic political and ecological events in the 1970s and 1980s led tens of thousands of East Africans to seek residency in the United States and abroad. The first East Africans to arrive in Seattle were mostly students in the 1960s and 1970s. The growing Seattle East African population was then due to random placement of refugees by the U.S. government. From the earliest arrivals, individuals would then sponsor family members and relatives to migrate to the city, creating a large East African community here.

Peter Gishuru, one of the earliest Africans in Seattle, shared stories of his family history. “I left Kenya in 1963 after learning of the opportunity I had, along with other educated Kenyans, to further our education abroad in the U.S.A. This program was known as the Tom Mboya Airlift. After befriending President Kennedy (a senator at the time of their meeting) Mr. Mboya, a Kenyan politician, created an agreement with the Kennedy Family Foundation to provide free transportation to educated Kenyans who qualified for admission to U.S. universities. This program was the first of its kind and is the very same one that resulted in the arrival of President Obama’s father in America. During that period, you could count the number of African immigrants in Seattle with two hands: three Kenyans, one Somali (my friend, Rasid who passed away last year, may his soul rest in peace), three Ethiopians, two Nigerians, one Ghanaian, and one Tanzanian. As far as ‘minority’ groups go, our group in the 60s epitomized the definition of the word. This was of course during the African American civil rights struggle, and yes, I know how difficult the struggle was (and still is!) and do truly salute those who give their life for the struggle. I still remember those dreadful evenings we spent in front of the TV watching the news of both the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy.”



## A Community-Centered Approach and Methodology

The city was open to co-designing this process so that it met the needs not just of the city, but also for the broader communities and the community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve them. Using a series of interactive focus groups, progressive interviews, and research review, this report summarizes the key challenges and recommendations for how to improve their community's quality of life. A few best practices and methods were purposefully used in this community-centered report. (See Appendix F for more details.)



African Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest focus group over Ethiopian food at Café IbeX.



Somali Community Services of Seattle focus group.

Rather than from a purely scientific ethos, the author approached this project as an opportunity to listen and hear stories from a vibrant, diverse community. Particularly knowing that many East African communities come from rich storytelling cultures, the author wanted to create a safe place to get to know each other and share concerns. The interviews and focus group conversations were guided by a set of thoughtful questions, but were left open-ended so that the participants could decide what topic they were interested in most. Instead of treating people as “subjects” in a transaction, the researcher viewed each as neighbors and colleagues that the city could build lasting relationships with into the future. The author loosely based this approach on an emerging qualitative methodology called ethnographic portraiture. While the purpose of ethnography is to listen to a story, portraiture is intended to listen for a story.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, this report documents and contributes community-driven data to the field. It helps to compensate for the lack of formal demographic data or research, and it aims to place equal value on the voices and expertise from the community members themselves.

There are limitations in this report that must be noted. Tasked with wanting to better understand the East African communities in Seattle, the research goals were broad, and therefore the results were also broad. Even more restrictive was the focus on East Africans and not all the African populations in the region. Timeframe and budget were also restrictive for this methodology. And in reality, any one ethnicity or subject matter alone could warrant its own separate research project. However, knowing and having heard from the community previously, the author could narrow questions to focus on significant current issues like housing, jobs, education, and violence, particularly after cor-

roborating this with city staff guidance. Another limitation was that there was a general bias towards Westernized written documentation, and therefore research review here is limited and can't include all the essential work currently occurring in the city's East African communities. In addition, the author was conscious of not being of East African or African descent, hoping instead to rely upon a clear set of values driving the report's creation, rather than her ability to speak the language or completely understand the culture. Lastly, this report doesn't purport to be a sample or representative, as described above, but it is meant to provide an informative "snapshot in time" for the readers.



Ethio-Eritrean Senior Group exercise pre-interview.

In summary, from late February to the end of April 2016, the author conducted one-on-one or group interviews with 35 key leaders in Seattle's East African community, representing organizations working in the Somali, Somali Bantu, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Oromo, South Sudanese, and Pan-African communities. (See Appendix A for the full list.) She also engaged in eight focus group conversations with small groups of 15 or less people living in Seattle. Overall, the author spoke with a total of 138 community members in this effort. A summary of those are provided here:

Focus Group	CBO Host
Eritrean adults, community members	Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle and Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity
Ethiopian senior citizens lunch group	Ethiopian Community in Seattle
Mixed East African youth, young adults enrolled in job readiness program, ages 15-20	Horn of Africa Services
Mixed African small business owners	African Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest
Oromo adults, community members	Oromo Community Services Seattle
Somali girls group, ages 15-22	Somali Family Safety Task Force
Somali women, home-based child-care providers	Voices of Tomorrow
Somali adults/youth, community members	Somali Community Services of Seattle

Lastly, the author reviewed research previously conducted by CBOs in addition to news, educational articles, and case studies that are sourced throughout this report.





## A Closer Look at the Data

To begin to understand the community, University of Washington professor Devon Alisa Abdallah, PhD first analyzed and summarized existing data sources. She created a detailed report of findings from such sources as American Community Survey (ACS), Seattle Public Schools, King County Courts, Seattle Police Department, King County, City of Seattle, and various research studies.

It was disappointing to experience firsthand the challenge of finding and analyzing data on East African communities. Not only is data difficult to locate across multiple agencies and sources, it is hard to analyze because each source uses different definitions for “East African.” Some sources use country of birth, which excludes those born in the U.S. Some look at primary language spoken at home, which often excludes those who speak multiple languages. Some use methodology that works better with more established communities, e.g. ACS sampling over a period of time utilizing English-language forms. And some use the proxy of “African languages” as a stand-in for East African individuals. This is misleading because again this may miscount multi-lingual home speakers.

The most well-known data source, the U.S. Census, is extremely limiting because it becomes dated quickly given its 10-year frequency. And it defines East Africans together with African American/black individuals. ACS data was the preferred large data set because it asks language and place of birth, but as mentioned, is limited given its small sample of a small population over time. Additionally, these data sources rely upon voluntary participation of interviewees—something that isn’t common or always trusted in immigrant and refugee communities. And some refugees are unaware that they can even list other additional ethnic groups. For example, one may list him/herself as Ethiopian, a more common and recognized country in the U.S., over choosing Eritrean or Oromo.

Based on ACS, it is striking to see differences in the East African community compared to all other Seattle residents. This is consistent with a general growing divide of income inequality in the U.S. and in our city and is compounded by the obstacles faced by East African arrivals, including war, trauma, and lack of educational access in the United States.

<b>ACS Data Set 2012–2014</b>	<b>East African Community</b>	<b>All Other Seattle Residents</b>
Percent children (17 years or younger)	37.7%	15.3%
Percent given birth to a child within last 12 months	14.1%	4.3%
Percent receive some sort of government assistance	53.8%	10.3%
Percent with no formal schooling attained (18 and older)	8.6%	1%
Percent with a bachelor’s degree as the highest education level attained	8.6%	33.8%

Initial data analysis of 2014 ACS-IPUMS data in Seattle confirms the wealth gap is real. People born in Somalia, Ethiopia, Mexico, and El Salvador have much lower incomes than U.S.-born and other non-U.S.-born populations and people born in Mexico, Ethiopia, Somalia, and El Salvador also have much lower rates of home ownership than U.S.-born Seattle residents.<sup>6</sup>

Looking at Seattle Public Schools (SPS) enrollment data, which asks questions based on home language, 6 percent of all students speak East African languages at home.<sup>7</sup> (Please note, this estimate does not include those who speak non-East African languages at home.) The numbers from 2012-2015 show a steady population of East African home language students: 2,982 students in 2012 and 2,958 in 2015. Somali speakers comprise the majority of these numbers at about 64 percent, followed by Amharic speakers at 20 percent and Oromo speakers at 14 percent. Mirroring ACS data trends, SPS data shows most East African students attend schools in the Southeast region of Seattle (39 percent), though in disaggregating that data, Somalis make up almost 50 percent of this population and Ethiopian (Amharic/Oromo) are lower at 27 percent. Ethiopians are more likely to go to schools in Seattle's Central region.

East African home language students make up 32 percent of all SPS English language learner (ELL) students, surpassed only by Spanish-speaking students. Over half of the East African population is ELL and within this group, Somalis comprise the majority of ELLs at 22 percent. The majority of East African home language students (63 percent) were actually born in the United States.



# Findings and Recommendations

Based on interviews, focus groups, and research review, the following nine issues arose as most discussed and pressing in the community:

- A. Housing and Gentrification
- B. Economic Prosperity
- C. Public Safety and Youth
- D. Education
- E. Family, Social Services, and Health
- F. Culture and Identity
- G. Civic Engagement and Relationship with the City
- H. Community-Based Organizations and Community Centers
- I. Data: Telling Our Story



## Crosscutting Findings: An Opportunity

The voices of Seattle’s East African communities are clear and resounding. Yes, we are proud Africans with deep ties to our cultures and homelands. However, we are also proud to be in the Northwest, and we want to work together with the City of Seattle to improve the quality of all of our lives. For too long we’ve focused just on our communities, making adjustments and learning new systems. We now understand that the systems also need to change to adjust to the growing diversity of our entire community. To do this, we must approach our work together creatively and with an equity lens, learning from history while also looking to community experts for clear answers. For our community, our youth and families represent all the good that is possible in the United States. And it is for them that we continue to build community across differences and struggle and push for change.

Specifically, the recommendations in each of the nine issue areas in this report have a few crosscutting themes.

- We must begin first by recognizing and lifting up the East African community expertise and solutions that are already in place or are percolating and that need sufficient resourcing or support.
- Race and equity principles must guide all approaches. East African leadership must be at the table, as they have not been engaged proportionately. “Do nothing for us without us.” Consider current disparities and create solutions tailored towards eliminating that gap.
- There is strong respect for East African-serving CBOs and the type of “life or death” support they provide for the community. There is strong capacity but also a desire to improve.
- Some recommendations recognize the good work in development or in existence now and should be continued or refined.
- Some recommendations involve public policy.
- Other recommendations are unique and more “outside the box,” but should be researched and considered.
- And still other recommendations suggest looking at what other communities have done to improve community conditions.
- The learning and adjustment goes both ways. Community education is paramount, but systems must be open to adaptation and change as much as the community. This includes “busting silos” across city departments and bureaucracies.

Though this report is broad, it does showcase numerous opportunities to engage and to co-lead efforts, with a ready and organized community, towards solutions that improve quality of life.



## A. Housing and Gentrification

East African community members are acutely aware of the issues of Seattle’s rapid growth and widening income inequality. No longer foreign to concepts such as displacement and gentrification, the community cites everyday experiences of moving to find more affordable and appropriate family-sized housing outside of the city. Southeast Seattle used to be the go-to place where community members could find housing, but now we know that the outer suburbs, particularly South King County, are rapidly seeing increases of immigrants, refugees, and communities of color.

Interviewees wonder, “Is Seattle being taken over by the very rich?” And “It doesn’t seem like all the city improvements are for us; they are for the wealthy and for those still to come. Pretty soon we’ll all be gone.”

Those who stay in Seattle are appreciative of existing subsidized housing stock, but face extremely long wait lists to get in. Those who move must endure displacement from their community safety nets and struggle with school disruption, family unrest, and longer commute times into the city for work. Our focus group survey cited housing as the number one issue. People frequently worried about affordability, tenants rights, homelessness, and homeownership against the backdrop of an increasingly expensive region.



2014 Seattle Housing Authority resident meeting. Photo courtesy of KPLU-FM.

## A1. Subsidized Housing

The long wait lists to become a subsidized housing resident has been long documented.<sup>8</sup> Currently, many service providers are unsure of how to support East African communities given this backlog. A potential solution is to prioritize those most at risk, particularly homeless women and children. East African CBOs provide on-site housing referral, often without compensation and are at a loss of where to direct people in desperate need. Those who currently live in Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) homes expressed a great deal of frustration around SHA's now canceled "Stepping Forward" proposal. This dictated that increased incomes of current longtime residents would disqualify them from subsidized housing. While many understood the need to work and move towards self-sufficiency due to Seattle's high housing costs, they felt it was unrealistic to assume families could transition immediately. Small wage increases or second family earners often helped families with furthering education and savings. At the same time, this benefit threatened their housing stability.

While SHA shelved the Stepping Forward proposal, their current Savings Match program exists to assist households ready to leave subsidized housing, either to rent in the private market or to purchase a home. But residents reported difficulty in accessing this program. Others shared stories of poor customer service or discrimination. One expressed, "Are we dumb just because we wear a scarf?" And, "It used to be that customers were always right, but not anymore." People shared personal stories about lack of Somali language interpretation access, lack of respect, and inconsistent enforcement of rental rules. Another explained how she wasn't offered professional interpretation when she went through the Section 8 orientation class. She wished for an advocate to help her. One service provider said she hears discrimination complaints every day from her community and wonders, "Who is ensuring Seattle Housing Authority is following the laws?" These conversations draw much emotion in the community because they feel as if they've repeatedly expressed these challenges to SHA administration and leadership, without much change. According to SHA, 40 percent of their 29,000 residents are African/African American.<sup>8</sup>

## A2. Private Market Pressures and Housing Quality

Those who live in private market housing shared worries of poor conditions and fear of displacement. Many of these rental homes are affordable because of deferred maintenance and are often under- or mismanaged. Somali Community Services of Seattle staff talked passionately about the high profile experience of residents at the Rainier Avenue Charles Street apartments owned by landlord Carl Haglund. They talked about how the situation was symbolic of gentrification and landlords eager to capitalize on the hot housing market by pushing low-income tenants out. Many of the majority East African residents spoke out when they were given notice in September 2015 of rent increases from \$550 to \$1,550 after Mr. Haglund purchased the property. The documented conditions of the apartments were deplorable: broken heaters/windows, cockroach infestation, and mold. With community and public support, immediate relief came in the form of delayed rent increases until housing code violations were resolved. In April 2016, Mayor Murray and Councilmember Kshama Sawant cosponsored legislation that had broad support: banning rent increases at buildings that don't meet basic maintenance requirements dictated in city law and allowing the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) to take action against landlords for retaliating against tenants that report unsafe living conditions or fail to provide proper notice of rent increases.<sup>9</sup> During the drafting of this report, the city council unanimously passed this bill in June 2016. Community members supported this along with other Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) proposals, like preventing landlords from discriminating against tenants who use government assistance to help pay their rent. Others supported expanding advocacy efforts like the Somali Youth and Family Club's continual education of policymakers about unhealthy homes in Seattle and King County. "Our families live beside cockroaches and toxins. Is that humane? No."

### A3. Homelessness

Homelessness is an emerging problem in the East African community. Many CBOs and interviewees referenced the increased numbers of men, women, and children seeking their direct help for emergency housing. Some have had to prioritize helping the chronically homeless versus the eminently homeless, and it's a difficult choice. According to Seattle Public Schools' 2014 enrollment, 75 percent of all immigrant youth who are homeless are black, and likely East African.<sup>10</sup>

Other grassroots CBOs expressed their despair in not being fully equipped to provide such help. A few CBOs talked about having families “dropped off” at their center, and the only option left was to temporarily house them at their members’ or staff’s homes. Organizations have very little dedicated and trained case managers on staff. The Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity is considering building temporary shelters on-site to help. The Ethiopian Community in Seattle (ECS) has recently launched a new focus on newcomer homelessness prevention. In 2015, ECS served 23 homeless families including 70 adults and children, the majority coming on Diversity Immigrant Visas. These visa holders are more vulnerable because they cannot become a public charge of the U.S., and therefore cannot access government cash assistance and long-term care programs. Often living with relatives is a temporary option, so the newly arrived immigrants are left in housing crisis. ECS’ project is innovative because it will provide culturally competent case management, emergency housing support, and community advocacy to secure long-term affordable housing.

The partnership includes renting out an ECS member’s apartment unit, a partnership with 29 churches to directly fund costs related to emergency housing. It also includes motel vouchers and partnerships with other CBOs for longer-term support in jobs and other resettlement issues. Somali Youth and Family Club provides case management and culturally appropriate outreach in East African communities in South King County. They also provide flex funds (cash assistance) to help resolve barriers to accessing services common for youth and young adults. For example, flex funds may pay for transportation, acquisition of required documentation, and work clothes. They report increased progress with 75 percent of their families served in just this first pilot year.



2014 Seattle Housing Authority resident meeting. Photo courtesy of KPLU-FM.

#### A4. Homeownership

On the other end of the spectrum, homeownership and the notorious “American Dream” is out of reach for most in the community. With the median sale price for a single-family home in King County now at \$515,000 and even higher at \$645,000 in Seattle, the homeownership market is out of reach for all working families, not just East Africans. Working paycheck-to-paycheck means prioritizing basic needs over down payment savings. First-time homebuyer programs are an option, but still out of reach to those without stable income or basic savings. This is even more difficult for Muslim East Africans. Adhering to Islamic financing options and the Islamic legal system prohibits Muslims from the acceptance of interest or fees for loans of money, whether the payment is fixed or floating. Islamic financing options are available in the greater U.S. market, but according to one interviewee, “I don’t know a single East African who has gotten that loan.” These loans are seen as predatory because instead of charging interest, the loans add up-front fees that often are more expensive overall. “They are a rip-off,” said one individual. “And I can’t recommend them to friends.” Those on the mayor’s HALA task force agree and call for additional investigation into potential financial products to be offered locally. A new company Falah Capital LLC<sup>12</sup> also suggests these solutions in partnership with community.





# Housing and Gentrification Recommendations

Grounded in lived experiences, community members suggested the following recommendations:

1. Support East African CBOs and their desire to provide increased or improved housing referral services to their community.
2. Understand Seattle Housing Authority community engagement and cultural competency policies and encourage dialogue with community members. Meet with Seattle Housing Authority East African-speaking staff or liaisons and their supervisors to develop relationships. Consider a place where East Africans in public housing can go to discuss issues. Share process for reporting discrimination complaints.
3. Discuss the relationship between Seattle Housing Authority, City of Seattle, and elected federal officials in jointly ensuring resident concerns are heard.
4. Discuss use of community space at Seattle Housing Authority properties, especially at high-population East African sites such as New Holly, Rainier Vista, and High Point. Is there more room to provide community program space? What about discounted or free use of gathering hall spaces when the Seattle Housing Authority tenants themselves are the benefactors?
5. Advocate for the “Carl Haglund” ordinance and others that protect tenants rights in the face of rising development pressures.<sup>13</sup>
6. Invest in affordable family-sized housing units, including provisions to require affordable units to be funded alongside market rate developments.
7. Support Somali Youth and Family Club’s new policy advocacy efforts at promoting healthy homes for East Africans.
8. Encourage East African community participation in HALA implementation and focus groups. Ethiopian Community in Seattle is currently a participant.
9. Support and learn from the organization Ethiopian Community in Seattle’s new homeless prevention project as an innovative, community partnership-driven solution.
10. Encourage East African community representation in regional efforts like All Home, which is in King County.
11. Encourage grassroots CBO awareness and participation among the larger homeless community network in an effort to share experiences, form partnerships, and share resources for housing referrals.
12. Provide technical assistance to CBOs interested in temporary housing solutions on their private property, like Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity.
13. Research alternative Islamic financing loan options and/or recent City of Seattle initiatives to promote such products. Look to possible national models for ideas that align with the HALA recommendation of “the city convene lenders, housing nonprofits, and community leaders to explore options for increasing access to privately funded sharia-compliant loan products to help these residents become homeowners in Seattle.”
14. Survey existing first-time homebuyer providers in Seattle-King County for further ideas to support East African homebuyers.



## B. Economic Prosperity

With true economic prosperity, families would have the choice, creativity, and ability to invest in their family and community dreams. Members of the East African community face numerous obstacles to achieve those economic goals, including unfamiliarity with the workforce and education system, the inability to use or develop skills, and mainstream policies and programs that aren't culturally competent. This is made more challenging with the struggles of starting over in the U.S., advancing in a career, or thriving in a small business. And our city's development and growth pressures have a tremendous effect. Small businesses often battle increased rents and need to adapt to changing demographics. Workers struggle to adjust to new technologies, changing desired skills, and growth in low-wage service sector jobs. Interviewees feel, "So small that we don't get the attention we need," and others express that "our community can be so much more than taxi drivers and janitors." A summary of small business and worker needs is below.

### BI. Small Business Sectors

In 2010, new immigrant business owners had a total net business income of \$2.4 billion, which is 13.1 percent of all net business income in the state. And foreign-born business owners comprise 19 percent of Seattle's and 15 percent of Washington State's owners.<sup>14</sup> There are no reliable estimates for the number of East African small businesses, although anecdotally and visually, businesses continue to cluster in areas like Rainier Valley and historically along 12th Avenue and in the Central District. East Africans are also prominent in sectors like taxi, health, airport, truck driving, import-export, and child/senior care.



Old signage from Kokeb restaurant, formerly located across from Seattle University.

Veteran small business owners expressed that challenges for East Africans have remained for several decades even as neighborhoods change and gentrify. An export/import business owner expressed fears of being displaced in the Central District once he learned development company Vulcan Real Estate bought his property and will convert it into apartments.<sup>15</sup> Belete Shiferaw, who operated Kokeb, the first Ethiopian restaurant in Seattle in business for over 20 years, reflected that

“our smaller voices haven’t been organized, and therefore the needs of our businesses are not prioritized over big profit businesses.” Another 21-year business veteran lamented that “our concerns we shared 10 years ago are still the same, but we’re only heard around election season, and we don’t see the follow-up.”

A recent graduate and hopeful new business owner summarized his needs: “One, we need access to operating capital. Two, we need information and education. Even business school didn’t prepare me for this. And three, how can I operate business when rents for office and warehouses are so high?” Other business owners shared similar complaints of going to typical sources of help like the Small Business Administration, Community Capital Development, and SCORE, as well as the traditional banks, and they do not work. “I’ve stopped trying. I just keep getting denied.” Another said, “I am a ‘small-small-small business,’ and I don’t have the financial history to qualify for loans. For U.S., we’re more about survival versus big profits.”

East Africans often turn within the community for support, and several business owners talked about informal micro-loans offered to help families with business loans, home loans, and emergency needs. Accion is a microlending nonprofit based in Albuquerque, New Mexico with ties to the U.S. Network of Accion International in Massachusetts. While traditional lenders may rely on criteria like credit score and collateral to determine credit worthiness, Accion’s “character-based” lending approach also looks at the strength of an applicant’s business plan, his/her ties to the community, and reference checks. In the past 20 years, Accion has served entrepreneurs in five states, making 9,515 loans totaling more than \$83 million. They have also financed more than 6,200 businesses that have created or sustained nearly 12,165 jobs throughout the Southwest region. In 2014, Accion boasted a 97 percent loan repayment rate—a reflection of the character and commitment of its clients.<sup>16</sup>

Lastly, even after an East African immigrant manages to acquire a loan or start a business, they will need ongoing financial literacy and support for improving credit, maintaining profit margins, and diversifying their service, networking, and access to capital for growth. Many reported that a “one-stop shop” support center for African businesses would be of great assistance.



Somali Family Safety Task Force girls group.

Home-based child-care providers were also interviewed and represent a growing business sector. According to Voices of Tomorrow, in King County there are over 300 Somali providers, of which 166 reside in Seattle, 52 Amharic providers, and 56 who speak other East African languages. Major issues for this community include: culturally competent access to resources and professional development and compliance with Washington Administrative Codes (WAC), adhering to the state’s Quality Rating Improvement system (QRIS), and accessing professional development registries. Horn of Africa Services historically provided support to help license child-care workers, and Voices of Tomorrow continue to organize now, hosting over 150 providers in the first East African child-care conference in May 2015 and again in 2016. But recent developments to meet the new “Early Achievers” state standards require child-care workers to have proof of high school diplomas. Proof of education is either nonexistent or difficult to obtain from a homeland country. This automatically disqualifies 40 percent of East African providers impacting families and the kids they serve, with little transition time. These providers not only generate business in the community but they play a large role in preserving community culture and values.

East Africans are prominent in the car service business especially with the recent popularity of Uber and Lyft. At one point, an interviewee compiled a database of 1,000 East African drivers in August of 2014 with the hopes to form an association, since forming a union was not allowed because they were contractors not employees. They shared grievances about the percentage of fees taken by the company and the ease with which drivers were terminated given a poor review, even without deep investigation. The group ended due to lost momentum and limited volunteer time, but it did showcase an important organizing tool across ethnic lines, and there is hope drivers will come together again in the future. To note, the Seattle City Council passed the first of its kind in the country ordinance in December 2015 that clears the path for “app-based drivers” to form unions.<sup>17</sup> There should be specific East African leadership engaged as this work moves forward.



Photo courtesy of labornotes.org.

One powerful story emerged about the power of community and entrepreneurship. The African Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest helped to guide a new African-owned business Blue Nile Trucking LLC, to success. These business owners went from making \$30,000 annually as employees to now working for themselves and earning \$80,000. “Last month I learned that some of them had bought new homes. Helping our community earn middle-income wages and build wealth is such a big part of our community empowerment goal that it gives us no greater feeling to know that we are achieving that.”

While not a specific topic of the survey, participants referenced the issue of Mayor Murray’s initial decision to close down the city’s hookah bars after the murder of Donnie Chin. (See C2. Youth Violence, Drugs, and the Juvenile Justice System on page 26 for more details.) Interviewees were concerned about the uniform application of policy to the lounges, which largely serve and are owned by East Africans. Others applauded the health impacts of such a decision, but all agreed that the issue was complex and needed more investigation and consultation with community members prior to any future city decisions.



First graduates of Ready to Work in January 2016. Photo courtesy of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs.

## **B2. Workforce Development**

By far, interviewees expressed that English language proficiency is the greatest barrier to work and career advancement. This skill is absolutely critical to communicate, to be educated, and to find jobs. The best programs combine ELL (English language learner) skill building with job training, wrap-around services, and on-the-ground application. Horn of African Services has historically provided this service. Women are especially in need of these skills in order to break out of traditional roles at home. Mother Africa is piloting a new empowerment initiative to increase economic opportunities for diverse African immigrant and refugee women. The initiative pilots both a Certified Nursing Assistant training scholarship program and auto driving lessons sponsorship program to provide financial literacy training and employment skills workshops. A promising program Ready to Work funded by OIRA has been well-received in the community.<sup>18</sup> However, as will be discussed in the chapter on CBOs (see page 52 for more details), some East African CBOs believe it is more efficient and equitable to directly contract with their agencies rather than using larger intermediary organizations.

Community members talked about the necessity of ELL skill development and how English-only discriminatory practices should not be tolerated. For example, the Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle and the Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity were both instrumental in advocacy efforts supporting a multiracial group of hundreds of Harborview custodial workers. In 2014, they were told they needed to pass reading, writing, and verbal English proficiency exams in order to receive a small wage increase or face unknown future work prospects.<sup>19</sup> “If they’ve been doing the job for years, and English and interaction with the public isn’t in their job description, why is this happening?” Fortunately, by working with elected city and King County officials and with the University of Washington, this group was able to influence Harborview to drop this exam requirement.

Another unique issue for East Africans is the phenomenon of “brain waste.” East African immigrants who earn professional degrees in their home country often cannot practice their skills in the U.S. They face specific sector requirements to pass proficiency tests or must re-school. Thus, they are forced to be under-employed or work in jobs that prevent them from using their specialized knowledge. “I know many taxi drivers that have PhDs. It’s incredible that their assets can’t be recognized.” According to OneAmerica, the growing number of foreign-educated immigrants as an untapped talent pool presents an opportunity that is both practical and innovative for growing the state economy. National rates of under-employment for African educated immigrants is 47 percent.<sup>20</sup> They propose that industries like health or teaching could benefit from better utilized, foreign-educated talent pools.

Generally, interviewees suggested that pathways to higher wage jobs needed to be proactively created. “Can there be specific industries like construction, health, or technology where East Africans are recruited and trained up?” Others noted that paid training and apprenticeship opportunities are of highest demand to realistically support families. Lastly, there is overall support, even without the specific details, for “priority hire” requirements that give preference to residents seeking jobs in their own neighborhood, like construction related occupations.

**“When I drive my neighborhood, I see so much construction but I wonder who is benefiting? At least people who look like me should be operating vehicles and waving the flags.”**

Currently, only five percent of construction workers contributing to city projects live in the economically disadvantaged areas of Seattle and only nine percent live in King County’s economically disadvantaged areas.<sup>21</sup> In January 2015, city council unanimously passed the Priority Hire Ordinance that will improve access to construction employment and improve training programs for workers, while prioritize the hiring of residents that live in economically distressed areas in Seattle and King County on public construction projects over \$5 million.

Lastly, young people emphasized their desire for more youth internships and job experience opportunities. One focus group interviewed was made of young adults participating in Horn of Africa’s job readiness training program. Students said that they were there not just “to help my family earn money,” but “to meet people...to better communicate and work together as a team...and to...improve our community.” Participating in the workforce yields multiple benefits. One young adult said he hopes “to change opinions about East Africans that we are all Muslim terrorists.” Youth programs that also offer CBO case management support, hourly pay, or stipends, and access to ORCA cards are extremely helpful. The Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is extremely popular and continues to be viewed positively when in partnership with East African-serving CBOs. According to the Seattle Police Department, this past summer, they hired 19 youths to work at various police facilities. One-third of these youth identified as East African, and two young people focused on translating community outreach documents in East African languages.<sup>22</sup> These kinds of placements help provide both working paid experiences, while also building community relationships.



Historic graduation photo. Photo courtesy of Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity.



Photo courtesy of Got Green.



## Economic Prosperity Recommendations

Grounded in lived experiences, community members suggested the following recommendations:

1. Support the organization and capacity of groups like the African Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest or other East African small business organizations to unite business owners across the city. Groups like this can support the deeper needs assessments of African businesses, particularly by different sectors, in order to understand unique challenges and to design creative solutions.
2. Examine models like the African Development Center<sup>23</sup> in Minnesota that, among other things, helps purchase capital equipment for businesses and sells these back to the business with a profit to be sharia-compliant.
3. Form a specific healthy capital loan pool that East African business owners can access. For example, as the Rainier Valley Community Development Fund transitions to their next focus area, they can potentially concentrate on East African businesses or those most at risk of displacement with culturally competent services and access to capital.
4. Research the viability of formalizing microloan products to reach a wider community. Examine modes like Accion<sup>24</sup> in New Mexico that provide unique, culturally competent microloans to entrepreneurs of color.
5. Survey small business technical assistance providers, (e.g. Small Business Administration, Community Capital Development, and SCORE) to understand their capacity and desire to work in the East African community. Support and encourage business resource fairs, such as one organized by the Rainier Beach Merchants Association that attracted a number of East Africans.<sup>25</sup>
6. Improve communication and mitigation efforts at the very beginning of construction projects in high immigrant business districts with culturally competent outreach and equity analysis.
7. Educate and outreach with CBOs on the goals of women and minority-owned businesses in the City of Seattle.
8. Involve interested small business owners in the new Affordable Commercial Initiative of Mayor Murray.
9. Support the efforts of CBOs to work with East African business owners to acculturate to the American system. One example is by helping them obtain their business-related licenses. The African Chamber of Commerce helps truckers with commercial driving licenses. Horn of Africa Services helps with child-care licensing.
10. Partner with the Southeast Seattle Economic Opportunity Center at MLK and Othello currently developing programs that can include community information centers for small business owners.
11. Develop a partnership and plan to assist East African child-care providers and groups like Voices for Tomorrow so they can continue to provide services while working towards increased professional development, including a U.S. high school diploma and new accreditation.
12. Track the enactment of the Seattle ordinance allowing Uber/Lyft drivers to unionize and ensure East African leaders are a part of the implementation process.
13. Model use of the City of Seattle Racial Equity Toolkit, as applied to the hookah bar closure

decision, for future issues that impact the small business community.

14. Continue to support and expand the Ready to Work program, which includes uplifting the role of or directly contracting with East African-based providers that form invaluable and continued relationships with graduates.
15. Survey workforce development providers and pathways to targeted careers for East Africans based on industry growth and match of skills and interest. Work closely with interested CBOs in piloting project, such as Mother Africa and their pilot Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program.
16. Consider developing programs focused on “brain waste” for possible city or state effort to create career pathways for foreign-educated immigrants.<sup>26</sup> Involve East African CBOs in the design and implementation. Research and talk with administrators at the Highline College Puget Sound Welcome Back Center<sup>27</sup> and the Edmonds Community College Northwest Washington Welcome Back Center about offering career re-entry support to medical professionals.
17. Provide community update as to the status of the Priority Hire Ordinance and connect with Got Green and community coalitions to plan alongside East African CBOs.
18. Support continued expansion of SYEP slots with ensured youth access to CBO case management and ORCA cards for maximum benefit.



Youth in Job Readiness Program at Horn of Africa Services.





## C. Public Safety and Youth

East African community stories of migration to the U.S. often have both elements of dangerous risk and a hope for opportunity and a better life for their children. The irony that violence can occur when they settle into American neighborhoods is not lost on the community. “Back home, I mostly worried about my daughters getting pregnant too young. Here I worry about my son getting killed.” Unfamiliarity and fear of both the criminal justice and juvenile justice systems contribute to disproportional rates of entry into these systems. The “school to prison pipeline” is a metaphor used to describe the increasing patterns of contact students across the U.S. have with the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems as a result of harmful policies adopted by government and school institutions. Many talked about how the pipeline is a reality for many immigrant and refugee families who face the multifaceted impacts of culture shock in America. For some, working with or questioning authority figures like police or government officials historically came with retribution and violence. Community members candidly shared their fears in their neighborhood, concerns for their youth, and hopes for improved community policing with the Seattle Police Department (SPD).

### C1. Neighborhood Safety

Youth, young adults, and seniors are often restricted in their mobility due to physical limitations and/or lack of access to transportation. These groups most often cited their dissatisfaction with the safety in their immediate neighborhood—their residential block, their senior program, and their school, including their pathway from home to school. “I wish I could just go outside and hang out more, but I don’t always feel safe.” Seniors who frequent places like the Ethiopian Community Center, Rainier Beach Library, or Yesler Terrace Community Center talked about their challenges walking on dirty sidewalks with overgrown tree roots and lack of lighting. School divisions and violence were everyday realities for youth surveyed, including a few neighborhoods like New Holly, High Point, White Center, and Rainier Valley that are home to different East African and mixed gangs. “At school, do I feel safe? About 50/50.”



Ethiopian Community in Seattle participates in Rainier Valley Heritage Parade.

## C2. Youth Violence, Drugs, and the Juvenile Justice System

Interviewees cited the violence that occurred the last half of 2015 as indicative of a growing problem, perhaps reaching a boiling point requiring a need for emergency attention from community and police. On July 31, 2015, 20-year-old African refugee Zakariya Ibrahim Issa was murdered, shot multiple times in the head while walking near 44th and Cloverdale after leaving a prayer service for a friend killed a day earlier in a drive-by shooting in Federal Way. That friend, 20-year-old Seattle resident Muldhata Dawud, was killed in a drive-by shooting after a Federal Way party on July 30, 2015. In October of 2015, 20-year-old Abubakar Abdi was shot at the corner of Rainier Avenue South and South Garden Street in the Brighton neighborhood after a street dispute with the murderer eventually arrested in the case. And on December 5, 2015, 16-year-old Hamza Warsame, a Running Start student at Seattle Community College and Rainier Beach High School died after falling off a Capitol Hill building, which SPD has ruled a result of an accidental fall. Community outcries called for #JusticeForHamza on social media and expressed concern about SPD communication with the family, fears of Islamophobia, and rumors of hate crimes.

Additionally, the high-profile murder of Chinatown-International District advocate Donnie Chin on July 23, 2015, remains unsolved and is an example of the intersections of two largely immigrant communities faced with similar issues of poverty and violence. According to SPD Chief Kathleen O'Toole, one of two men placed at the scene of the murder is East African, and there is prevailing concern over rising gang violence in the East African communities.<sup>28</sup> According to one youth advocate, the gangs come and go, with names like East African Posse, Black Gangster Disciples, Valley Hood Piru, Yesler Terrace Bloods, Down with the Crew, 74 Hoover Criminals, and East Union Street Hustlers. And they can be small and often form around drugs, territory, or a number of other reasons.<sup>29</sup> But they aren't as formal or big as sometimes you hear. And it's likely someone in the community knows more about the Chin murder, but doesn't speak out for fear of retribution. Interviewees cite common reasons for gangs: cultural alienation, poverty, and wanting to achieve a fast path to American success and money, often as a counter to the hard lives their parents' generation experienced in their homelands.

Prevention has always been the key to reducing violence. Community members offer many ideas for creative and authentic programs that would keep kids out of trouble and focused on positive outlets. Places to play sports (e.g. soccer, basketball, volleyball, climbing equipment), indoor safe activities (e.g. crafting, sewing, cooking), and learning dance and language. "We need places where we can just chill and be ourselves...and not always with our parents around." And, even the girls interviewed agreed that programs are needed "for boys especially because once they are in a gang, they're there for life." People shared dreams of an indoor soccer field or a multipurpose East African youth center that kids could "live in, feel connected, and away from violence." Companion Athletics has evolved their work not just to provide athletic programs for youth, but also to partner with parents, schools, and neighborhoods.

**"The two main root causes here are lack of parental involvement in the education of their children and lack of cultural competence of schools when dealing with East African students."**

Somali Family Safety Task Force's experience is that men must be involved in any youth anti-gang violence work. Some of the violence at school is related to basic arguments fueled by racial tension. Many of the youth suggested ways that they could bridge divisions and learn more to work together across ethnic groups to learn about each other's cultures. "Sometimes it's not gangs, it's just personal beef people have." Programs that support youth in school and post-school were also



New playground installed in 2014 at the Ethiopian Community in Seattle.

popular. Mentoring, tutoring, and career/college counseling are critical but are also most effective when delivered by people who understand young people and treat them as “friends” and not as “clients” or as a transaction they need to just complete. A cousin of the young man slain in Federal Way expressed her sorrow that if there was a stronger Oromo community, perhaps with a physical space where he could have gone to connect with others, maybe his death could have been prevented. These reflections emphasize the need to work with CBOs and those with trusted relationships to East African communities.

According to the Somali Working Board, a group made up of eight to twelve Somali-based CBOs, 10 percent of Seattle’s juvenile probation caseload are East African youth. Parents don’t understand the criminal justice system and youth are without proper support or mentorship. “Who is helping our East African kids in youth jail?” Horn of Africa Service’s experience is that you must work with the whole family and not just the individual youth when providing case management. They have piloted a successful “diversion”<sup>30</sup> program that is culturally responsive and is a stop gap between arrest and court involvement. This is critical because youth of color are 30 percent more likely to fail diversion than whites. In just a short period of time in 2015, of the 23 families referred to Horn of Africa Services, eight have successfully completed diversion, 14 are in progress, and only one youth has been filed on and referred to formal court processes (a 5 percent failure rate). Compared to diversion failure rate (41 percent) of East African families in 2014, this is an 88 percent improvement.<sup>31</sup>

### C3. Community Policing

Even with the high emotions and historic mistrust of police, some East African groups recognize the need to work closely with SPD. Somali Community Services of Seattle has been organizing community police groups to address violence. In the fall of 2015, their community identified the main issues as: communication challenges between community and police, dissatisfaction with existing police services and specific hot spots of criminal activity at Rainier and Rainier Beach Community Center, and drug trafficking along Martin Luther King Jr. Way. They noted the critical need to develop trust, especially given their history of law enforcement back home and amongst the youth. There is also a perceived, if not real, lack of police attention in immigrant, neighborhoods of color. Interviewees want police response 911 to be fast, but they don't want all interactions to be negative. "Showing up is important to our culture. When there is a murder in our community, especially someone young, the mayor should visit our community!" They also voiced support for more opportunities for positive interactions, like attending community festivals, volunteering with CBOs, and playing sports with youth. Some highlighted examples like SPD officers attending iftar evening meals and various end-of-Ramadan events.

Hiring East African police officers with deep community knowledge was a common suggestion from interviewees. King County Sheriff John Urquhart agrees. "If we're going to be successful in this day and age, we've got to mirror the community. Otherwise, we're not going to have the buy-in, we're never going to have the credibility, we're never going to have the cooperation, in the long run, of the community."<sup>32</sup> Therefore much anticipation and fanfare accompanied the hiring of the first Somali American police officer by SPD in September 2014. But his subsequent departure just a year later and details of his experience have left many wondering if change can truly occur from within. Another common suggestion was instituting formal liaison positions in government. In June 2015, the city hired the first-ever civilian liaison to work between the Seattle Police Department and the East African community. The full-time position was posted under the title Immigrant and Refugee Coordinator for SPD. However, some questioned the scope of such a position and offered ideas of how to expand responsibilities. (See G. Civic Engagement and Relationship with the City on page 48 for more details.) The East African Advisory Council is also a good start but seems to be underutilized, according to the community.



Community and police meeting with Somali Community Services of Seattle.



## Public Safety and Youth Recommendations

Grounded in lived experiences, community members suggested the following recommendations:

1. Explore Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) reviews for cultural centers, which are gathering places for East African community seniors and youth. Consult with experience of Seattle Neighborhood Group.
2. Increase investment in youth anti-violence work, especially targeting East African communities, while working alongside trusted CBOs committed to providing such programs.
3. Continue support of East African youth in the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, including data on impacts of such work in the community. Highlight targeted efforts like the hiring of East African case managers in middle schools and evaluate their effectiveness.
4. Continue building relationships between SPD and community—like OIRA’s Refugee Women’s Institute which now has expanded to focus on youth and families—and co-sponsored trainings with CBOs on crime prevention (including written materials) translated and interpreted in East African languages. Include faith-based groups, too.
5. Continue Late Night—a collaborative agreement with Seattle Parks and Recreation and the Seattle Police Department for youth programming at ten different community centers throughout the city. Van Asselt and High Point have the highest concentration of East African youth attending the evening activities. Involve East African-serving CBOs.
6. Explore police athletic leagues or other supports to youth athletic events involving SPD.
7. Involve East African community and CBOs in national efforts to reduce violence in black/African communities, e.g. City United/National League of Cities<sup>33</sup> or My Brother’s Keeper initiative of the White House.<sup>34</sup>
8. Support and invest in community-generated, restorative justice programs to address youth in the juvenile justice system, e.g. Horn of Africa Services pilot involvement in the Community-Assisted Diversion Initiative (CADI) or other methods to involve community accountability boards and CBOs in the juvenile justice continuum.
9. Support and invest in the Reconnect to Opportunity<sup>35</sup> project to support youth age 16-24 who are neither in school nor employed. There are 26,000 “opportunity youth” in King County, a majority without education for a minimum wage job and facing issues like criminal records, mental health, or supporting a young family.<sup>36</sup>
10. Set target and outreach plans for hiring East African police officers.
11. Formalize East African liaison position at SPD and ensure responsibilities to community are clearly communicated.
12. Resource and support East African Advisory Council to be able to meet regularly in larger community town halls, and especially in response to violence in real time.
13. Promote Seattle Neighborhood Group’s East African Immigrant Support initiative and connect them to increased resources.



## D. Education

In the U.S., East Africans theoretically have access to the same education system that produced President Barack Obama and success stories like the “all-Ivy League” Class of 2019 students who are all children of immigrants from Nigeria, Somalia, and Ghana.<sup>37</sup> In reality, the hardships for families and the inadequacy of the school system create different results. However, several efforts have attempted to improve education outcomes. In 2015, Mother Africa convened several women’s groups in historically disconnected African communities (Liberian, South Sudanese Nuer, Gambian, Congolese/Burundi, and Kenyan). As the women prioritized their key issues, each of them involved some form of support for their children. This was true in each of the interviews convened as well. But preparing for formal schooling is problematic when only 42 percent of eligible 4,488 low-income preschoolers were enrolled in early learning programs in 2014.

Overall in Seattle Public Schools, students of color met third grade reading standards at a rate 30 percent lower than their white classmates and also graduated 24 percent lower than white high school students. One-third of Seattle students of color attend a high poverty school, while one-third of Seattle white students attend private schools. A few in the East African community are blunt: “South Seattle schools, especially where our kids go, suck. Resources are spread inequitably based on property taxes so wealthier areas prosper. Enough nice talk, our schools are not up to par!” The Somali Working Board was alarmed when they looked at 2012 data on African American youth in the state and saw that the dropout rate is 28 percent and is expected to rise. In the South Seattle schools involved in the Road Map Project, 71 percent of African Americans enrolled in college, but only 55 percent remained in college. African American males, (which include African immigrants) consistently perform lower than children of other racial, ethnic, and gender groups on many academic measures—a pattern seen locally and nationally. Community members corroborated these facts as they shared their thoughts about their children moving through the “cradle to career” pipeline.



Photo courtesy of East African Community Services.

## D1. Early Learning

The concept of family and multi-generational early learning care is not a foreign concept to East Africans. There is a long documented history in Africa and rich cultural traditions passing on lessons to one another within the family. What is less familiar is the American education system and the kind of Westernized early learning preparation that is requisite for child success today. Somali Youth and Family Club (SYFC) has been a long-standing champion of early learning education and helping bridge the gap between two different cultural systems. They've worked with parents and partnered with school districts to assist in the education of parents and preparing their children for kindergarten, as well as many other necessary programs.

East African communities are most likely to use licensed, family child-care centers, particularly those run by East Africans, and then other family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) care/Play and Learn groups. "Our Somali community values supporting one another in times of need." Given that, "family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) care is a concept we have been using for centuries as an informal child-care system. What is a new concept to us is the formal child-care system that is guided by policies and is regulated." This gap speaks to the importance of trusted CBOs to act as supporters to these providers. It's also important to note that young children get exposure to culturally appropriate activities in this type of care. Voices of Tomorrow speaks highly of several providers who use their home language lullabies and children's songs as part of their program. Many providers introduce cultural food and games to the children.

Some mothers mentioned the Seattle Preschool Program Levy, passed in 2014. Applauded by all, the community hoped that their students would qualify and sign up for the free pre-K services administered by the first-ever Department of Education and Early Learning at the city. Some saw this as a positive sign for the city to formally be a part of the education continuum as a direct funder and implementer of critical services. Others were hopeful, but still worried that it was a pilot program and didn't cover every child yet.



Photo courtesy of Somali Youth and Family Club.

## D2. Community Engagement and Education

Overwhelmingly, parents (especially mothers) expressed their concern that they don't feel welcome or connected to their children's schools.

**“Who wants to volunteer if you don't feel welcome? I only talk to teachers when there is a problem at school.”**

One mother shared her experience of not even being able to freely enter the front door of the school without being buzzed in, right away creating a feeling of being an outsider. Even if there is a family liaison staff person, they usually have too much on their plate and can't serve everyone. For some communities in Africa, teachers are completely responsible for all the instruction in schools and parents aren't involved. Coming from this system to the U.S. presents a learning curve for parents. “At home, we really nurture our kids—spoon-feed them, tie their shoe; maybe Westerners think it's too much because here in preschool, kids are taught to be independent.”

Many CBOs discussed needing to support parent education as much as student education. English and digital literacy were most frequently named as barriers to participation. One mother expressed her embarrassment over not knowing how to track her child's progress and school attendance online because she doesn't know how to work the computer very well. Many others talked about not hearing from the schools until it was too late, and there was already a formal grievance against their child. Later they'd find out that English notices were given, but either they couldn't be understood or were co-opted by the child. “The system is complicated for everyone, but especially for immigrants and refugees not used to these rules.” Some noted a Minneapolis school that has produced a Somali language parent handbook and how this is a reasonable step towards educating families. Locally, Horn of Africa Services is piloting a parent education program about school policy while also providing cultural workshops for the Seattle schools. When asked,



Garfield High School students attending conversations prior to Mayor's Education Summit. Photo courtesy of Capitol Hill Seattle Blog.





Photo courtesy of Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity.

no one interviewed admitted involvement in their local Parent Teacher and Student Association (PTSA), and some didn't even know what the group was. One community leader expressed this opinion, "Most parents don't have time for fundraising, and that's all PTSA's focus on."

### D3. School Policies

The reality for bicultural families is that often their children will have better English proficiency than their parents. Families shared numerous stories of children manipulating systems by not sharing important school information or, on the other spectrum, of children experiencing the stress of growing up too early and serving as the family interpreter for complicated issues like paying bills and court notices. Nearly a quarter of all students in Seattle Public Schools lives in families whose home language is not English. And even though federal law requires that critical communication between schools and families

be conducted in English and the home language, the result is inconsistent and inadequate. Another area of concern was discipline. Even without data proof, parents were certain that students of color were suspended more often, and thereby more vulnerable to entering the juvenile justice system. These were the biggest concerns of our parents and CBOs. (See C. Public Safety and Youth on page 25 for more details.) Some brought up the inadequacy of teachers to adapt learning methods and adopt more culturally competent practices with their ever-growing diverse student populations. "It's not just about community engagement, sometimes it's more like mainstream engagement and their education. Our world is changing!" A landmark report on newly arriving Somali Bantu elementary-age students in Chicago offered two years of evidence of the benefits of a tailored education approach. Many of the kids, who came from refugee camps in Kenya, lacked any formal schooling and some were unfamiliar with use of even the most basic school supplies, such as pencils. The students appeared to be disengaged not because of lack of interest but because they were unfamiliar with the culture of schooling. Among the successful strategies: relationship building, one-on-one attention, and the use of materials to infuse more meaning into learning tasks.

Lastly, interviewees brought up other ways in which Seattle Public Schools could accommodate culture and religion, e.g., allowing for quiet time/prayer in the day, for more modest clothing in school sports, or for halal appropriate food during lunch. Some of the young people talked about how far-reaching institutional and historic racism was in their school lives, a contrast from personal experiences or stories of inter-personal racism. "I feel there is just subtle racism that exists the way teachers teach us, like because of our hijab or our accent." One student added profoundly, "People sometimes live into those stereotypes, and if I'm going to be called a terrorist, then I might as well be a gangster. And that messes with your head."

Some parents were confused about the city's role with Seattle Public Schools. They didn't understand the two were separate entities and that the mayor didn't have jurisdiction over school

decisions. However, some CBOs and leaders participated in Mayor Murray’s Education Summit event that took place in April 2016 and prior conversations leading to it. They liked the idea of the city being more involved in the school system and focusing on inequities for students of color. Interestingly, the input gathered from 1,300 surveys prior to the April 30, 2016, summit were consistent and in line with what interviewees suggested: improving school’s community engagement, a more diverse teacher workforce, and a greater focus on what happens after students graduate from high school. Lastly, the work of the Seattle Public Schools’ African American Male Scholars Think Tank seems promising in addressing the inequities named above. Interviewees wanted to ensure that both the community and the school system learn and make changes.

#### **D4. Community-Based Programs**

The prevalence of culturally competent CBOs and community groups focused on youth and young people succeeding in education is a great asset in the East African community. Groups like Somali Youth and Family Club, Companion Athletics, East African Community Services, Horn of Africa Services, Ethiopian Community in Seattle, Somali Community Services of Seattle, Somali Family Safety Task Force, Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity, and Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle each provide a variety of youth programs like tutoring and homework help, after-school activities, sports, summer programs, parent engagement, health, and ESL. East African Community Services recently expanded their scope to provide the full spectrum of K-12 support, noting the incredible need in the community. It’s important to note that none of these programs is adequately resourced, and each suffers from the nonprofit challenge of sustainable funding. (See H. Community-Based Organizations and Community Centers on page 52 for more details.) For example, even basic issues such as transportation to the organized youth activities is a barrier for some. Lastly, beyond nonprofits, a few independent volunteer-run organizations and informal faith-based programs exist to provide mentoring and after-school activities for youth in Seattle.



Photo courtesy of Somali Youth and Family Club.



## Education Recommendations

1. Support and expand access to family child-care centers, friends, family, and neighbors, or play/learn groups that are accessible and familiar and that promote cultural competency within the East African community.
2. Support CBOs like Voices of Tomorrow in their direct support and advocacy with licensed child-care providers.
3. Work with East African CBOs to recruit and support East African preschoolers eligible for the Seattle Preschool Program and share demographics of initial classes of preschoolers.
4. Support family engagement positions within schools who speak different languages and whose job it is to develop relationships with families. Consider learning from the Family Connections model utilized in White Center and Highline Public Schools.
5. Understand and support Seattle Public Schools' African American Male Scholars Think Tank recommendation: "In order to engage with African American families and students, commit to following the '10 principles of authentic community engagement.'" You can find out more about the 10 principles at: [https://uwba.org/files/galleries/10\\_Principles\\_of\\_Authentic\\_Community\\_Engagement.pdf](https://uwba.org/files/galleries/10_Principles_of_Authentic_Community_Engagement.pdf).
6. Support CBOs and school partnerships to conduct parent education and parent advocacy classes customized to their needs, particularly as alternatives to mainstream PTSA's.
7. Review Minneapolis Somali American Parent Association, particularly their new program for parents Waalidow Indhaha Furr or Parents Wake Up, which offers six weeks of training for newly arrived parents to help them become oriented to the U.S. school system.
8. Support parent-school education opportunities, like those piloted by Horn of Africa Services, which also include similar education for educators and the school district about East African history and culture.
9. Support and encourage East African parents' efforts to organize and advocate for local school boards, including Seattle, to pass policies making improved language services and bilingual education a priority. Connect with partners as necessary.
10. Understand Seattle Public Schools' cultural competency and equity goals to ensure it reflects the needs of East African cultures and religions. Encourage the city to share and to cross-fertilize ideas and lessons learned related to equity principles and application.
11. Understand and support Seattle Public Schools' African American Male Scholars Think Tank recommendation: "implement a moratorium on non-violent suspensions and expulsions from K-12, and provide appropriate supports, services, and resources to school administrators, with a focus on preventing the loss of instructional time, growing students' habits of success, and increasing teacher professional development."
12. Understand and support Seattle Public Schools' African American Male Scholars Think Tank recommendation: "provide professional development addressing racism and implicit bias, trauma, social justice, equity, and culturally responsive pedagogy."
13. Encourage continued city and Seattle Public Schools relationship, especially when city can play a focused role supporting students of color and low-income students.
14. Recognize and support CBOs serving East African youth and their critical role as partners to the city, schools, and juvenile justice system.



## E. Family, Social Services, and Health

Uprooting and moving to the U.S. created complicated bi-cultural experiences for East African families that continue on even as the numbers of second generation, U.S.-born children grow. “It’s like fire and water, the village versus the individual,” says one Eritrean elder. Family and the respected role of seniors and youth were the most treasured values in the community. But those values have been challenged as the East African community transitions into an East African *American* community. Social services, domestic violence, health, and mental health each are complicated by these changing relationships and the continued need for culturally competent design and delivery of such services. And given the relative newness of the East African community, the role of CBOs and community centers is life-critical and therefore, vulnerable. They are “stretched to the seams” providing youth and senior programs and general case management, often without compensation and necessary technical training. “Where else do community go? If we don’t help them, who will?”



Photo courtesy of East African Community Services.

### E1. Intergenerational Relationships and Family

When discussing the role of seniors in the community, participants shared warm stories of the respect given to elders and their traditional role of acting as mediators, advisors, and holders of tradition. Youth were equally nurtured and raised knowing they are to get a good education and make a good life for the family and for the community. In each interview however, community members noted the culture clash here in the U.S. creates intergenerational, family conflict.

This clash of generations was a common theme amongst the youth participants. “They try their best, I know, and they are scared for our safety. But they just don’t understand teenagers,” and “They always think every boy I see is my boyfriend. I go to school with boys, I have to talk to them,” or “They don’t understand how our life can’t be like how it is in Africa.”

The challenge isn't just about holding on to traditional values. One young man said, "I know back home, elders are supposed to guide youth. But here nobody has time, everyone works so hard. Who has time to help me?"

Similarly, parents and elders shared their concerns. "We are like two roommates. We don't get to talk to our kids," and "They are too independent here. They think they can run around and do whatever without getting trouble."

There is a genuine concern about losing identity, too. "I worry that my kids will lose interest in our culture and our language," and "Even though we teach them, they have a hard time being pulled in different directions."

In one focus group that involved a mother and her daughter, their responses were polar opposites. The mom said, "I need to keep her as close as possible so I can protect her," while the daughter said, "I just need a fun place I can be alone without my parents."

Community members and CBOs have innovative ideas on how to conduct culturally competent programs addressing this issue. Somali Family Task Force wishes to pilot a joint youth and parent intergenerational project focusing on healthy communication centered around fun, creative events, particularly using new media and theater skits. The Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity wants to teach youth about "jebena," a traditional Eritrean coffee ceremony, while engaging in intergenerational conversations about community priorities with elders. Somali Community Services in Seattle is piloting a youth handicraft project for both youth and adults centered on art therapy techniques.

One youth loved the idea of cooking together with her elders as a way of doing something fun and fostering traditional culture. One senior simply expressed, "We just need more time to talk with each other. We're just so busy all the time." Some groups like Mother Africa and Voices of Tomorrow conduct focused conversation circles that can be expanded to include two generations. For example, Somali Peace Circles are formal processes used to bring people together to better understand one another, build and strengthen bonds, and solve community problems. "As a community who have been through severe stages of trauma and suffering from xenophobia, racism, Islamophobia, and different level of discrimination, this space is very sacred place for us to reconnect, to love, and to hold each other's spirits high so we can get through from day to day."

## **E2. Family Violence**

Participants shared their perceptions that family domestic violence is on the rise. CBOs shared stories of community members experiencing violence with young men, amongst siblings, and between husbands and wives. Involving the criminal justice system and calling 911 may provide immediate help, but it tears apart families in the long run. "Some fathers just disappear. And how does the family survive then?" Some groups suggest there is a role for cultural mediation and the involvement of the community in these instances, though many in the community consider this work as taboo because of the social stigma and potential repercussions of violence towards women. One group has had to call their work "family engagement" as a platform to be able to discuss the issues of domestic violence. They shared their early work in domestic violence and how hard it was to get public support of the work from the imams. Somali Youth and Family Club works directly with Child Protective Services and Department of Social and Health Services to provide case management to East African families. "This is such a complicated and tough topic, but people are in danger and we need to begin addressing this." Trained or not, CBOs are at the front lines of confronting family violence and need support. They have and will develop the relationships with the families in the long run.

### E3. Seniors

As previously discussed, East African seniors carry enormous respect and have an ability to positively impact families and communities.

“I want the mayor to know that even though we are old, we want to be involved in helping our community!”

And yet, many elders feel underutilized in the community. Some CBOs wonder if seniors could be involved in providing mediation support to families in their communities. Though others worry about how seniors might have traditional gender biases of men versus women in family roles that might negatively affect their mediation role. Seniors wished they had access to more programs and some even wanted to formally volunteer or work to earn extra income. Seniors from the Ethiopian community and who live at Yesler Terrace gather to share meals with each other, exercise

and partake in classes like ESL and computer training. Some Ethiopian and Eritrean seniors farm and harvest food at the Rainier Beach Urban Farm. Sometimes these elders work side-by-side with at-risk youth who are new to gardening and interested in farming and mentorship. Senior lunch programs were particularly mentioned as an important manifestation of many senior needs: cultural nutrition, comradery, and reduced social isolation. Groups like Somali Community Services of Seattle, Ethiopian Community in Seattle, and others have regular senior meal programs that over the years have been de-funded, yet they continue to keep them going with their own limited resources. Seniors also described wanting to have their own senior center. They go to other centers, but they don't always feel welcome and their time is limited. In 2012, East African Community Services commissioned a report on the feasibility of an East African senior center. After speaking with 80 East African community members, they found a unanimous desire and need for a center to address concerns about aging safely in place, public safety, intergenerational connections to preserve culture, health/wellness, and reducing social isolation.

### E4. Health, Drugs and Mental Health

The East African community is experiencing greater health disparities as they struggle to adjust to their lives in the U.S. Several CBOs have approached this challenge through a myriad of community programs like nutrition programs, health fairs, gardening, and working with small businesses to diversify food products. “But we need a better, more coordinated approach,” says one CBO leader.

The Somali Health Board was formed by health professionals to advocate for culturally and religiously appropriate policies and services within the health systems, as well as to promote partnerships and education. In their 2014 Somali health fair survey, they discovered that the top five self-reported health issues in the community were diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, arthritis, and heartburn. In a healthy eating assessment commissioned by East African Community



Seniors at Rainier Beach Urban Farm. Photo courtesy of Seattle Tilth.

Services and King County, they hoped to improve knowledge and access to healthy food by first understanding food practices and preferences among East African residents. As to be expected, generational differences explained preference for American versus traditional foods, and knowledge of nutrition varied. (The Oromo and Amharic languages lack an appropriate term that translates to “nutrition.”) There was a general agreement that in the U.S., meals included more meat, cost was a huge barrier for healthy foods, and generally folks exercised less. “Back home, people used all these same things—sugar and salt and heavy ingredients—but they didn’t have these problems because they sweated and walked a lot.” And another participant said, “In Somalia, there were obese people, but they were healthy. Here, you get a little overweight and then you get all these diseases.”

The use of drugs and alcohol was also brought up, particularly given the recent hookah bar controversy. From a health point of view, many CBOs were supportive of reducing access of these drugs, which they considered a gateway to more dangerous drugs. They held similar feelings about the new legalization of marijuana in Washington State. Specific to at-risk youth and young adults, one interviewee spoke candidly that this was the number one issue, even above gang violence. “Kids abuse different concoctions of drugs nowadays that impair judgment and affect basic relationships. The kid who shot the kid going home after the funeral...in 2015? At the time he was smoking some kind of pill meant to swallow and making him act like a zombie. He wasn’t right. And these kids are not accessing rehabilitation or counseling support. Mainstream groups don’t know how to serve our community—there needs to be a personal touch first.”



Photo courtesy of Somali Health Board.



At a community event about Islamic Trauma Healing.  
Photo credit: Safiyah Hersi-Dhooye.

Lastly, mental health was also a growing concern. One interviewee suggested, “People coming from trauma and war-torn countries, I’m sure they deal with PTSD and just don’t want to talk about it because they want to forget. Like when the soldiers came back from the Iraq War, except we’re not dealing with it.”

Youth who witness violence and shootings close to their homes deal with these issues, too, and they, too, are not getting help. Some groups like Refugee Women’s Alliance, Asian Counseling and Referral Service, and Southwest Youth and Family Services serve East Africans in their mental health programs. But as with the family violence discussed above, there is a similar stigma with seeking help and these groups may not have the relationships to reach those most in need. People go to friends and family, but more often professional support is needed. “It’s untreated. People don’t even know it’s actually a treatable problem. Imagine the amount of postpartum depression amongst mothers too!”

Expanding programs such as the new Somali “centering pregnancy” program at NeighborCare Healthbridge in Rainier Valley is very promising. It combines prenatal care and peer learning/ community support. Another promising program is led by the newly formed Somali Reconciliation Institute. This group believes that individual psychotherapy may not be the most effective approach for PTSD symptoms, given that Somali culture integrates faith and community. So the group helped to develop an empirically supported intervention for Somalis suffering in the aftermath of war-torn conflict. The result is a six-week PTSD program *Islahul Qulub: Islamic Trauma Healing* that combines prayer, prophet narratives, and guided discussion. Members of the community are trained as lay leaders and lead sessions with separate groups offered for men and women.

Lastly, one person shared her experience with misdiagnosis of mental health issues and warned that it’s almost more important to encourage people to see their primary doctor, as opposed to mental health experts right away. “Is a headache mental health? No. So let’s not elevate the problem when it’s not there.” Encouraging and helping families to sign up for health care is a sound strategy as well.





## Family, Social Services, and Health Recommendations

1. Support authentic intergenerational projects led by trusted CBOs, like Somali Community Services of Seattle, to encourage positive relationship and educational outcomes.
2. Promote “peace circles” and other forms of community-led healing conversations.
3. Connect East African CBOs with mainstream professional counselors/agencies to understand resources available to address intergenerational family violence and other forms of conflict. Support the creative programming that comes from such conversations, such as cultural mediation.
4. Connect interested East African CBOs with the work of groups like API Chaya, an experienced service organization also working on family violence issues in largely Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Islander communities.
5. Share with and engage the East African community in the Mayor’s Office recommendation of an Adolescent Family Domestic Violence (AFDV) initiative: Develop, pilot, and evaluate a culturally responsive adolescent family domestic violence referral and intervention model for African American and East African young men.
6. Share with and engage the East African community in King County’s Step Up family violence intervention program and the role for CBOs in such work.
7. Fund critical senior meal programs led by East African CBOs.
8. Revisit East African Community Service’s 2012 report on senior centers and connect with existing initiatives for community/cultural centers.
9. Survey existing healthy eating and nutrition programs serving East African residents and explore the desire to coordinate amongst service providers.
10. Support East African gardening and nutrition programs, particularly at the Rainier Beach Urban Farm.
11. Explore drug treatment options for communities of color and possible outreach work that targets East African youth and young adults. Look at the model of Washington Asian Pacific Islander Families (WAPI) Community Services, initially created to provide treatment and support to Asian Pacific Islander youth. Chemical dependency services are also available at Sound Mental Health.
12. Understand mental health treatment options for communities of color and possible work to outreach and target East African youth, young adults, and adults. Talk with Refugee Women’s Alliance about their behavioral health program, which currently advertises only in the Somali language. Include Asian Counseling and Referral Service and Southwest Youth and Family Services in that review. Talk with Somali Reconciliation Institute about their experience. Encourage the use of authentic East African CBOs to deliver services as required.



## F. Culture and Identity

“Wofera” is a word in the Tigrinya language that means the spirit or act of volunteering, not just as a single person, but as many people coming together and displaying teamwork to achieve a goal. The concept of wofera was used in discussing the building of the Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle’s community center at Rainier Avenue S and Massachusetts. “That is what we base all of our work on. It means we can support each other in a community in times of great need.” This was a common theme expressed in interviews. Not only was there immense pride and ability here in Seattle to perpetuate East African culture, but there is a recognition of the power of community—East African and African alike—to come together to improve people’s lives. However, there is also internal conflict and stereotypes that complicate relationships and become even more complex as the demographic landscape of the U.S. moves towards a majority community of color population. Interviewees spoke with great passion about their culture and identity and how they continue to live in two worlds at once, both here and in Africa.



Somali community dancers at a Multicultural Community Center Coalition meeting in 2014. Photo credit: Mel Ponder.

### F1. Preserving Culture

Each segment of the community interviewed placed great value on preserving and sharing their culture. Most participants talked about how their identities are comprised of language, art, folktales, dance, dress, religion, and many opportunities to share bread and injera over delicious African foods. And just as the seniors expressed earlier, the youth also want to maintain similar traditions. “We’re bi-cultural though. I’m Somali and American!” Some youth wished for a Seattle holiday just to celebrate their culture. And others lauded the role of East African community centers because they perceive them as safe places to celebrate. (See H. Community-Based Organizations and Community Centers on page 52 for more details.)

Language is particularly important to the community. Members of the state’s South Sudanese Kuku tribe are trying to make Kuku language classes available online so as to preserve it from being lost. Those in the Oromo community shared their desire to have social services available in Oromo, even though they may speak and/or be more fluent in Amharic. It’s particularly important to understand this in the context of the historical suppression of the Oromo language and culture back in Africa. Somali Student Association members were quite proud to have secured a 10-week intermediate and

advanced Somali-language course through the University of Washington’s Experimental College—as of writing, the only formal course of its kind in the Northwest. And the Arabic language has been a successful organizing method for groups working with Mother Africa. Arabic-speaking women of different nationalities and skin colors have been gathering and building cross-cultural relationships over shared interests and goals. Fortunately, participants perceived Seattle as a supportive city to express culture and identity. For example, the city’s Office of Arts and Culture shared a summary of recent grant investments that included a West and East African cross cultural arts festival in the Delridge neighborhood, an Eritrean Independence Day celebration in Volunteer Park, and an exhibit of Somali cultural artifacts at the New Holly community.

A unique story emerged during the interviews that showcases the use of traditional cultural practice applied to today’s modern challenges. A CBO staff person talked about a physical altercation between her daughter and another young girl at Rainier Beach High School. While school officials suspended the girls and effectively shut communication down, the two mothers of the girls took them to a Somali peace circle. From there they were able to discuss their larger issue with the family and the community. It’s a poignant reminder of the value of family and cultural competency that, in this situation, served these girls better in the long run than mainstream discipline.



Grand opening of expanded Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle in 2012.



Helping Kajo-Keji High School in South Sudan. Photo courtesy of South Sudanese Kuku Association of North America.

## F2a. International Diaspora

Seattle’s East African community is intrinsically linked to their homelands in Africa. “The quality of my life improves here when my family back home is better off.” An often repeated sentiment among participants was having “one foot here and the other foot there.” Interviewees shared how important it is to make as much money as possible so more can be sent back home to support the village. This generosity is threatened by recent U.S. actions to tighten restrictions on large banks who provide wire transfer remittance businesses serving Somalia. Others spoke about raising funds specifically to help homeland village projects such as building schools or clean water wells. They also wondered if Seattle’s generous philanthropic sector could be of support here. And still others shared grief over the perils of Africans trying to leave Africa. For example, in April 2016, over 400 Somalis drowned after their smuggler-organized boat capsized on its way to Italy.



#OromoProtests march in Seattle in December 2015. Photo courtesy of Mergitu Argo.

## F2b. #OromoProtests

As a snapshot in time, this report must discuss the current issue affecting the Oromo community in Ethiopia. Oromos make up almost half of the Ethiopian population, and they live on rich farmlands around the Addis Ababa capital of Ethiopia. According to Oromo-based website gadaa.com and shared by interviewees through social media networks, peaceful protests of the Oromo people started on November 12, 2015, in response to the illegal land grabbing by the Ethiopian government, which left millions of indigenous Oromo farmers landless and homeless. The Tigray minority leadership considered this a part of a “master plan” to expand the influence of the capital. Primary and high school students and the children of the affected farmers started the peaceful protests, which quickly engulfed the entire Ethiopian state of Oromia. In response, the Ethiopian government has purportedly killed over 450 peaceful protestors, young people, and women, and jailed over 12,000 Oromos. The government has since dissolved civilian administration and imposed martial law.

In Seattle, the Oromo community holds rallies to educate and garner larger public support, particularly hoping to influence the U.S. federal government’s aid policy to Ethiopia. Recently, a first of its kind congressional briefing on this issue was held on April 19, 2016, and many from Seattle attended alongside 2,500 other Oromo Americans. Subsequently, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Maryland), ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced a resolution with 11 other Senators. It condemned the lethal violence used by the government of Ethiopia against protestors, journalists, and others in civil society for exercising their rights under Ethiopia’s constitution. U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-Washington) is also a co-sponsor. The resolution calls for the Secretary of State to conduct a review of U.S. security assistance to Ethiopia in light of allegations that Ethiopian security forces have killed civilians. It also calls upon the government of Ethiopia to halt violent crackdowns, to conduct a credible investigation into the killing of protestors, and to hold perpetrators of such violence accountable.

Given this violence and grief, Seattle-based Oromo leaders gathered their community to participate in a focus group for this project. “You start to hate yourself when you see this.” One parent talked about having to explain the violence to his kids, especially since social media images are so prevalent and a common way to share information. On social media, #OromoProtests became a popular

hashtag when talking online about the controversy. “When will the killing stop,” she wonders. And she says she can’t concentrate on homework because of what she saw on the internet.” The organization Oromo Community Services in Seattle had plans to strengthen their membership and slowly build the capacity of their new organization. But this crisis occurred, splitting their community. “I have 1,000 things going on in my mind—my kids, my job, serving my community, but I can’t think normal because of the violence back home.” There are some leaders that hope to re-focus on their goal of an Oromo community center because while extremely tragic, the international issues will be ongoing. They hope there is a way to balance the issues both here and abroad.

### F3. East African Community Identity

Generally, the community and CBO leaders interviewed accepted the term “East African” as a way to unify community and garner larger political clout. Of course, people felt a primary affinity with their home country or culture, but they understood other East Africans to be their brothers and sisters. Some youth went further suggesting that “we’re different than blacks/African Americans, but they’re like our cousins, too.” However, many warned that East African too often means “Somali” or “refugee” in Seattle. “We are more than that. We’re a beautiful, diverse people that shouldn’t be defined by our political status.” It is important that the city recognize the breadth of African nations and their respective cultures in order to avoid naïve, sweeping assumptions about the community. Smaller groups like the Kenyan, Somali Bantu, or South Sudanese Kuku or Nuer communities particularly valued coming together with other Africans. They know that their voice is heard louder when spoken in harmony with other similar groups. The businesses in the African Chamber of Commerce were also more vocal in their preference for an “all-African” identity. Some CBO leaders also believed this was a right step towards eliminating artificial differences between West and East Africa.



African women's leadership group. Photo courtesy of Mother Africa.



Eritrean leadership at a 2014 Multicultural Community Coalition meeting. Photo credit: Mel Ponder.

Despite calls for unity, historic conflicts between East Africans play out locally in Seattle. While some Ethiopians dream and wish for an “all Ethiopian,” color blind, unified community, many Oromos believe this is equivalent to erasing a rich Oromo tradition and culture. “You can’t just say we’re all one people if that means everyone has to fall in line and follow orders from one leader.” With the current crisis in Ethiopia, some Ethiopians have come out in support of Oromo human rights. They explain that the issue is with the political party and not the everyday Ethiopians. Still currently some Oromos refuse to utilize the Ethiopian Community Center. Additionally, some people who are Oromo would rather identify as Ethiopian.

Tribal clan differences is another significant factor. Often elders and organizations continue to follow clan traditions, and faith-based groups often organize along those clan lines. Some argue that young people are learning differences from their parents and perpetuate this bias. Others believe that the younger generation is getting better at dissolving clan lines in the U.S.

It's worth sharing the story of this positive partnership between Seattle's Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle and the Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity. Originally founded by members of different Eritrean political affiliations, today the two groups co-exist and often partner together. At the time of the formation of the Multicultural Community Center (MCC) Coalition in Southeast Seattle, the leaders of both groups would only participate if the other was also involved. From that point, they worked on several more joint projects and truly got to know each other personally. Today the groups continue to come together over shared advocacy and civic engagement goals and hope to advocate for each other's plans to physically improve each of their respective community centers.



## Culture and Identity Recommendations

1. Continue and expand support of East African/African culture preservation programs.
2. Examine a locally mentioned solution for safe remittance to Somalia: partner with “CoinFling,” a local money transfer company that has an established anti-money laundering program that meets U.S. standards and has additional internal controls.
3. Inquire if the City of Seattle has active Sister City efforts or desire to connect with African municipalities.
4. Survey international aid foundations and their support of African charitable work. Introduce those interested to CBOs serving the East African community.
5. Consider ability for the City of Seattle to support Oromo community during current international crisis, potentially with a public statement condemning the violence.
6. Organize community discussions about the city’s use of the term “African” versus “East African.”
7. Promote cross cultural East African community partnerships when appropriate.



## G. Civic Engagement and Relationship with the City

According to 2013 ACS numbers, the size of Seattle’s foreign-born residents has grown each year and is currently around 18 percent of the city’s population. This includes over 57,000 naturalized citizens. However, members of immigrant communities do not participate in civic life at the same rates as other Seattle residents. One look at City of Seattle boards, commissions, and other civic leadership roles, and it’s obvious that East Africans are not represented at key decision-making tables. While one school of thought encourages elevating the influence of alternative, more culturally accessible forms of leadership, some CBO leaders were passionate that, “we need to proactively engage and infiltrate the system from within if we want to make change.” This section of the report looks at common forms of civic engagement like voting, civic volunteerism, running for public office, and the community’s relationship with the City of Seattle. However, it isn’t meant to discount the asset-rich history of the East African community, CBO, and faith-based volunteerism that has supported the East African residents for decades.



Photo courtesy of Coalition of Immigrants, Refugees, and Communities of Color.

### GI. Civic Engagement

Community basic needs are understandably priority focus areas for CBOs and volunteer agencies. However, as families stabilize and begin to understand the political system of influence, groups have started to form around promoting civic engagement in targeted communities. African Diaspora of Washington (ADWA) was created in 2011 around this idea of moving beyond social services and leveraging African-born residents’ civic engagement and political inclusion in King County. ADWA has organized and provided workshops for CBOs and leaders in voter education, voter registration, and civic engagement.

The Coalition of Immigrants, Refugees, and Communities of Color (CIRCC) is a civic group organized around educating multicultural communities about elected positions and encouraging voting. It was co-founded by members of the Eritrean community and ensures immigrants and refugees are centered in this work. Since the systems haven’t been working well for all, the belief is that community members must sit at those decision-making tables to influence those systems. But for East Africans, even basic education of the political system is critical, whether that be through informational bal-



lot parties, workshops, or direct one-on-one. One poignant example surfaced when an interviewee talked to a community member about why he didn't vote. He was struggling with the presidential election because if he voted for a particular candidate, he felt he'd be supporting that candidate's past support for war abroad. And this potential voter didn't want to be judged by Allah for those crimes.

When looking at elected public office in Seattle, it is disheartening to report that as of writing, no East Africans have served in these roles. In 2003, Mengstab Tzegai was the first Eritrean to serve on the board of Highline Public Schools and likely in all the region's school boards. In the city of Federal Way, Ethiopian councilmember Lydia Aseffa-Dawson was elected in 2015. As of this report's publication, the 37th Legislative District has an East African Democratic liaison. In addition, community members have voiced hopes that a candidate will emerge in the upcoming round of elections. And while the Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle is a member of the Southeast District Council, most other officially recognized city-sponsored neighborhood councils don't engage East Africans. Puget Sound Sage leads one promising effort. Their Community Leadership Institute (CLI) focuses on preparing and training individuals of color to join city boards and commissions.

Recently, the Immigrant Voting Rights Task Force produced a report for the City of Seattle. It includes a myriad of strategies aimed at increasing civic and political participation by immigrant communities. They include:

- Expanding the scope and reach of the New Citizens Program to support naturalization and citizenship.
- Developing research tools and examining current data to better understand how to best serve current and potential immigrant voters.
- Working with King County Elections to identify locations for permanent ballot boxes in Seattle's immigrant-rich neighborhoods.
- Registering immigrants to vote and educating and informing them of general voting information.

While not explicitly discussed, these strategies appear to be aligned with the general concerns of the community. And the city should continue to engage with East African CBOs that work with immigration and citizen issues.



Photo courtesy of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs.

## G2. Communication Between Community and City

The most frequent suggestion from report participants involved increasing the visibility of the mayor and other city officials with community and CBO groups. “You must come to us before you make big decisions that affect us!” Others are proud of their work and want the city to recognize it. “Come to our meetings and you’ll see how engaged and informed we all are. We are organized.” Some youth shared that it was important to meet the mayor and see him “eye to eye, face to face.” Showing up is a huge sign of respect. In times of grief (when homicides occur) or in times of celebration, the community remembers when city officials make efforts to reach out. “It’s not always all songs and dance though. We have issues; come go on a walk with us!” And this includes meeting with some regularity. “One town hall is not enough.” People want an authentic relationship with the city.

Another dominant topic from the interviews was the role of community liaisons at the city. Generally speaking, this was a popular suggestion and seemed like a reasonable way to develop relationships with the community. However, most took issue with the actual implementation of such positions. Some questioned the appointment process (versus a transparent hiring process that could include a community review panel). Some worried about qualifications and whether the individual truly has the appropriate experience, reputation, and a constituency to play the role. “You can’t appoint or hire the loudest person or the one who speaks the best. You have to really look at their set of skills and their understanding of community issues.” Or, “Maybe they are there for personal gain only.”

Others were concerned about the catch-all liaison position since it seemed to always be combined with other community outreach or departmental program work, thereby reducing the actual work with the community. “What is the job description? Does it actually include talking with community members regularly? Will they call me back?” The Public Outreach Engagement Liaison (POEL) program at the Department of Neighborhoods was mentioned as a good start because it involves many ethnic leaders as translators and interpreters reaching deep into the community for public comment. But since they focus only on specific projects, their influence is not as broad as a strategic advisor and liaison role at the city. Similarly, there were questions about the new Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) and their scope and ability to outreach into the community. One interviewee placed high value on, “OIRA coordinating amongst all the other city departments to ensure immigrant and refugees are being served and engaged.” Some interviewees wondered about the role of the Immigrant and Refugee Commission and how often they are supposed to be out in the community.

Lastly, there were several mentions of the lack of East Africans in city jobs. Some recognized Mayor Murray’s hire of the new Office of Planning and Community Development director, Ethiopian American immigrant Sam Aseffa, and a few other prominent hires. But, “all other East Africans I can count of my hand and the city staff should reflect our community.” One leader suggested working closely with the city to advertise relevant city positions and internships in the community.



## Civic Engagement and Relationship with the City Recommendations

1. Support community groups (like African Diaspora of Washington and Coalition of Immigrants, Refugees, and Communities of Color, among others) in their civic engagement activities.
2. Review the participation of East Africans in City Neighborhood Councils, District Councils, boards, and commissions, and identify areas for targeted outreach and training.
3. Support leadership efforts like Puget Sound Sage's Community Leadership Institute and the role of East African leaders in the project.
4. Promote the Seattle Votes campaign and ensure East African CBOs and leaders are participants in the process, especially those already serving potential new voters.
5. Consider annual/regular community outreach policy and calendar of events for the Mayor's Office and other officials.
6. Re-examine existing liaison roles and job descriptions. Consider broader use of East Africans as strategic advisors with skills and who have broad support of the community. Formalize the positions and responsibilities. Use community to advise on the selection process of such staff. Examine liaison models in other cities for working in diverse immigrant communities and communities of color.
7. Share the OIRA annual report, strategies, and outreach with the East African community and relevant CBOs. Share OIRA's role in coordinating efforts across city departments.
8. Promote and support the outreach efforts of the City of Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission.
9. Consider opportunities to recruit East African residents for city jobs, which may include outreach strategies, partnership with CBOs, or other ideas including those involving OIRA's ethnic media strategy.



## H. Community-Based Organizations and Community Centers

There were several thoughtful conversations about the value of trusted places like CBOs and ethnic community centers to the East African community. CBOs and community centers provide front-door support and a sense of home for the East African community. Interviewees expressed a common theme about community centers as “second homes” and how “shelter is a basic need.”

“If you help CBOs, you truly help the community. We are here and already existing.”

The struggle to keep doors literally open to the community are in some ways not unique for small organizations. Grassroots CBOs grapple with limited funding and low capacity. Community centers struggle with membership recruitment and deferred building maintenance costs. Business mod-



Ethio-Eritrean senior group of farmers funded by the Seattle Foundation Neighbor to Neighbor program in 2015.

els evolve (or don't), leadership rises and falls, and the funding environment has not adjusted to Seattle's changing demographic. Many interviewees believe this section on CBOs and community centers should be explicitly shared with funders and partners of CBOs, beyond the City of Seattle, for greater influence and potential impact.

### H1. Challenges of East African CBOs

Clearly, this report highlights the intrinsic need for East African CBOs to lead and serve the community, in partnership with entities like the City of Seattle. “We are professional, strong organizations. We can do so much more than just outreach!” While this report was not exclusively focused on nonprofit organizations, the use of CBOs as key informants necessitated this important section. Here we focus more on the challenges expressed by those CBOs to reach their goals and potential ways to mitigate those barriers. “We are an undeserved agency that serves an underserved community, and it's high time for us to speak for our rights and not to be under the shadow of the others.”

#### Funding Inequities

Funding and chasing funding disorganizes communities. Many CBO leaders talked about the com-

petitive nature of grantwriting as counterintuitive to how they work and wish there was a different way to support all necessary community programs. Others noted that funders still operate in a dominant Western culture and have not adjusted their practices or policies to work for grassroots immigrant and refugee communities. A few CBOs have experienced and appreciated when funders provided technical assistance when applying for a grant or during the brainstorming process, particularly the Seattle Foundation Neighbor to Neighbor initiative, a grassroots grantmaking program focused on increased community engagement, partnership, and policy/systems change. Others wondered if funding pools could be more equitable. An example is not forcing smaller organizations to compete against larger, more established organizations for funding. Or could there be more opportunities for multi-year and operational funding not explicitly tied to program outcomes, thereby allowing for infrastructure growth? One leader was candid in expressing his desire to co-design and communicate more often with funders.

### **Undervalued Contracting and Partnerships**

Countless stories were told of East African CBOs feeling undervalued and exploited due to inequitable funding contracts. The use of large-scale or mainstream intermediaries to “trickle down funds” was particularly egregious. Deep frustration exists when funders invest in large staff or budget organizations that seem more responsible, but don’t really know community. “Does an organization know a community just by hiring one East African when they get a grant and then firing them when the grant is over? No. We are always here.” Even larger social service agencies that serve multicultural communities were identified as exploiting the nature of grassroots groups. “Are we going to say no? Of course we won’t. Even if we aren’t paid to do the referrals, we’ll help people anyway because where else are they going to go?” Attendees shared examples of significantly smaller sub-contracts used primarily for outreach instead of more substantive strategic work or service delivery, even if that’s what ends up happening anyway. “We should just be doing these services ourselves.”

“And just because you speak our language doesn’t mean you’re well connected to the community. There are other criteria that should be used.” Sometimes groups were just expected to do work for free. This commonly happens when contacted by government agencies. The CBOs interviewed believe they need to monetize the importance of such work. And others talked bluntly about having to say, no when the partnership is not equitably resourced. “Honestly, I’m tired of the exploitation. When will the City of Seattle (and others) apply race/equity tools to how they fund nonprofit organizations?”

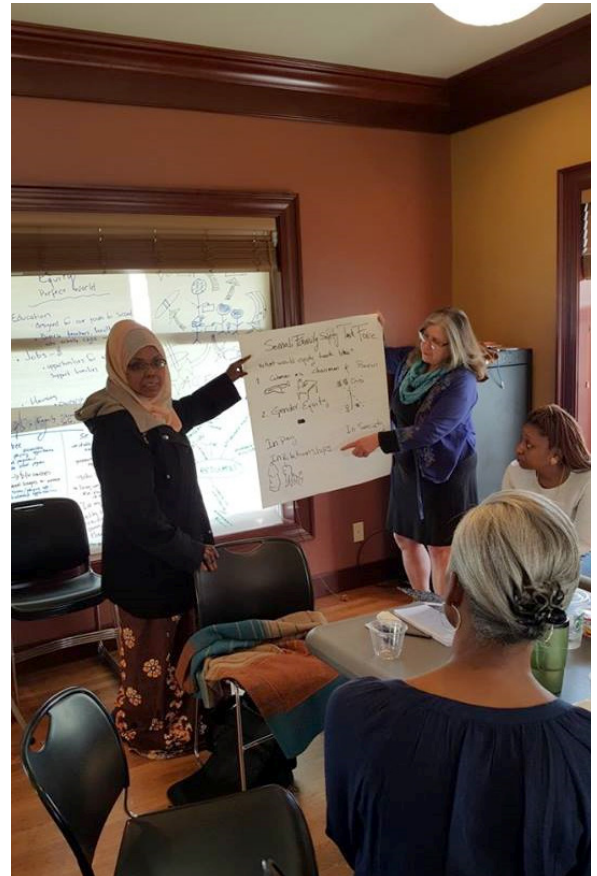
### **Partnership and Collaboration**

There is certainly an acknowledgment that the number of East African CBOs continues to increase. On one hand, this is promising and increases community capacity to serve growing needs. However, others note that this is troublesome when groups compete for the same limited funds and are inefficient because of duplicative services and waning capacity. There is a strong desire to see a CBO collaborative come together to deepen relationships and plan for the future across ethnic, language, and political boundaries. Perhaps some CBOs can focus on certain issues or in certain geographies. Or there can be shared advocacy and empowerment agendas or large scale collaborative funding efforts to secure more significant resources. Partnership may even include shared back office supports or fiscal agency responsibilities. There was varying opinion on who could make that happen. Would it make sense for the East African community to self-organize internally or would a third party neutral partner better help bring folks together? The Somali Working Group is an example of a fairly new coalition. “People on the outside always say we are so fragmented. And we want to change that narrative.”

Years ago there was an attempt at a Somali CBO state network. The Oromo Community Services of Seattle recently completed a self-assessment of how to rebuild their agency after merging three Oromo groups into one unified group. But currently no East African or African network of CBOs exists. Members of the smaller African communities particularly wish this could occur to strengthen their numbers, for example, building off the model of Mother Africa as a trusted community inter-



Photo courtesy of Oromo Community Services of Seattle.



Somali Family Safety Task Force participates in NAC's 2016 cohort.

mediary in South King County. Examples like the Youth Development Executives of King County, Minority Executive Directors Coalition, or Asian Pacific Directors Coalition of Washington may be helpful to examine. “Bringing people together is a real skill and it takes diplomacy and trust.” And partnership shouldn’t be assumed, because “it has to make sense for all parties.” But it has strong merits and roots already in the community.

### Capacity Building

Interviewees expressed a desire for increased capacity building support for CBOs. A myriad of options were named including basic trainings in running a nonprofit, content-specific workshops (like grantwriting or finance), leadership coaching, data analysis, race/equity analysis, transition planning, and increased use of volunteers/interns. There are unique circumstances in providing capacity building to immigrant and refugee CBOs. “My organization was basically run by a few family members. Their hard work is appreciated but we have to move beyond them.”

Many raised questions about sustaining and fundraising amongst membership. Trying to move beyond a community “club” to a full-fledged service-providing nonprofit is not an easy transition. And some concepts are simply foreign and have learning curves. For example, board meeting protocol (Roberts Rules, written resolutions, conflict of interest), contracting (data collection, narrative reporting, evaluation), and fundraising (raising money from a poorer constituency, raising money from mainstream individuals, online tools) aren’t familiar practices. Aligning with these comments,

a 2015 Nonprofit Assistance Center (NAC) assessment found CBOs were challenged because they:

- Work in isolation because of limited capacity to forge partnerships. This includes lack of time as well as a lack of cultural capacity among mainstream organizations to partner with communities of color.
- Have little or no paid staff; rely heavily on volunteers without a management system.
- Have a hard time building boards that are reflective of the community and that have technical skills.
- Are shut out from grant money because of budget restrictions, written English language issues, and the types of measurements requested.
- Need more recognition for the work being done, the role of volunteers, and their community knowledge and credibility.
- Particularly need help with fundraising; they survive at great personal cost.

The CBOs interviewed experienced very low or nonexistent salaries, high turnover, and are over-worked. Investing in their ability to move beyond “paycheck-to-paycheck” existence requires creativity. A few East African CBOs are or have taken advantage of unique capacity building opportunities tailored towards building relationships with communities of color in a racial justice framework. Five of the inaugural ten CBOs in Rainier Valley Corps (RVC) serve the East African community. RVC trains and places paid fellows in neighborhood CBOs. Nonprofit Assistance Center (NAC) facilitates a cohort model of peer learning and coaching. Over the last three years, five have participated here. Lastly, some groups talked about the power of investing in women and youth leadership, given historic disenfranchisement of these groups in Africa and in U.S. history as well.

## H2. Community Centers are “Cultural Anchors”

Community centers are true lifelines for the most vulnerable residents. More than just physical buildings, these places are trusted and multi-purposed. They act as visible cultural anchors rooted in diverse communities even as gentrification occurs around them. Some communities are fortunate to have benefitted from the foresight of founders to invest in property. The building that houses the Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle at Rainier and Massachusetts was purchased in 1997, built on in 2004, and was most recently renovated in 2012. The Eritrean Community in Seattle and



(Left to right) Images of various community center exteriors: Ethiopian Community in Seattle, Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle, and Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity.

Vicinity building is located at 24th and Spruce and was purchased in 1991. Lastly, the building of the Ethiopian Community at Rainier and Rose in Rainier Beach, was purchased in 2010 and is now slated for expansion. Sometimes these centers are the first places immigrants and refugees come to when they arrive into the country. SPD has dropped off people at the centers when they had nowhere else to turn. The Coroner’s Office reaches out to the centers with questions about burial rights and next of kin. Interviewees suggest that city departments can and should continue to provide outreach materials on site in these centers.



Photo of the Multicultural Center Coalition in 2014.

Their number one priority is to keep their doors open. Each of the three centers have thriving populations using their space. All have dreams of expansion and/or renovation to better serve the community. Each also participate in the multicultural community center (MCC) coalition with hopes of further developing a network of MCC spaces through southeast Seattle. (Current MCC plans now focus on a co-work space for a myriad of CBOs and nonprofit organizations anchored in Rainier Valley.) And many community members desire increased partnership with the City of Seattle. “Why can’t the city look at our centers like they do other neighborhood centers? We need support to keep these places open.” Other communities desire such spaces. Somali Community in Seattle has hoped for years to raise enough funds to purchase their own property. “I wish we could partner with Seattle schools to buy surplus property. But for now we’re ok to rent and share space with other communities.” Oromo community members recently named finding a permanent home as their highest priority.

**“Oromos have always been on the run, even in our homeland.  
Having a place to be recognized and safe is so important to us.”**

As discussed earlier, East African seniors have also expressed their desire for a center. And some CBOs talked about a center for East African youth. For example, they say Van Asselt Community Center would be an ideal location for such activities. In south King County, other African populations hope the cost of land is still affordable and plentiful enough for them to secure land. Mother Africa has dreams of a larger center for African women in Kent. It is clear there is a fundamental desire to connect culture and community with a physical place to be proud of.





## Community-Based Organizations and Community Centers Recommendations

1. City of Seattle should consider investing in or creating grassroots, innovative funding pools like the Seattle Foundation's Neighbor to Neighbor small grants program or United Way of King County's New Solutions program. These funds invest in emerging organizations and ideas, provide technical assistance, prioritize funder learning collaboration, and have explicit equity goals to deeply reach into communities of color.
2. City of Seattle should participate and encourage community/funders forums and opportunities to brainstorm and learn together. Partner with Nonprofit Assistance Center or others interested in cultivating the funder-grantee relationship in creative ways.
3. Consider funding pilots that address equity issues of small grassroots CBOs, including different categories of funding (for example, under/over \$500,000) or provision of technical assistance.
4. Understand city contracting policy on investing directly in CBOs as opposed to utilizing large intermediary organizations.
5. Re-consider "community criteria" when selecting community-serving CBOs for service contracts. Go beyond existing language capacity and consider things such as ethnic partnerships, constituency, years of service, and East African membership on staff/board.
6. Evaluate the funding pools of various city departments against the race/equity tool to understand where investments are being made.
7. Support the possibility of an East African-serving CBO summit or leadership retreat designed by community members, with the hopes of deepening partnerships and relationships. Or consider a less formal East African networking event where funders, including City of Seattle, could attend. Consider learning lessons from the experience of the Minority Executive Directors Coalition (MEDC)?
8. Review the capacity needs and support new partnership groups such as the Somali Working Group or Oromo Community Services of Seattle.
9. Continue and deepen capacity-building investments to grassroots CBOs. Provide scholarships to capacity-building training opportunities in the region. Consider formal partnerships with capacity builders such as Nonprofit Assistance Center, Wayfind, and others.
10. Conduct further research into the needs/challenges/opportunities of East African-serving CBOs in the region. Understand existing capacity building services used by East African CBOs and delve deeper into suggestions for improvement with groups like Nonprofit Assistance Center, Rainier Valley Corps, or 501 Commons.
11. Identify women and youth leadership opportunities and perhaps expand on Somali Family Safety Task Force's work and Mother Africa's work for women/girls.
12. Explore the partnership between Seattle Parks and Recreation and the existing East African community centers to understand assets and needs each space offers.
13. Convene discussion with Seattle Parks and Recreation/Van Asselt Community Center, East African CBOs that serve youth and community leaders about increased youth programming.
14. Provide community development technical assistance to community cultural anchors in their desire to thrive in place, focused on sustainability. Support the work of the Southeast Seattle Multicultural Center (MCC) Coalition and their desire to work together around a shared work space and eventual MCC.



# I. Data: Telling Our Story

This report contributes long overdue documented insight into the needs and opportunities in the East African community. We used both qualitative and existing quantitative data to paint a fuller picture of the community. But it is clear that this work is a first step towards better understanding and more thoughtful recommendations for improvement. For so long communities of color have not been in leadership when it comes to designing and collecting data.

“People from the outside always survey us. When will we be able to tell our own stories?”

Additionally, there is bias towards scientific and statistical data that requires professional training and unrealistic resources. Interviewees expressed their desire to elevate the importance of community-generated data that, in theory, leads to community-driven solutions. “The definition of data should be more broad to include information we can collect directly from our community.” From here, the data should be analyzed and respected so as to make actual change in the community, rather than “sit on a shelf and collect dust.”



Graduation ceremony. Photo courtesy of Ethiopian Community in Seattle.

## II. Data Disaggregation and Standardization

The most common complaint heard from interviewees was the lack of quality, truthful data about East Africans. As described earlier on page 9, there is typically no good way to distinguish data about Africans versus African American/blacks, let alone to distinguish among the various ethnic groups in Africa. Disaggregation is not only necessary, but it is arguably the central reason why East Africans are misunderstood and disregarded. Furthermore, the data sets available are inaccessible and difficult to navigate between data indicators, census tracts, and other variables. There also isn't a systematic way in which data is collected across data sets and different large systems.

Recent local efforts are a good start. In September 2015, Mayor Murray and city council adopted Resolution #31613 creating the Demographic Data Task Force to recommend strategies to standardize and disaggregate demographic data used by city departments in allocating resources and developing city policies, programs, and services. This legislation will spur the city to examine the limitations of its current data practices and recommend ways to disaggregate data and reform data

collection and analysis such that departments can improve its data driven policy and resource allocation decisions.

## 12. Community-Based Participatory Research and Capacity

Several interviewees discussed the concept of community-based participatory research (CBPR). This is a formal term defined as a partnership approach to research that equitably involves both community and researchers in all aspects of the research process. A basic tenet is that all partners contribute expertise and share decision making and ownership. Many CBOs themselves are the researchers. They described their years of work surveying their community pre/post strategies, conducting focus groups for more intense input, facilitating multi-disciplinary community dialogues, and fostering oral storytelling. For example, a 2012 report conducted by East African Community Services surveyed small business needs as a way of mitigating and taking the advantage of future light rail investments through business districts, along future light rail line investments. In the Rainier Beach neighborhood, the local CBO hired and trained Rainier Beach youth to survey and provide positive activities at corner hot spots in an effort to reduce crime and build community. Another example of CBPR took place in White Center, a diverse neighborhood overrun with payday lending institutions. The local CBO hired local residents to first survey the rates and terms of each of the 13 payday institutions in the community and placed all the information in an informational packet. From there, the residents took their experience and educated their communities in their native language to sway people to utilize more alternative banking services.

Finally, CBOs noted their desire to become better at data collection and analysis, especially as they look towards receiving more mainstream funding that requires certain data capacity internally. This includes resources such as database software, computer hardware, and ongoing training. Therefore, interviewees suggest that not only do we need to expand the definition of data, but we also need to train more diverse, community-based researchers.

Understandably, there were several honest discussions about the use of a non-East African researcher for this report. Several were enthusiastic about using someone with community experience and facilitation and listening skills who could be more neutral in her approach. Others countered that if “we are truly to support East African communities, we should push our boundaries and hire East Africans, who understand how to approach a project with neutrality and partnership as a goal.”

## 13. Action and Further Research Needed

The biggest doubt that interviewees shared was whether or not this particular report would result in any change. There have been other attempts at collecting community information, and many who were involved were disappointed at the lack of results. “Will this time be different?” As noted earlier in the project limitations (see page 7), it was challenging to survey interviewees on such broad topics; any one subject like housing or employment could warrant its own in-depth and more detailed set of recommendations. Similarly, focusing on specific ethnic groups likely would have led to more refined, culturally competent observations. The CBO leaders were particularly hopeful this report would be just the start to something more.



## Data: Telling Our Story

### Recommendations

1. Consider all data in this report and develop a strategy to enact or work towards positive change for the East African community.
2. Further the work of Seattle Resolution 31613 (creating a Demographic Data Task Force) and engage East African CBOs and leaders in the subsequent task force or other engagement opportunities.
3. Include a cross section of organizations and government agencies in collaborative data efforts to work towards standardizing definitions and aligning strategies for data disaggregation.
4. Examine and participate in national efforts such as PolicyLink's National Equity Atlas, a website featuring multiple datasets, to make the case for inclusive growth and equity. Equitable growth profiles in various cities can be disaggregated by nativity and ancestry.
5. Understand existing investments across city departments and among partners in community-based participatory research (CBPR), led by East African CBOs and consultants, with the potential to expand.
6. Provide technical assistance and support to smaller CBOs contracting with the city and required to track or report data.
7. Develop clear action-based deliverables on the results of this report and work collaboratively with the community.



## Past City-Initiated Research

The author did a brief review of a few recent, city-initiated research efforts. Prompted by community interviewees, the hope was to embrace the theme of this report to uplift the great work already achieved and to honor the voices of community already expressed. Though this report seems to be the first to solely focus on East Africans, prior efforts in 2006 and subsequently in 2010-12 uncover similar issues and challenges in Seattle’s larger immigrant and refugee populations.

### 2006 Recommendations “Immigrant and Refugee Community Engagement Project”

In 2006, Mayor Greg Nickel’s office commissioned a report and survey to inform a larger initiative to strengthen city services to and relationships with the many diverse immigrant and refugee communities that live within Seattle. Led by Emerging Design Consulting, questions were asked about the community’s use of city services, levels of civic engagement, ideas to support CBOs, and overall community support. The topics are still relevant today and it anecdotally led to the creation of OIRA. The author summarized the recommendations as, “a call for positive empowerment of communities” and named several examples:

- Invest in the communities’ own assets and resources for self-help.
- Engage with their internally-selected community leaders.
- Contract with formal and informal immigrant and refugee organizations to be the bridge between the original culture and the U.S. culture—in provision of outreach, education and training, and services.
- Consult with communities to give input in city services and city initiatives.
- Consult with communities to design programs and services to meet their needs.
- Treat them as contributing partners, instead of supplicants for meager funds.

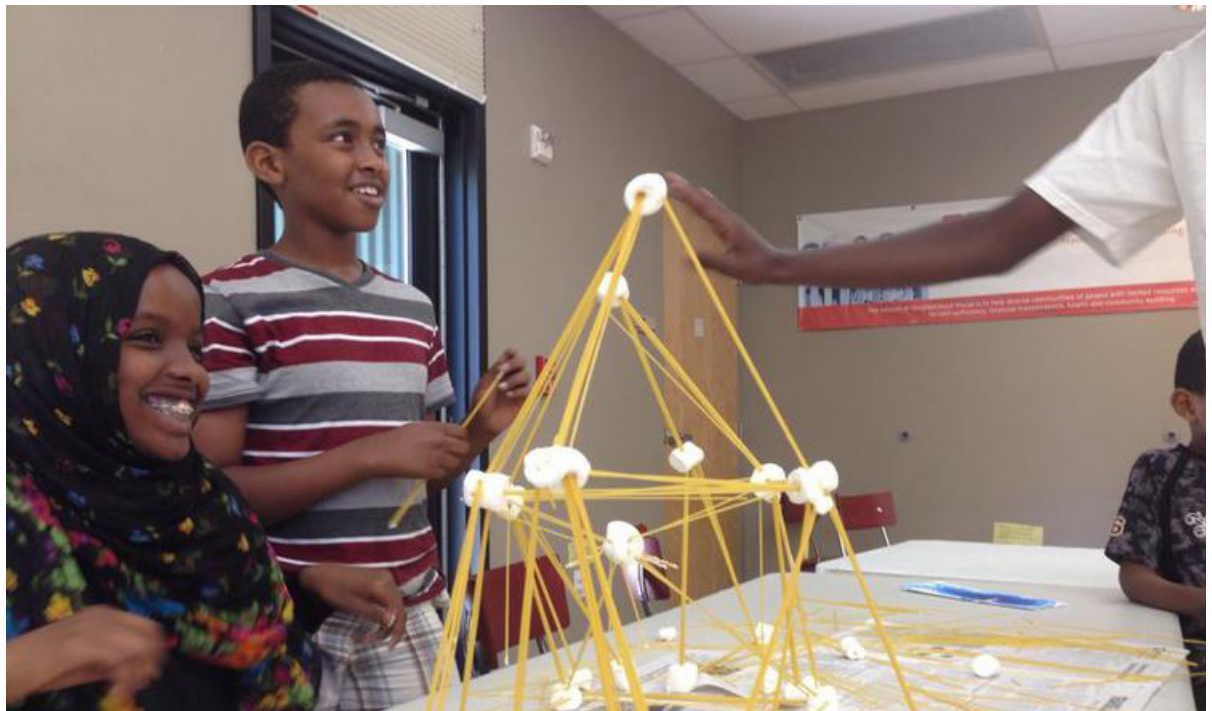


Photo courtesy of East African Community Services.

## 2007 Immigrant and Refugee (I/R) Report and Action Plan

Building off this work, the 2007 I/R Report and Action Plan was developed as a launch to the Immigrant and Refugee Initiative. It also explicitly connected with the Race and Social Justice Initiative and relied on the leadership of various city departments and staff. It was intended to bring greater clarity to city departments by using a common, strategic approach and reporting mechanism. After further input from the community and an analysis of current city initiatives, this report highlighted five major themes and laid out subsequent current city efforts and short/long term action steps. A summary is provided below:

Theme	Issue	Existing City Efforts
Access to Services and Information	Many I/R do not know about city programs and/or how they can access them. City communication and outreach efforts are inconsistent and uncoordinated among departments.	The city's language web portal indexes departments' documents translated into 26 languages. In 2006, the city re-vamped its Employee Language Bank to improve departments' access to in-house interpretation services.

### Actions

Implement new citywide translation and interpretation policy; establish the newly named Customer Service Bureau as an initial point of contact; develop new and/or refine existing communications and outreach strategies with I/R communities; address needs of I/R as part of its emergency preparedness efforts.

Protection of Civil Rights	Too many I/R have limited knowledge or information about U.S. laws and customs, including their legal and civil rights. Many also lack access to affordable legal services.	The mayor and city council support comprehensive, humane immigration reform. The city has ensured the rights of I/R to access city services by prohibiting city staff, including the SPD, from asking about immigration status and accepting other forms of identification, e.g., Mexican ID cards.
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### Actions

The city will collaborate with community partners to produce a "U.S. Laws and Customs 101" course for I/Rs. The mayor will continue to advocate for comprehensive and humane immigration reform, as well as for state and federal funding to provide affordable legal aid.

Civic Engagement	I/R communities have few opportunities to engage with city staff and elected officials.	Some city departments maintain active advisory bodies composed of I/Rs.
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### Actions

The city will establish an I/R advisory board to advise the mayor and city council on relevant issues. The city, through the Mayor's Office, also will enhance its outreach with I/R communities.

Theme	Issue	Existing City Efforts
Workforce and Economic Development	In order to successfully enter and succeed in the workforce, I/R need to learn English necessary for employment, gaining citizenship, and accessing resources. People also need improved educational and training opportunities.	A number of city programs support English language and computer classes and job-readiness training and services. Economic development initiatives offer resources to many immigrant-owned businesses.

**Actions**

The city will work with community partners to increase vocational English, computer, and citizenship classes, as appropriate. The city will also provide more in-depth technical assistance to immigrant-owned businesses.

Service Delivery	Many types of agencies exist in Seattle to serve I/R communities, including smaller, emergent immigrant-run agencies. At times, several of these smaller agencies, many with very limited capacity, serve the same relatively small community. Additionally, some I/Rs find mainstream non-immigrant led agencies non-responsive to their cultural need.	The city provides direct services to assist I/Rs in the areas of nutrition, senior services, and youth programs; funds many types of agencies serving I/Rs; and funds technical assistance for small, emergent, immigrant-led agencies.
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**Actions**

The city will make it easier for small I/R-run community-based organizations to apply for service funding, and will work more closely with these organizations to meet their communities’ needs. The city will work with East African communities to assess community needs and strengthen their capacity to address these needs.

With these themes and action steps developed, succeeding documents were created to track progress in these areas: Phase I 2007-2009 action plan and the Phase 2 2010-2012 action plan. Later, OIRA was established in 2012, and from that point the pace of this work picked up and became more fully integrated into the regular operations of the City of Seattle.

A first look at these past reports reveal that these are similar issues experienced by East African communities today in 2016. This report provides further details into the cultural and historical context of the East African experience, as well as a more comprehensive look at issues beyond the five listed above. These past reports serve as reminders of the foundation from which this report and future initiatives are built upon. It’s imperative there is accountability and forward progress as current next steps are laid out.



## Next Steps

Copies of this report will be made available to all the CBOs and community participants involved for their use and future reference. The City of Seattle looks forward to reviewing the results and recommendations internally across the different departments. Their desire is to create an action plan from this report that will be shared with the broader community.





# Appendix A: List of Interviewees and their Organization Affiliations

<b>Individual</b>	<b>Organization(s)</b>
Bilal Abdallah	Somali Bantu Association of Washington
Fahmo Abdulle	Horn of Africa Services
Hamdi Abdulle	Somali Youth and Family Club
Ethiopia Alemneh	Ethiopian Community in Seattle
Dr. Ahmed Ali	Somali Health Board, Somali Working Group
Saida Alim	East African Community Services
Isaac Araya	Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle
Mergitu Argo	Oromo Community Services of Seattle
Sahra Fahra	Somali Community Services of Seattle, Somali Working Group
Habiba Golicha	Oromo Community Services of Seattle
Ubox Gardheere	Somali Working Group
Yemane Gebremicael	African Diaspora of Washington, Horn of Africa Services
Tsegaye Gebru	Horn of Africa Services
Mekdese Gessesse	Horn of Africa Services
Peter Gishuru	African Chamber of Commerce
Abdullahi Jama	Community Leader
Faisal Jama	East African Community Services, Somali Working Group
Ahmed Jamal	South Seattle College
Patrick Joseph	South Sudanese Kuku Association of North America
Haileselassie Kidane	Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity
Haregu Kidane	Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle
Farhiya Mohamed	Somali Family Safety Task Force, Somali Working Group
ZamZam Mohamed	Voices of Tomorrow, Somali Working Group
Michael Neguse	Community Leader
Senayet Negusse	Community Leader
Natalie Neville	Horn of Africa Services
Rahmo Rashid	East African Community Services
Mulu Retta	Ethiopian Community in Seattle
Rizwi Rizwan	Muslim Housing Services
Risho Sapano	Mother Africa
Sara Teklesembet	Horn of Africa Services
Meseret Tesfaye	African Chamber of Commerce
Issa Ulo	Oromo Community Services of Seattle
Hassan Wardere	Horn of Africa Services, Companion Athletics
Nourah Yonus	East African Community Services
Various Members (15)	Ethio-Eritrean Senior Group



## Appendix B: Focus Group Participants

Group	Attendees
East African small businesses	Abrham Abrha, Kay Kayougo, Al Muanda, Behilu Toedo, Wube Woyku, Hanna Asfau, Mary Mitchell, Belete Shiferaw, Hanna Petros, Nuria Agraw, Mustafa Getahun, Omara Benjamin Abe, Matheas Teshome, Peter Gishuru, Meseret Tesfaye
East African youth	Warda Ahmed, Shihab Ahmed, Issa Abdulkadir, Latifa Suleyman, Zuhur Muhumed, Mohamed Dahir, Sadad Yogol, Abdullahi Jama, Hamza Ali, Gada Ahmed, Taha Robele, Fatuma Meshalla, Hassen Haris, Ailaf Ali, Tigist Ferhiwot, Haregoin Peterson
Eritrean community members	Haregu Kidane, Isaac Araya, Solomon Berhane, Haile Tekle, Gebrehiwet Tesfu, Yonatan Berhane
Ethiopian community seniors	A mix of 15 senior citizens involved in Ethiopian Community in Seattle's senior programs
Oromo community members	Habiba Golicha, Mergitu Argo, Issa Ulo, Ahmed Layina
Somali child-care providers	Ubah Gow, Faiza Shine, Siki Kiljao, Sahra Moalin, Sahra Cosire, Noasra Mohamey, ZamZam Mohamed, Zenicila Mohamed, Bahsan Ibrahim
Somali community members	Khadra Mohamed, Fadumo Mohamed, Sharifo Mahamedantee, Habiba Abdi, Almed Hassan Ali, Nur Hassen Aden, Faduma Ermi, Fadumo Muhamud, Amina Mohamed, Abubakar Mohamed, Sahra Fahra, Fardousa Elmi
Somali Family Safety Task Force Girls Group	Yasmin Ehmlı, Elaam Idris, Sahmis Zaid, Sofiya Idris, Maryam Ali, Salwa Ali, Fadumo Hassan, Naima Osman, Muna Hassan, Hanni Hassan, Zawia Mohamed, Adiam Nuguse, Ibtisam Zaid



# Appendix C: Community-Based Organizations Serving East Africans

This alphabetical list was compiled with information gathered from OIRA/City of Seattle, Ethno-Med, websites of local CBOs, and basic internet searches. It is not comprehensive, nor have all the contacts and websites been verified for its current status.

Group	Mission/Vision	Contact
<b>Abu-Bakr Islamic Center</b>	Our vision is to make Abu Bakr Islamic Center of Washington an incredible facility that can cater to the needs of our members and the area at large.	Abdirazak Goni abubakardirector@gmail.com  14101 Tukwila International Boulevard Tukwila, WA 98186  abubakrslamiccenter.com
<b>African Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest</b>	The mission of ACCPNW is to promote an environment of direct trade and business prosperity between Africa and the Northwest United States. ACCPNW provides also free business seminars to local minority business owners. The training courses range from the process of starting and sustaining a business to the techniques of effective business development.	Peter Gishuru CEO peter.gishuru@commerce.wa.gov  2001 6th Avenue Suite 2600 Seattle, WA 98121 (206) 256-6139
<b>African Diaspora of Washington</b>	ADWA is an organization whose vision is to support the equitable development and inclusion of African immigrants/ refugees and African-based community organizations in the State of Washington by helping them to develop a united and articulate voice. ADWA achieves this goal by advocating on their behalf and assisting them to improve both their internal capacities and the qualities of their services. The goal of ADWA is to bring about great civic engagement and discourse in the African communities that have traditionally shied away from these forms of political involvement.	Yemane Gebremicael (253) 261-4670 yemanegm2@gmail.com
<b>Al Kariim Islamic Center</b>		Ali Ayoub ali@tracassoc.com  5511 Martin Luther King Jr Way S Seattle, WA 98118
<b>Al Nur Islamic Center</b>		Sheik Yussuf Gacal  6727 Martin Luther King Jr Way S Seattle, WA 98118
<b>Berhane Hiwot Eritrean Church Seattle</b>		10510 Stone Avenue N Seattle, WA 98133 (206) 297-0580

<b>Companion Athletics</b>	Creating athletic programs that encourage solidarity and instilling values that help U.S. understand how we're all inextricably connected.	companionathletics2014@gmail.com companionathletics.com facebook.com/CompanionAthletic
<b>Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR) - Washington</b>	The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a grassroots civil rights and advocacy group. CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties organization, with regional offices nationwide. CAIR's mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.	Arsalan Bukhari Executive Director (206) 367-4081 cairseattle.org
<b>Debre Genet Kisdist Sellasie Eritrean Orthodox Church</b>		2401 E Spruce Street Seattle, WA 98122
<b>East African Community Services</b>	The mission of East African Community Services (EACS) is to provide culturally responsive K-12 education programs that keep our youth safe and help them succeed in school and life.	Faisal Jama Executive Director 7054 32nd Avenue S Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 721-1119 eastafriancs.org
<b>Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle</b>	The Eritrean Association of Greater Seattle is the primary service and support organization for over 1,000 Eritreans. We are committed to addressing the basic needs and maintaining the cultural values of Eritreans and other African refugees and immigrants in need.	Isaac Araya Board President iaaraya@yahoo.com 1528 Valentine Place S Seattle, WA 98144 (206) 568-1264 eritreanassoc@comcast.net
<b>Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity</b>	The mission of the Eritrean Community in Seattle and Vicinity is to promote, through its members, the social, economic, educational, and cultural interests of Eritrean refugees in Seattle while conserving and passing on the Eritrean culture and tradition to the children. Volunteerism, members' participation, and involvement are the backbone of achieving our goals.	Abraham Geysus Board President Abrahamg_98@yahoo.com 2402 E Spruce Street Seattle, WA 98122 (206) 323-1154 info@ericommunity.com ericommunity.com
<b>Eritrean Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Seattle</b>		12509 27th Avenue NE Seattle, WA 98125 (206) 363-0110
<b>Eritrean Kidist Selassie Orthodox Tewahedo Church and HOPE Eritrean Social Services</b>	Hope – Eritrean Social Services has been active in the greater Seattle community for five years. This nonprofit organization provides various services including after-school tutoring for K-12 students; Tigrinya language, educational, and cultural classes; and other community services. Volunteers are vital to help the children of this first-generation immigrant community.	Tsegay Berhae (425) 503-5208 segalweb@aol.com 12327 15th Avenue NE Seattle, WA 98125 (206) 351-4684 nigssu@yahoo.com

<b>Ethio-Eritrean Senior Group</b>	This group includes Oromo, Amharic, and Tigrinya speakers. Our mission is to bring unity and harmony among East African and mainstream communities.	Michael Neguse michael@sngi.org
<b>Ethiopian Community in Seattle</b>	ECS's mission is to facilitate a seamless integration of all persons of Ethiopian origin with mainstream United States. Additionally, ECS aims to contribute to the social, cultural, and civic life of the Puget Sound area as well as assisting Ethiopians and Ethiopian Americans to preserve and share their ancient and rich cultural heritage.	Ethiopia Alemneh Community Center Director (206) 788-7576 Ethiopy2000@hotmail.com  8323 Rainier Avenue S Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 325-0304  ecseattle.org
<b>Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Seattle: Medhane-Alem</b>	Our mission is to guide people of all backgrounds into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.	8445 Rainier Avenue S Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 720-0181  medhanealemseattle.com
<b>Future Foundation International</b>	The mission is to empower and engage East African cultural communities by teaching the best practices in health, education, and environmental sustainability in order to eradicate underdevelopment.	Mohamed Saireh Director  23501 62nd Avenue S B102 Kent, WA 98022 (206) 334-1715  worldpeaceeducation.com/ futurefoundationinternational  Fiscally sponsored by Somali Community Services of Seattle
<b>Hope Academy Enrichment Center</b>	Hope Academic Enrichment Center (HAEC) provides a comprehensive supplemental education program that collaborates with Seattle Schools and Highline Schools and parents communities to help students cross the threshold of academic success. HAEC since its inception in 2004, has been involved in the academic enhancement of East African communities in the Puget Sound Region, specifically in White Center, Southwest, and Southeast Seattle neighborhoods.	Abdulkadir Jama ibnadam001@yahoo.com  9421 18th Avenue SW Seattle, WA 98106  hopeacademic.org
<b>Horn of Africa Services</b>	The mission of HOAS is to offer multi-lingual and multicultural assistance to East African immigrants and refugees in support of immediate and long term adjustment needs. This includes empowering individuals and families through education, advocacy, referrals, and holistic support to improve the overall quality of life of East African immigrants and refugees in Seattle, Washington.	Tsegaye Gebru Executive Director tsegayeg@hoas.org (206) 760-5071  4714 Rainier Avenue South, Suite 105 Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 760-0550

<p><b>Kenyan Community Interdenominational Church</b></p>	<p>To actively and joyfully pursue God's perfect will in our lives by preaching faith, hope, and love to all who believe in Him. We're committed to also serving and showing love to nonbelievers and to encourage them to seek refuge in Jesus Christ. We proclaim faith through deeds, which are based on the call to be our brothers' keepers.</p>	<p>Pastor Charity Kisanga  18635 8th Avenue S Seattle, WA 98148 (206) 852-2024 info@kencomchurch.org  kencomchurch.orgindex.asp</p>
<p><b>Mother Africa</b></p>	<p>The mission of Mother Africa is to assist African refugee and immigrant women and their children to reach their highest potential. We are committed to building leadership, advocacy, and community action capacity to reduce barriers to health, education, safety, and economic independence while fostering an empowering environment that celebrates cultural diversity, families, and socio-economic growth.</p>	<p>Risho Sapano Executive Director  1209 Central Avenue S Suite # 208 Kent, WA 98032 (253) 249-8811 risho@motherafrica.org  motherafrica.org</p>
<p><b>Multimedia Resources and Training Institute</b></p>	<p>MMRTI was conceived in 2004 from a multimedia project sponsored by the Ethiopian Community Mutual Association. Then by combining with the Ethio Youth Media (EYM) TV program in 2006, it expanded its service to the larger immigrant youth community reflecting activities and issues that affect young people most. EYM is now continuing its programming and values by teaching young people how to broadcast on TV and become future community leaders. The Ethio Youth Media TV is aired every week on Sunday from 7:00pm- 8:00pm, Wednesday from 5:00pm-6:00pm, and Tuesday 4:00am-5:00am on SCAN Cable 77/21.</p>	<p>Assaya Abunie Executive Director (206) 838-6359 assayea@msn.com  2301 S Jackson Street Suite #103 Seattle, WA 98144 (206) 696-1381</p>
<p><b>Muslim Housing Association</b></p>	<p>Since 1999, Muslim Housing Services (MHS) has served Seattle and King County homeless families who are primarily refugees and second migration immigrants from East Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and other parts of Africa. Located in Southeast Seattle/ Rainier Valley, Muslim Housing Service's eligible clients receive extensive case management to help them overcome cultural, linguistic, social, financial, health, employment, educational, and system barriers to attain self-sufficiency and achieve permanent housing.</p>	<p>Riz Rizwan Executive Director rizwan.rizwi@muslim-housing.org  6727 Rainier Avenue S Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 723-1712</p>
<p><b>Northwest Kenyan Association</b></p>	<p>To promote community development and cultural heritage. To mentor the youth and support the families with pertinent information and resources available.</p>	<p>5302 11th Street SW Lakewood, WA 98498</p>

<b>Oromo Community Services of Seattle</b>	Goals are to: Provide social services such as education; Respect human rights and justice within the meaning of 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service; Foster unity and equity in access to assistance for Oromo immigrants and refugees in the greater Seattle area; Serves all residents regardless of culture, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic class, religion, language, gender; Help to minimize disparities in educational, welfare, and economic outcomes for diverse adult and youth populations; Help to adjust into the mainstream culture of United States of America.	Umar Ushe Chair (206) 228-7695  Fiscally sponsored by Horn of Africa Services
<b>Oromo Cultural Center</b>	Oromo Cultural Center is to encourage education, cultural development, and social integration among the Seattle Oromo population. The OCC aids refugees in overcoming social, cultural, and economic problems by providing classes, referrals to helpful agencies, and resources for both adults and children.	8819 Renton Ave S Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 709-8888  oromoccc.org
<b>Raja for Africa</b>	Raja for Africa is a nonprofit grassroots organizing agency rooted in building community of color for action.	Nuradin Ali  1221 South Main Street Suite 205 Seattle, WA 98144  facebook.com/RajaForAfrica/
<b>Roots of South Sudan</b>	ROOTS of South Sudan is a 501(c)(3) founded in 2011 to empower South Sudanese women and youth through the preservation of traditional Sudanese arts and crafts.	PO Box 561 Issaquah, WA 98027-0021 (425) 557-0725  rootsofsouthsudan.org
<b>Runta-NW Somali News</b>	This website is an online version of Runta Somali News Magazine which has been in print since 1995. We mainly cover stories that concern the Somalis wherever they are, but also cover stories that interests Muslims and Africans. It is based in Seattle, Washington. The paper is bilingual Somali and English, and it is published bi-weekly.	Mohamud Yussuf Publisher  runtanews.com
<b>Somali American Parent Association</b>	To strengthen the capacity of Somalis, Middle Eastern, and other East Africans to become contributing members of society. Our organization priorities: 1) Helping community to understand and be successful at navigating the system, both public and private, 2) Improving community health and wellbeing, 3) Helping families, children, and youths to be successful, 4) Reducing language barriers and increasing literacy.	Abdirahman Derie Executive Director (206) 354-4881  10610 Kent Kangley Road Suite 201 Kent, WA 98030 sapacommunity@gmail.com  Fiscally sponsored by Kurdish Human Rights Watch
<b>Somali Bantu Association of Washington</b>	The purpose of this organization is to enhance and improve the wellbeing and quality of life of the Somali Bantu families and individuals in the State of Washington, while maintaining the cultural heritage of the Bantu community.	Mohamed Kerrow mokerrow@yahoo.com  1209 Central Ave S #122 Kent, WA 98032 (206) 420-9814

<b>Somali Community Services Coalition</b>	The sole mission of the SCSC is to further the common welfare and wellbeing of the Somali community in the State of Washington and also to promote and instill in them the American ideals that will help them and result in their eventual successful settlement in the U.S.	15027 Military Road S Suites 2-3 SeaTac, WA 98188
<b>Somali Community Services of Seattle</b>	Our mission is to work for the success of refugees to undergo a smooth transitional process and attain self-sustainable status in their new country. We do that by focusing on community-based efforts including education, awareness, and safety. We want to make a difference.	Sahra Fahra Executive Director (206) 760-1181 somcss@yahoo.com  8810 Renton Avenue S Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 422-7074
<b>Somali Family Safety Task Force</b>	The mission of the Somali Family Safety Task Force (d.b.a. Somali Task Force) is to create a culturally appropriate environment where Somali families in Washington State can share experiences and work together to empower each other and to advocate for the needs of their community.	Farhiya Mohamed Executive Director (206) 498-4518 Farhiya79@hotmail.com farhiya@sfstf.org  somalifamilysafetytaskforce.org  facebook.com/Somali-Family-Safety-Taskforce-843164342390407/
<b>Somali Health Board</b>	The Somali Health Board's mission is to reduce health disparities of the Somali immigrants and refugees and to and improve health outcomes within the communities by: Advocating for and ensuring culturally/religiously appropriate and relevant policies and services within the health systems; Developing and implementing meaningful partnership with the health systems; Developing mutual education for providers and community leaders.	Ahmed Ali Executive Director  7050 32nd Avenue S #104 Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 721-1119 somalhealthboard@gmail.com  somalhealthboard.org
<b>Somali Reconciliation Institute</b>	The Somali Reconciliation Institute envisions the Somali community healing and reconciling through Islamic and traditional forms of trauma healing therapy.	15221 International Boulevard S SeaTac, WA 98188  somalireconciliation.org
<b>Somali Working Group</b>	The mission of the Somali Working Group is to promote economic prosperity for Somalis in King County in 3 ways: 1) by carrying out an advocacy and organizing campaign, 2) through education and 3) through policy and systems change.	Ahmed Ali Member  ahmed.abdille@gmail.com
<b>Somali Youth and Family Club</b>	We are dedicated to providing essential services to Somali and other underserved families and youth in King County.	Hamdi Abdulle Executive Director hamdi@southclub.org  19550 International Boulevard Suite 106 SeaTac, WA 98188 (206) 779-0138  southclub.org



<p><b>SomTV-Seattle</b></p>	<p>SomTV-Seattle is a television program dedicated to inspiring and educating the Somali community through news, information, and entertainment programming. Our mission is to provide community oriented, insightful, and culturally significant programming to our local, national, and global viewers.</p>	<p>somtv.org</p>
<p><b>South Sudanese Kuku Association of North America</b></p>	<p>SSKANA's mission is to promote education of children and empower women in the community, to preserve the environment and our rich cultural heritage with mainstream American society to ensure all Kuku members residing in both North America and Kajo-Keji are actively involved and share mutual respect.</p>	<p>Patrick Joseph Board President Lokiden@hotmail.com</p> <p>Kent, WA sskanainc@gmail.com</p> <p>sskana.org</p>
<p><b>Sudanese Community Church of Washington</b></p>	<p>The Sudanese Community Church of Washington is a non-denominational Church. This Church is founded by the Southern Sudanese Community, who calls Washington State their home. They are the refugees from Southern Sudan. The purpose of this church is to worship God and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to unite the Sudanese community and believers, in spiritual fellowship and be an effective fellowship of the concerned, lovingly sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>(at St. Columba's Episcopal Church) 26715 Military Road S Kent, WA 98032 (253) 202-3965</p> <p>sccofwashington.com/default.asp?sec_id=180001189</p>
<p><b>Voices of Tomorrow</b></p>	<p>Voices of Tomorrow was founded by East African Professionals that came together to achieve one goal: "Helping today's children for better tomorrow." These professionals are working towards eliminating the inequity that exist in the early learning systems which deeply affect our children's academic performances. They work closely with community partners in the early childhood field to eradicate the disparities that exist among the East African children. These professionals are committed to increase the quality standard of East African early childhood education programs and also support the professional development of the practitioners in the community.</p>	<p>Zam Zam Mohamed CEO (206) 335-8817 zmohamed@tomorrowvoices.org</p> <p>9421 8th Avenue SW Seattle, WA 98106 (206) 370-0489</p> <p>tomorrowvoices.org</p>



# Appendix D: Top Issues

## Top Issues Ranked (Total)

Using cards featuring symbols for nine common issues, many focus group members were asked to rank the top three issues for them and their community. The following is a culmination of their votes. Not surprisingly, the top issues raised were also the themes discussed through this report.

Rank	Issue	Votes
1	Housing/Homelessness	30
2	Education/Schools	28
3	Racial Equity/Community	26
4	Jobs	25
5	Public Safety/Violence	23
6	Health/Wellness	17
7	Arts/Culture	11
8	Environment/Climate Justice	9
9	Other: Maintain Community Centers	9



# Appendix E: Sample Questions

These questions served as guidelines for the conversations and were often altered and shortened based on the direction of the group.

## Family, Culture, and Community (Select 2 below as conversation flows)

- How did you/your family first arrive in Seattle?
- What cultures and traditions from your home do you carry on now here in the U.S.? (Do you feel supported in your ability to do so?)
- What role do seniors/elders play in your community? What role do youth play in your community?
- What are your hopes and dreams for yourself, your family, your children? How are you doing?
- What are the barriers to achieving these dreams?

## Living in Seattle and Housing

- Do you enjoy living in the city? Do you see yourself living in Seattle into the future? Why or why not?
- Is housing affordability a challenge for your family? Why? Any suggestions for improvement?
- Are you interested in owning your own home? If so, what challenges do you face in doing so?

## Prosperity and Advancement

- What kind of training or support do you need to advance your job or career?
- Are you satisfied with your children’s education (early learning, preschool, K-12, post)? Why or why not?
- What is your experience with afterschool programs? Suggestions for improvements?

## Relationships with Others

- What does the term “East African” mean to you? Can you talk about the East African community in Seattle? Is there opportunity to meet and interact with others from the East African community?
- We’ve heard that the generation gap between immigrants/refugees and their children is sometimes difficult. Can you describe your experience?
- We understand youth violence is a huge issue in the community. Can you talk about how violence has affected your community? What kind of relationship do you have with the Seattle Police Department?
- Have you experienced racism or discrimination because of your appearance or religion? What about your community do others misunderstand about you?

## Working with the City of Seattle

- What do you want the mayor and the city to understand and know about your community?
- How can the city help you and your community achieve your hopes and dreams? (Think about not just access to money, but also about resources, partnerships, leveraging city power.)



## Appendix F: Community Research Best Practices, Balahadia Consultation

Driven by my experience working in multicultural communities, I utilized numerous best practices and methods to conduct the research for this report. Below is a list of the strategies employed:

1. Community-based organizations (CBOs) were heavily relied upon to provide insight, connections, and recruit/translate/host the focus groups. Not being East African myself, I had to rely upon their trusting relationships to find individuals willing to participate.
2. Research generated from within the community was integrated and sourced. I wanted to uplift and showcase great work already gathered by the community in this report.
3. A small community advisory panel helped to co-design and advise me. Time commitments were made clear and small stipends were offered for their time.
4. A small inter-departmental city team advised the author as to the kinds of questions they were interested in asking the community. This pre-work helped to ensure my “clients” at the city also were heard.
5. Diverse viewpoints were actively sought after to ensure more accurate assumptions and recommendations: age, generation, gender, nationality, ethnicity, language, socio-economic. I interviewed both established and emerging East African community leaders.
6. Introductions to those leaders were respectfully made by existing East African leaders with trusted relationships to those individuals.
7. Host organizations were compensated for their time in planning and recruiting for the focus groups. Participants also received small incentives for their time as well. Child care, translation, and food (of the host group’s choice/discretion) were standard.
8. Focus groups and interviews occurred and were designed in locations, times, and, in some cases, as part of larger gatherings, to make for the most comfortable sharing conditions. For example, I conducted an interview after a senior exercise class and traditional Ethiopian lunch was served in a cafeteria-style setting. Friday nights and weekend mornings were common times that community gathered and could meet. And I met with the Oromo community in several venues and different attempts to capture a community that was disorganized due to international crisis.
9. Information was collected in various ways: verbally in conversation, written in survey form, and visually using simple cue cards.
10. Survey questions were designed to be general guidelines. Adjustments were made to the questions asked during the focus group, in order to follow the interests of the group and ensure participant-driven discussion and conversation.
11. Participants were ensured of their general anonymity as comments in the report were not directly attributable. This helped to encourage honest reflections.
12. Participants were given opportunity to comment in-person and electronically on initial drafts/findings prior to the completion of the final report to ensure their thoughts were reflected correctly and nothing glaring was omitted. Much time was spent here in drafting and editing.



# Appendix G: Notes

- <sup>1</sup> [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web\\_informational/dpdd016861.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/dpdd016861.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/data/a-spike-in-king-county-foreign-born-populations/>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/what-king-countys-refugee-populations-look-like-interactive-map/>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://sites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=qualitative&pageid=icb.page340906>
- <sup>5</sup> OIRA draft analysis
- <sup>6</sup> Includes the languages identified at Seattle Public Schools: Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya, Amharic, Dinka, Nuer
- <sup>7</sup> According to an outdated SHA website fact, at the end of Dec 2008, 6879 people were on waiting lists.
- <sup>8</sup> <http://www.seattlehousing.org/about/pdf/SHAFactsheet.pdf>
- <sup>9</sup> <http://murray.seattle.gov/mayor-murray-councilmember-sawant-unveil-tenant-protection-bill/#sthash.eY9Nw1WB.dpbs>
- <sup>10</sup> [https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_543/File/Migration/Departments/Enrollment%20Planning%20-%20Demographics/SPED\\_Health\\_Inequality\\_Report\\_V3\(1\).pdf](https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/Migration/Departments/Enrollment%20Planning%20-%20Demographics/SPED_Health_Inequality_Report_V3(1).pdf)
- <sup>11</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/business/real-estate/king-county-home-prices-hit-a-new-high/>
- <sup>12</sup> <http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/blog/2015/07/how-more-observant-muslims-can-buy-homes-and-why.html?ana=tw>
- <sup>13</sup> On June 6, 2016, the Seattle City Council unanimously passed the bill.
- <sup>14</sup> <http://ethnicbusinesscoalition.org/facts-figures/>
- <sup>15</sup> <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2016/03/11/entrepreneurial-dream-sidetracked-changing-central-district/48555>
- <sup>16</sup> <http://www.wkkf.org/what-we-do/featured-work/rebuilding-new-mexicos-economy-through-entrepreneurs>
- <sup>17</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/15/technology/seattle-clears-the-way-for-uber-drivers-to-form-a-union.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/15/technology/seattle-clears-the-way-for-uber-drivers-to-form-a-union.html?_r=0)
- <sup>18</sup> <http://www.seattle.gov/iandraffairs/RTW>
- <sup>19</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/custodians-say-pay-raise-denied-based-on-english-test/>
- <sup>20</sup> [https://www.weareoneamerica.org/sites/weareoneamerica.org/files/OA.BrainWaste.final\\_.pdf](https://www.weareoneamerica.org/sites/weareoneamerica.org/files/OA.BrainWaste.final_.pdf)
- <sup>21</sup> <http://murray.seattle.gov/mayor-council-celebrate-seattles-new-priority-hire-ordinance/#sthash.OY3dK7O8.dpbs>
- <sup>22</sup> Information from Carmen Best, SPD
- <sup>23</sup> <http://www.adcminnesota.org/>
- <sup>24</sup> <http://accionnews.org/newmexico/>
- <sup>25</sup> <https://southseattleemerald.com/2015/11/02/resource-fair-tackles-unique-needs-of-east-african-business-community/>
- <sup>26</sup> [https://www.weareoneamerica.org/sites/weareoneamerica.org/files/OA.BrainWaste.final\\_.pdf](https://www.weareoneamerica.org/sites/weareoneamerica.org/files/OA.BrainWaste.final_.pdf)
- <sup>27</sup> <https://welcomeback.highline.edu/>
- <sup>28</sup> <http://legacy.king5.com/story/news/local/seattle/2015/08/14/east-african-homicides-seattle-police-chief-kathleen-otoole/31744071/>
- <sup>29</sup> <http://features.crosscut.com/who-killed-donnie-chin>
- <sup>30</sup> The juvenile court Diversion process in King County provides a pathway for youth with first time or low level offenses to avoid formal court processing and connect to community services.
- <sup>31</sup> The Community Assisted Diversion Initiative (CADI) with Horn of Africa Services Report
- <sup>32</sup> <http://features.crosscut.com/the-hard-fall-of-a-community-hero>
- <sup>33</sup> <http://citiesunited.org/>
- <sup>34</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/my-brothers-keeper>
- <sup>35</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/no-diploma-no-job-a-team-of-educators-outreach-workers-and-one-former-nfl-player-want-to-help/>
- <sup>36</sup> <http://reopp.org/>
- <sup>37</sup> <http://www.businessinsider.com/students-accepted-to-all-8-ivy-league-schools-have-one-specific-thing-in-common-2015-4>
- <sup>38</sup> [file:///C:/Users/a\\_bal/Downloads/Road-Map-Project-2015-Results-Report.pdf](file:///C:/Users/a_bal/Downloads/Road-Map-Project-2015-Results-Report.pdf)
- <sup>39</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/education/education-summit-highlights-disparities-in-student-achievement/>
- <sup>40</sup> Road Map Project annual dashboard
- <sup>41</sup> [file:///C:/Users/a\\_bal/Downloads/Road-Map-Project-2015-Results-Report.pdf](file:///C:/Users/a_bal/Downloads/Road-Map-Project-2015-Results-Report.pdf)
- <sup>42</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/education/immigrant-parents-say-language-gap-hampers-their-involvement-in-kids-education/>
- <sup>43</sup> [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/academic-engagement-newly-arriving-somali-bantu-students-us-elementary-school](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/academic-engagement-newly-arriving-somali-bantu-students-us-elementary-school)
- <sup>44</sup> Halal is any object or an action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to Islamic law. The term covers and designates not only food and drink, but also all matters of daily life.
- <sup>45</sup> Hijab is a veil that covers the head and chest, which is worn by some Muslim women.
- <sup>46</sup> [http://o.seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/education/2028661108\\_educationsummit.xml.html](http://o.seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/education/2028661108_educationsummit.xml.html)
- <sup>47</sup> [https://seattleschools.org/families\\_communities\\_committees/african\\_american\\_male\\_scholars/](https://seattleschools.org/families_communities_committees/african_american_male_scholars/)
- <sup>48</sup> [https://seattleschools.org/families\\_communities\\_committees/african\\_american\\_male\\_scholars/](https://seattleschools.org/families_communities_committees/african_american_male_scholars/)
- <sup>49</sup> <http://mnsapa.org/index.html>
- <sup>50</sup> <http://tomorrowvoices.org/somali-peace-circle/>
- <sup>51</sup> Imams are those in Islamic leadership positions.
- <sup>52</sup> <http://www.kplu.org/post/seattle-gardening-program-pairs-east-african-seniors-risk-youths>
- <sup>53</sup> [http://www.eastafricans.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/EACS\\_RaVE\\_Needs\\_Assessment\\_June\\_2012.pdf](http://www.eastafricans.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/EACS_RaVE_Needs_Assessment_June_2012.pdf)
- <sup>54</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/strong-bonds-grow-with-bellies-at-program-for-pregnant-somali-women/>
- <sup>55</sup> <https://artsci.washington.edu/news/2016-05/tailored-approach-trauma-intervention>
- <sup>56</sup> <http://www.apichaya.org/>
- <sup>57</sup> <http://kingcounty.gov/courts/clerk/step-up.aspx>
- <sup>58</sup> <https://wapiseattle.wordpress.com/>
- <sup>59</sup> <http://www.rewa.org/services/licensed-behavioral-health/>
- <sup>60</sup> Injera is a sourdough-risen flatbread with a unique, slightly spongy texture. Traditionally made out of teff flour, it is a national dish in Ethiopia and Eritrea.
- <sup>61</sup> <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/poetry-of-somali-language-coming-to-seattle/>
- <sup>62</sup> <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2016/04/26/somali-seattle-migrant-trafficking-mediterranean/50349>
- <sup>63</sup> <http://finfinnetribune.com/Gadaa/2016/03/oromo-protests-and-ethiopian-repression-overview/>
- <sup>64</sup> <http://www.foreign.senate.gov/press/ranking/release/cardin-rubio-colleagues-condemn-ethiopias-crackdown-on-civil-society->
- <sup>65</sup> <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OIRA/OIRA-Voting-Report.pdf>
- <sup>66</sup> <http://www.pugetsoundsage.org/section.php?id=78>
- <sup>67</sup> <http://www.seattle.gov/news/detail.asp?ID=15010>
- <sup>68</sup> <http://new.seattlefoundation.org/~media/Files/PDF/NEIGHBOR-TO-NEIGHBOR-FUND.pdf>
- <sup>69</sup> <https://rainiervalleycorps.org/>
- <sup>70</sup> <http://nacseattle.org/>
- <sup>71</sup> <https://seattle.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2451700&GUID=E519126A-26C2-4487-88A6-3E4C8BF55DAD&Options=&Search=>
- <sup>72</sup> <http://nationalequityatlas.org/>

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