

Hands Across the World

Evaluation Plan and Preliminary Results

Prepared by

Kania Johnson & Meghna Subba

University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs

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Introduction

Hands Across the World (HAW) has four organizational goals for supporting newly arrived immigrants and refugees into American society. Their goals are cultural settlement, social adaptation, economic adjustment, and political integration. Established in October of 2013, HAW has worked over the last 18 years to serve newly arrived immigrant and refugee families via educational programming which is directly aligned with their organizational goals. HAW is an important resource in the St. Cloud, Minnesota community that works to address the complex relationship of integration into the United States and validating the extraordinary experiences of the newly arrived families they serve.

The evaluation specifically looks at HAW's programming. The educational programming that HAW offers is a complex system that involves volunteers, various participants of different nationalities and cultures, a culturally responsive curriculum, and various community partnerships. Additionally, programming must now be implemented during a global pandemic that has changed the way educational instruction has traditionally been done.

This evaluation report focuses on the efficacy of the HAW programming in achieving its main goal of supporting newly arrived immigrants and refugees into American society and ultimately leading families to live successful lives in their respective communities. Throughout the semester, student evaluators from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs collaborated with HAW leadership and developed the following materials:

- An object description and logic model highlighting the main components of Hands Across the World.
- An evaluation design and matrix summarizing the design that includes research questions and methods that flow directly from the program logic model.
- An online survey tool that was administered over seven weeks in spring 2021.
- A summary of preliminary research findings and our recommendations for improving HAW programming.

We hope that this report can help to support program improvements for future iterations of the HAW programming and services by providing valuable, thoughtful, and relevant feedback on the activities carried out by the organization. We believe that by continuously improving upon the content and activities of programming, HAW can help immigrant and refugee families have greater experiences as they navigate their new homes.

Object Description

Written by Fall 2020 HAW Program Evaluation Team: Nicolas Demm, Denis Enywaru, Melinda Fenn

HAW programs are based on four major goals aimed at the cultural, social, economic, and political integration of newly arrived immigrants and refugees into American society. Adopting education as the foundation for accomplishing its mission, the organization's goals are:

Goals

- **Stage one: Cultural Settlement** - Provide a safe place for families to gather and share experiences, questions, and concerns. As well as providing information about housing, clothing, food, transportation, and education.
- **Stage two: Social Adaptation** - Assist families with shifting from settlement to integration, particularly as it relates to maintaining their cultural identity while learning the social norms and traditions of their new home.
- **Stage three: Economic Adjustment** - Support and clarify short-term job opportunities and long-term career paths, as well as resources needed to take advantage of employment opportunities.
- **Stage four: Political Integration** - Assist with seamless integration into American culture, including ensuring families understand American culture and the rules and responsibilities of being an American citizen.¹

Setting

Hands Across the World's programming operates at the crossroads of U.S. immigration, human services, and educational systems. As a non-profit focus on culturally-relevant immigrant and refugee services, the organization serves as an extension of the formalized federal state and immigration and human services agency system, which includes U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS); the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) Office of Refugee Programs.² The organization also serves as an extension of the St. Cloud area's regular K-12 and community education programs, as well as for school districts located throughout the Central Minnesota region, and as a supplement to the social services delivered to immigrant and refugee populations by the traditional county-administered human services system in Minnesota (most notably, Starns County Human Services).

¹ Adapted from December 2020 Hands Across the World Program Evaluation Plan

² For a brief overview of the U.S. refugee resettlement system, see American Immigration Council, "An Overview of U.S. Refugee Law and Policy," p. 4-5.
https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/an_overview_of_us_refugee_law_and_policy.pdf.

Outside of government agencies, organizations operating in this arena primarily include private non-profit voluntary agencies (known as VOLAGs) that contract with the U.S. Department of State to provide reception and resettlement services for refugees admitted to the United States. These organizations also frequently contract with HHS-ORR,³ as well as national immigration network organizations such as the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI),⁴ to provide a continuum of services and community support, including job training and placement, English language programs, and other social services designed to integrate immigrants and refugees into the United States. For refugee resettlement and related support services, Minnesota is currently served by a network of VOLAGs, and related non-profit organizations spread across four regions that aid with basic needs, employment navigation and training, educational resources, and legal services.⁵ Central Minnesota is located in Minnesota's Region 2 Network, with hub locations being Lutheran Social Services and Avivo, and legal services being provided by Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid. Other local VOLAGs spread throughout Minnesota include Catholic Charities of Southern Minnesota, the International Institute of Minnesota, the Minnesota Council of Churches, and Arrive Ministries.⁶ In addition to refugee-specific services, a range of nonprofit organizations provide subject- and community-specific services for other immigrant populations throughout the state.⁷

Between 2005 and 2016, Minnesota resettled an average of 2,550 refugees annually,⁸ but more recent immigration and refugee restrictions under the Trump administration have resulted in substantial reductions in recent years.⁹ Consequently, Minnesota resettled 1,003 refugees in 2017, 663 refugees in 2018, and 891 refugees in 2019.¹⁰ More broadly, Minnesota is home to 472,231 foreign-born residents, or 8.4% of the overall state population, 15.4% of whom live under the federal poverty level (compared to 8.4% of the U.S.-born population), and who have median household incomes of \$62,470 (compared to the \$75,665 median household incomes of their native-born peers).¹¹

³ Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement, "Fact Sheet: About the Office of Refugee Resettlement." https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/orr/about_orr_fact_sheet.pdf

⁴ U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, "Network Agencies." <https://refugees.org/agencies/>.

⁵ Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), "Refugee Resettlement: Program Overviews." <https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/program-overviews/refugee-resettlement/>.

⁶ Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), "Resettlement: Local voluntary agencies." <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/rih/topics/resettlement.html>.

⁷ See, for example, the range of immigration-oriented organizations located in Minnesota compiled by the Advocates for Human Rights at https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/immigration_links.

⁸ Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), "2005-2019 Minnesota primary refugee arrivals by Nationality." https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/MN%20Refugee%20Arrivals%20CY2005-2019%201-22-20_tcm1053-417096.pdf.

⁹ Nakamura, D., Sacchetti, M., and Kim, Seung, "Trump administration slashes refugee limit for the third consecutive year to a historical low of 18,000." *The Washington Post*. September 26, 2019. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-administration-proposes-slashing-refugee-limit-for-the-third-consecutive-year-to-a-historic-low-of-18000/2019/09/26/3a554a60-e0a4-11e9-be96-6adb81821e90_story.html.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Minnesota Compass, "Immigration: Population Trends." <https://www.mncompass.org/immigration/population-trends#1-10779-d>.

Staff and Volunteers

HAW is a volunteer-run organization with oversight from 6 permanent staff. The organization's leadership includes the CEO and co-founder, as well as an Executive Director. A cohort of volunteer teachers serves as the organization's primary resource for classroom and one-on-one tutoring instruction. The organization is served by a seven-member board of directors. The board, and organization, are governed by a series of bylaws that specify board composition; terms of election and procedures for resignations and vacancies; meeting frequency and decorum; policies outlining the powers of the board to appoint agents or representatives and enter contracts; the fiscal calendar of the organization; rules governing voting rights; and prohibitions against sharing in earnings of the organization.¹²

Participants

HAW serves families from different countries and ethnic backgrounds who have newly arrived in central Minnesota. Program participants are primarily Spanish-speaking immigrants from Central and South America, as well as refugees with origins in various countries of Africa. Between 2003 and 2018, HAW served 4,282 adult refugees and 425 adult immigrants with multi-lingual adult programming. Between 2007 and 2018, over 350 students became American citizens.¹³ The program emphasizes cultural diversity, new friendships, self-sufficiency, pathways to citizenship and, most importantly, a true sense of being welcome and integrated to their new home.

HAW currently serves an average of 400 adults and 182 children per year through community facilities located in the St. Cloud area. The community facilities include:

- The Great River Public Library
- Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- Peace Hall Cafeteria
- Belcare Acres in Waite Park

Due to Covid-19, all programming has been conducted online since March 2020.

Activities

HAW's day to day programming is implemented through various educational activities. Major activity areas include:

- **Multi-lingual Adult Education:** Hands Across the World conducts adult English lessons that are integrated with culturally relevant and immigrant-specific life skills such as job

¹² Hands Across the World, "Bylaws of Hands Across the World." November 10, 2003.

¹³ Hands Across the World, "Multi-Lingual Adult Program." <https://www.handsacrosstheworldmn.org/copy-of/about-1>.

readiness, mathematics, health and wellness, information about life in America, and community-building through cultural arts and craft activities. Through civic education, participants learn important lessons about American history and ways of life, with the goal of realizing educational and economic opportunities and becoming American citizens.

- **Early Childhood Education:** Hands Across the World engages the infants and preschool-age children of adult ESL participants with basic English exposure and instruction. As a related aspect of the children’s success, the organization teaches parents about the American educational system and how to participate in their child’s school activities and programs. A related component of the Early Child Education program is basic childcare training for adult parents interested in seeking employment in childcare centers or even establishing their own licensed home childcare program. As of 2019, 114 women have been trained and certified as early childhood daycare providers.
- **Math and English After School Education:** Hands Across the World collaborates with the St. Cloud School District (District 742) and the United Way to deliver after school one-on-one tutoring in an initiative called “Partners for Student Success.” Math and English literacy tutoring are provided to students in kindergarten through eighth grade, and both parents and children are invited to participate.¹⁴
- **Community Programming:** Hands Across the World is involved in organizing community events to bring awareness about human trafficking. According to the U.S. Department of State, 14,500 to 17,500 people are being trafficked in the U.S. annually,¹⁵ and Minnesota ranks high nationally for occurrences of human trafficking.¹⁶ HAW is committed to keeping the communities it works with safe through its Human Trafficking Prevention Program. In addition, HAW engages its students in environmental conservation efforts through the Recycle and River Preservation Project. Students are given the opportunity to volunteer with staff from the City of St. Cloud to preserve the environment and recycle.¹⁷
- **Online Instructional Video Lessons:** Hands Across the World understands the importance of physical and mental health to a person's wellbeing. Therefore, HAW provides instructional videos on topics of Health, Nutrition & Wellness on its website. Additionally, HAW offers instructional videos on topics related to cultural settlement and

¹⁴ Hands Across the World, “Early Childhood Education.” <https://www.handsacrosstheworldmn.org/copy-of-community-program>.

¹⁵ Hands Across the World, “Community Programming.” <https://www.handsacrosstheworldmn.org/copy-of-adult-program>

¹⁶ Minnesota Department of Transportation, “Human trafficking awareness <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/humantraffickingawareness/>.

¹⁷ Hands Across the World, “Community Programming.” <https://www.handsacrosstheworldmn.org/copy-of-adult-program>.

integration to better support families as they transition to a new environment and culture.¹⁸

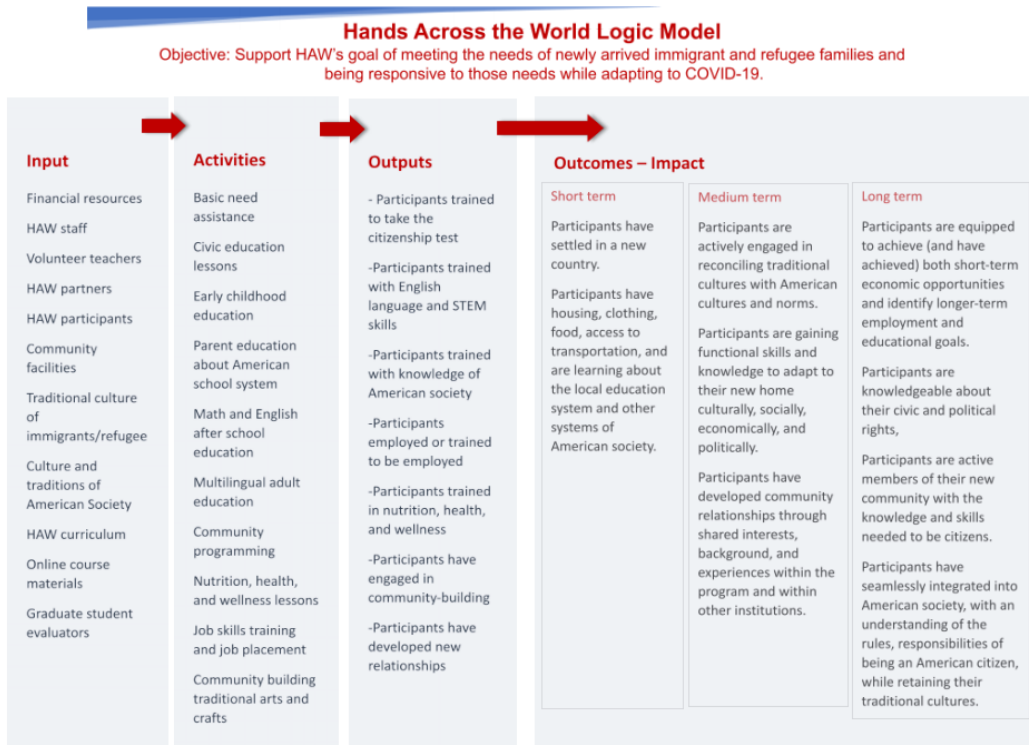
Budget

HAW is funded by a mix of individual and business contributions, foundation grants, non-profit grants, and in-kind donations. In 2019, the organization's total annual budget was \$390,776. Total programming and operating expenses amounted to \$108,835, leaving a net income for 2019 of \$281,941. In 2020, the projected annual budget was \$401,394, with anticipated programming and operating expenses of \$324,079, and a net income of \$77,315.¹⁹

¹⁸ Hands Across the World, "Video Lessons." <https://www.handsacrosstheworldmn.org/video-lessons>

¹⁹ Hands Across the World, "Annual Projected Budget, 2018-2022."

Logic Model



- Assumptions**
- ❖ Education is the foundation of cultural, social, economic, and political integration.
 - ❖ Newly arriving immigrants and refugees have difficulty integrating in the U.S.
 - ❖ Formal public institutions do not provide enough social and economic support for immigrants and refugees to succeed in American society.
 - ❖ Newly arriving immigrants and refugees can receive information about the program and are willing to participate in the program.
 - ❖ There are volunteer instructors available and willing to support the organization's goals and mission.
 - ❖ Outside of the formal education and human service systems, funding is still needed – and available – to support cultural and immigrant specific community and educational programming.
 - ❖ Despite the politically contentious nature of immigration, there is still strong support for community-based programming aimed at uplifting immigrants and refugees.
 - ❖ No matter the time, place, or politics of the moment, people will always be immigrants somewhere.

- External Factors**
- ❖ Policy and funding constraints around immigration and refugee resettlement in the United States.
 - ❖ Limited funding streams to support refugee and immigrant professional and educational development.
 - ❖ Politically contentious policy environment around immigration, particularly under the previous presidential administration.
 - ❖ Politically contentious policy environment around immigration in Central Minnesota.
 - ❖ Generally strong philanthropic history and community support for nonprofits in Minnesota.
 - ❖ Deep and growing networks of immigrant and refugee families across the state, particularly in Minnesota and St. Paul.
 - ❖ Robust network of community-based nonprofit in Minnesota focused on immigrant and refugee-specific services, and a strong array of foundation and private funders.
 - ❖ Year-to-year shifts in foundation and nonprofit grant amounts, donor contributions and in-kind services.
 - ❖ Funding subject to economic downturns as foundations, private donors, and public agencies scale back expenditures.

Figure 1: HAW Logic Model

Evaluation Design

The evaluation was formative and developmental, utilizing an online evaluation tool for data collection. HAW will use the results of the evaluation to discover if their educational programming is meeting the needs of their participants, what impact if any COVID-19 has had on programming, and future improvement they can make to better serve their families. The evaluation focused on the cultural settlement organization goal of HAW and the results will be used to ensure that their educational programming is aligned with this larger organizational goal.

Due to time and resource constraints, and COVID-19, we focused on the outputs outlined in our Logic Model, especially as it relates to participants building skills to be successful in their cultural settlement and the usefulness, they perceive these skills are having in their lives.

Design Matrix Evaluation Questions

As noted above, we used an online evaluation tool which was a survey that was administered to approximately 38 HAW participants who had participated in HAW programs out of the nearly 400 adults that participate in the program. The goal to capture 80 responses was requested by our client with hopes to have a rich quantitative and qualitative data to present to their key stakeholders. We sent our evaluation tool to Executive Director and Founder, Brianda Cediell, who trained two staff members to administer it to participants via the online survey per her request. The evaluation tool was administered in 4 cycles from February 26th to April 16th. The key question outlined in the design matrix seeks to understand participants' feelings about educational programming by asking: **whether HAW's current array of programs and services meet the needs and requirements of the target population?** The rationale behind asking this question is to provide HAW with the necessary information to better understand their impact and improve their future programming by capturing how participants perceive the usefulness of educational programming.

Research Questions

Is HAW's current array of programs and services meeting the needs and requirements of the target population?	Are HAW's current educational programs useful to the participants and their families in their daily lives?
	What are the areas of improvement for HAW to provide quality programs and services to the participants?

Table 1: Final research questions

To capture this feedback, we provided HAW with an online survey to administer. Every two weeks the survey was administered to participants. The decision to have HAW staff administer the survey is due to efforts to ensure the survey was accessible and the staff be able to translate for participants who needed it. Additionally, the decision to aim to survey 20 participants every two weeks was made to align with HAW's organizational capacity, as not to over burden them and to support their desire for a high response rate.

We analyzed participant feedback by pulling major themes that emerged from their responses. As previously mentioned, the survey was formative and developmental in nature, so we looked for themes that addressed whether HAW is meeting participant needs, how participants felt about current and future modes of instruction, COVID-19's impact on participants' ability to access programming and improving the HAW experience.

Our evaluation tool is a survey, which had some limitations including:

- The surveys were optional; participants were not required to complete the survey.
- There was a bias due to self-reporting.

In conclusion, the purpose of this evaluation was to support HAW's goal of meeting the needs of newly arrived immigrant and refugee families and being responsive to those needs while adapting to COVID-19. This evaluation will also inform subsequent education programming and will allow the client to begin tracking their organizational progress and effectiveness as a means of recruiting more participants and moving closer to achieving their four organizational goals.

Design Matrix

Research question	Information sources	Methodology	Limitations	Potential Findings
A. Is HAW's current array of programs and services meeting the needs and requirements of the target population? Are there additional subject areas that need to be covered?	Direct response and feedback from the participants	Online surveys, email questionnaires, or telephone interviews. Surveys/questionnaire will be translated into multiple languages	Limited to participants that the interviewers could reach out to (possible selection bias). Limited to participants that choose or can respond. Limited to participants who have previously participated in the programs.	Is HAW targeting the skills that newly arrived immigrants and refugees need? Are there other subject areas or skills that could contribute to positive employment or citizenship outcomes?
A.1 Is HAW's current educational programs useful to the participants and their families in their daily lives?	Direct response from the participants and families.	Online surveys, email questionnaires, or telephone interviews.	Limited to participants who have previously participated in the educational program and services of HAW.	Is HAW's educational programs and services meeting the skills required and needed for the newly arrived immigrants and refugees?
A.2 What are the areas for improvement for HAW to provide quality and programs and services to the participants?	Direct response from the participants and families.	Online surveys, email questionnaires, or telephone interviews.	Limited to participants who have previously participated in the educational program and services of HAW.	How and where can HAW improve their programs to better serve the participant's needs?

Figure 2: HAW Design Matrix

Data Collection Tool & Analysis Plan

For the Hands Across the World (HAW) 2021 evaluation, we created a survey to be implemented between February 26th-April 2nd. The goal of the evaluation is to discover if their educational programming is meeting the needs of their participants and future improvement, they can make to better serve their families. The primary method of evaluation is based on participant feedback through this survey, which has been translated and administered by HAW staff.

Survey Protocol

HAW shared that they would collect survey responses over time as this will best align with their needs. The Executive Director and Founder, Brianda Cediell wanted to collect 80 surveys in total because she believes it will provide strong evidence of HAW's impact on their participants. The survey was created on Google Forms so that HAW can easily administer it with their participants. In the survey, the overarching evaluation question was subdivided into two distinct themes that is based on the design matrix:

1. Usefulness of HAW educational programs to the participants and their families.
2. Areas of improvement for HAW to deliver quality programs to the participants.

Based on these themes, we will analyzed narrative responses and comments.

Analyzing Survey Results

Our client shared that they would administer and collect the translated survey responses that they will provide us on **February 26, March 12, March 26, and April 2nd, 2021**. The goal was to collect 20 surveys per batch. Participants were targeted to complete the survey based on their willingness and availability. As we received each batch of surveys, we downloaded the results from the corresponding spreadsheet. As noted above, we used both quantitative and qualitative processes for analyzing the survey results. Using the spreadsheet noted above, we were able to easily determine how the participants scored each question as part of the quantitative findings and summarize the information by question. Our Likert scales all range from 1 (not helpful) to 5 (very helpful). We considered 1-2 as not helpful, 3 as helpful, and 4-5 as very helpful.

For the qualitative portion of the survey, we analyzed common themes among the responses. Each team member conducted their own review initially and determined common themes. After each team member completed their analysis, we compared our results and came up with common themes and results. This helped ensure inter-rater reliability.

As we analyzed the comments from each participant, we created a grid for each response and added a short summary for each response (example below). Once we did that, we were able to see common themes between the participants. We went through this grid and highlighted different themes in different colors. We used categorization and thematic processes for coding our results based on patterns. Common expected themes included helpfulness of HAW educational programming, barriers to participating in HAW programming before COVID-19 and currently under COVID-19 protocols, helpfulness of online classes under COVID-19 protocols, and overall usefulness of HAW programming. The comments along with the quantitative results

from the survey were coded and summarized. We then shared our results with each other and compared, combined, and summarized our results.

	Respondent #1	Respondent #2	...
Please rate your overall experience participating in HAW’s educational activity on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the worst experience to you or your family, and 5 being the best experience to you or your family			
Below is a list of potential barriers to fully participating in HAW educational activities, please select all that apply.			
Based on your personal or family’s experience participating in HAW activities, please provide any feedback on areas that you think could be improved to better meet your needs.			

Table 2: Example of coding grid

Evaluation Results

Introduction

Hands Across the World shared 38 survey responses with the evaluation team. The data showed that 74% of the survey participants were women and only 26% were men. Among the total participants, 16 belonged to the 25-34 years bracket, 15 belonged to the 35-44 years bracket, 5 belonged to the 45-64 years bracket, and one belonged to the 18-24 years bracket. The data showed that 24 out of 38 participants have been living in the US for more than five years and only two participants have been living in the US for less than a year. The survey responses showed 19 participants are originally from Somalia (their country of origin), 10 participants are from Dominican Republic, three respondents were from Kenya and each participant from Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Venezuela, Honduras, Palestine, and Tunisia. Out of a total 38 participants only eight confirmed to be bilingual and can speak both English and their native languages.

The results from our evaluation are used to answer the following research questions:

1. Is HAW's current array of programs and services meeting the needs and requirements of the target population?
 - a. Are HAW's current educational programs helpful to the participants and their families in their daily lives?
 - b. What are the areas of improvement for HAW to provide quality programs and services to the participants?

We would like to acknowledge a major limitation of our study; we were unable to use our revised survey. The revised survey would have captured the following needs of the organization:

- Barriers to Participating in HAW Educational Programming (Pre-COVID and Currently)
- Experiencing HAW educational programming during a Pandemic
- Improving the HAW Experience via the website, tutoring, and overall programming

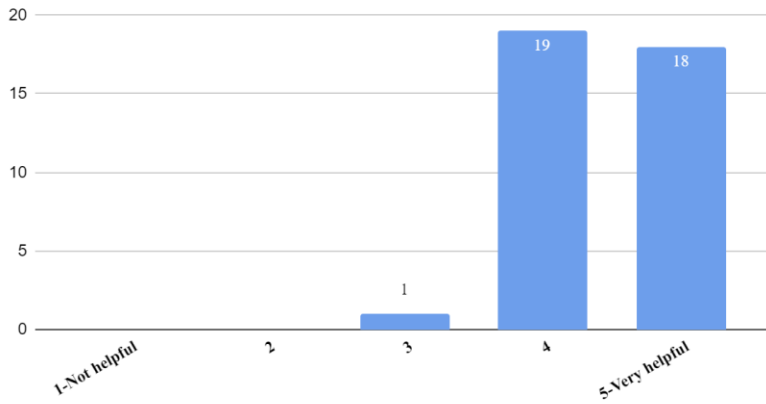
While we were unable to capture the above, we were still able to capture insightful results that HAW can use to understand and grow their programming to better support their participants.

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data collected for this evaluation included Likert scale questions about helpfulness of HAW educational activities, as well as the overall experience of participating in HAW programming. All responses are reflected in the below graphs, which are then summarized into tables for easy analysis.

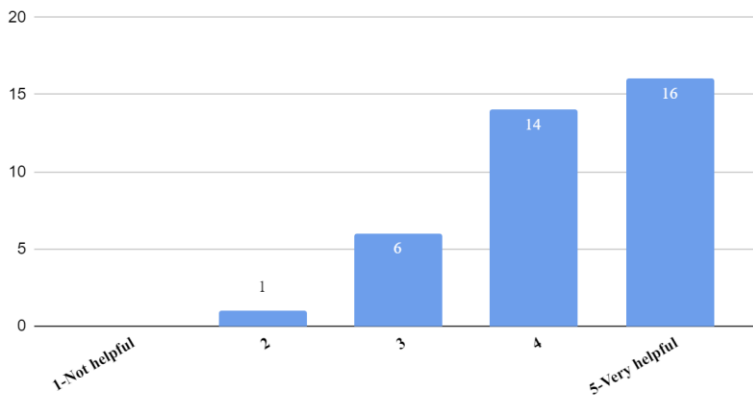
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: English Language

38 responses



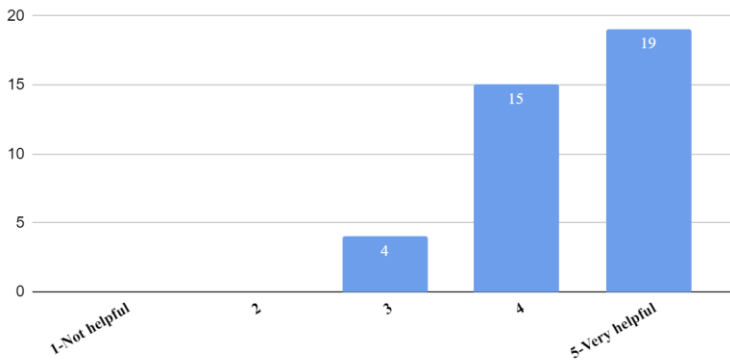
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: Health and Nutrition

37 responses



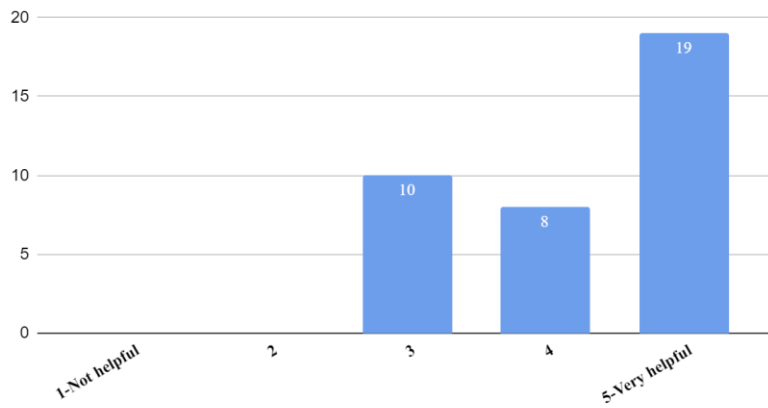
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: American Educational System

38 responses



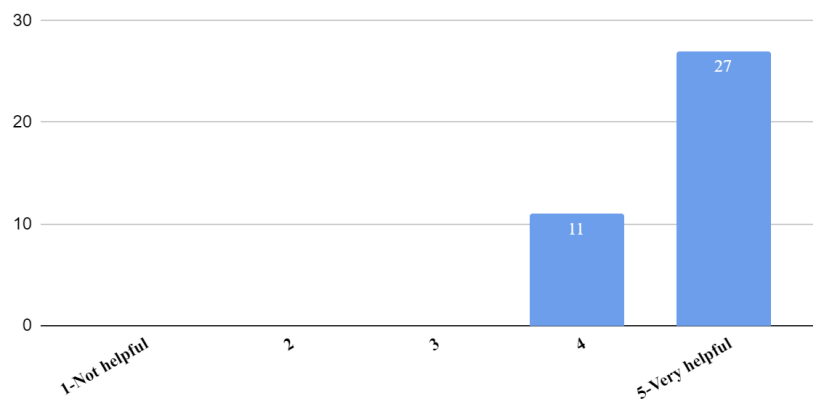
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: American Citizenship

37 responses



Please rate your overall experience participating in HAW's educational activity.

38 responses



Summary of Likert Scale Results

Survey Question	Results	
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: Mathematics	Helpful	Not Helpful
	35	0
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: English Language	Helpful	Not Helpful
	38	0
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: Health and Nutrition	Helpful	Not Helpful
	36	1
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: American Educational System	Helpful	Not Helpful
	38	0
Please rate the following HAW educational activity: American Citizenship	Helpful	Not helpful
	37	0
Please rate your overall experience participating in HAW's educational activity.	Excellent	Poor
	38	0

Note: Helpful/Excellent responses indicate a response coded a 3 or higher, and not helpful/poor responses indicate a coded 1 or 2 response. We did not code a neutral code.

Summary of Results

For the question, “Are HAW’s current educational programs helpful to the participants and their families in their daily lives?”, we analyzed participants ratings of the following based on a Likert scale (1-not helpful to 5-helpful): Mathematics, English Language, Health and Nutrition, American Educational System, and American Citizenship. We also analyzed participants ratings of their overall experience participating in HAW educational programs (1-poor to 5-excellent). Overall, participants find HAW programming helpful and excellent. While participants deemed HAW educational programs helpful and deemed their experience excellent overall, they also expressed challenges and areas of opportunity that they would like to see HAW address.

90% of the participants shared that they face challenges of technology, time, and language. These three are the main challenges that participants face on a daily basis. Beside these, the 10% participants also face challenges of transportation and Minnesota’s extreme weather conditions. For the areas for improvement, we analyzed that participants need capacity building and skill development so that they are better equipped when they are out to find sustainable jobs. The participants expressed they are keen to learn tangible skills such as computers, sewing, finance, and language. The participants also expressed that they want to be part of community events to network with others and increase their social skills.

We would like to acknowledge a major limitation of our study; we were unable to use our revised survey. The revised survey would have captured survey data to address the following needs:

- Barriers to Participating in HAW Educational Programming (Pre-COVID and Currently)
- Experiencing HAW educational programming during a Pandemic
- Improving the HAW Experience via the website, tutoring, and overall programming

In addition to not being able to use the revised survey we also had the following limitations:

- Survey response bias
- Evaluator bias
- Double counting on self-identified length of time participating in HAW programs
- Convenience sampling

While we were unable to capture the aforementioned due to survey administration happening via the organization, we were still able to capture insightful results that HAW can use to understand and grow their programming to better support their participants.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on the qualitative and quantitative data analysis, we have derived the following recommendations for the HAW for future consideration:

1. **Incorporate flexible availability of programming, as well as include children's activities or care when in-person classes resume.** 78% of the HAW participants are female with 42% belonging under the age brackets of 25-34 years old with minimum two children per household.
2. **Continue providing current educational program offerings with improvements in technology and offering a flexible course schedule.** . Based on our analysis 100% of surveyed participants found HAW programming Excellent.
3. **Identify ways to incorporate tangible skills into programming.** Some skills the participants were keen to learn were sewing, computer skills. These skills can help participants in getting employment and generate immediate income for the families.
4. **Continue offering online classes in model.** The survey response showed participants want the online classes to continue as it provides flexibility in their work and home lives.
5. **Offer more networking and community building opportunities for participants.** Organizing events that allow participants to get to know each other and the community, was of interest to participants.
6. **Providing technological support.** A huge theme participants shared was that technology was a barrier. HAW should provide the following support based on participant feedback: internet access, navigating online classes, general digital support.

Overall, there is a general agreement among the participants that they are satisfied with HAW's educational programs. However, there is definite room for improvement for easy and smooth access to these programs that are offered both in-person and online. With female participants of age group of 25 - 34 years being the main participants group, the focus of services should be on young women for participant retention and satisfaction, such as including children playgroups while the mothers are in class, flexible class time for mothers, training on soft skills e.g., sewing, salon etc. Participants also shared that they are overall satisfied with the classes, however due to time constraints and technology challenges they have barriers to take part in the classes. Much of these constraints had to do with participants needing technological support or not being able to attend classes due to work, not having childcare, or transportation to class. HAW should continue their educational programs to the immigrants and refugee's population as data shows that these programs are meeting the general requirements of the participants, however there are

opportunities for improvement while offering the online classes as well as in-person classes, that can allow for more robust and effective programming.

Appendix A

HAW Participant Survey

Hands Across the World (HAW) Participant Survey

As a past or current participant in Hands Across the World programs, you are being selected to participate in a survey of your experiences with the organization.

This survey is being conducted as part of a program evaluation led by graduate students of the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs.

Your responses are completely voluntary and anonymous and will be shared only with Hands Across the World staff to inform and improve program offerings.

Thank you for your participation.

Length of Time Participating in HAW Programs

- Under 3 months
- 3 to 6 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- 1+ years
- 2+ years
- 3+ years
- 4+ years
- 5+ years

Rating of Hands Across the World Programs

Please rate the following HAW educational activity on a scale of 1-5, with **1 being the least helpful** to you or your family, and **5 being the most helpful** to you or your family.

Mathematics

1 2 3 4 5

Please rate the following HAW educational activity on a scale of 1-5, with **1 being the least helpful** to you or your family, and **5 being the most helpful** to you or your family.

English Language

1 2 3 4 5

Please rate the following HAW educational activity on a scale of 1-5, with **1 being the least helpful** to you or your family, and **5 being the most helpful** to you or your family.

Health and Nutrition

1 2 3 4 5

Please rate the following HAW educational activity on a scale of 1-5, with **1 being the least helpful** to you or your family, and **5 being the most helpful** to you or your family.

American Educational System

1 2 3 4 5

Please rate the following HAW educational activity on a scale of 1-5, with **1 being the least helpful** to you or your family, and **5 being the most helpful** to you or your family.

American Citizenship (government, voting, constitution, rights)

1 2 3 4 5

Please rate your overall experience participating in HAW's educational activity on a scale of 1-5, with **1 being the worst experience** to you or your family, and **5 being the best experience** to you or your family.

1 2 3 4 5

Below is a list of potential barriers to fully participating in HAW educational activities, please select all that apply.

- Language
- Technology
- Time
- Transportation
- Other (please specify below)

Based on your personal or family's experience participating in HAW activities, please provide any feedback on areas that you think could be improved to better meet your needs.

Examples:

"I would like HAW to provide more services on how to find affordable housing in Rochester."

"I would like to see more community events being offered."



Demographic Information

What best describes your gender

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe _____

Age

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-64
- 65+

Length of Time in United States

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- 3-4 years
- 4-5 years
- 5+ years

Number of Children (in U.S.)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9

° 10

Country of Origin (Native Country)

Languages spoken (please select all that apply)