



American Sign Language (ASL)

Providing Hope and Empowerment to New Americans

*Original population in 2007

Damak to:

Beldangi Camps: 08 Kms/20 Mins

Sanischare Camp: 17 Kms/30 Mins

Soldhap Camp: 42 Kms/60 Mins

Khudunabari Camp: 50 Kms/75 Mi

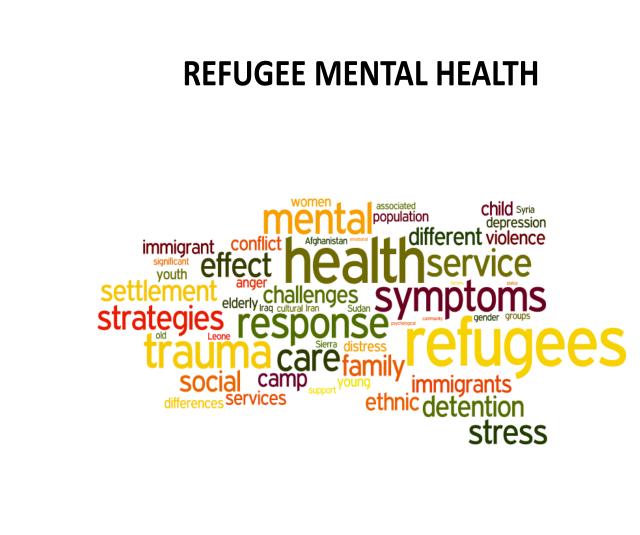
Timai Camp: 61 kms/90 Mins



Our Mission

- Teach ASL to New Americans with hearing impairment and intellectual disabilities
- Teach self-advocacy skills through ASL class
- Build community and inclusion
- Provide a model for service organizations
- Prepare for Employment
- Access to Video Phone Communication

RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM



Demographics

- Refugees represent 13% (78/600) of people receiving disability services through Howard Center since 2007.
- •Languages spoken include Nepali, Arabic, Vietnamese, Burmese, Maay Maay, Somali, Swahili, and Mandarin.
- •20 Bhutanese/Nepali refugees are enrolled in American Sign Language class at Howard Center.
- Most staff workers are hired from the same community for facilitation

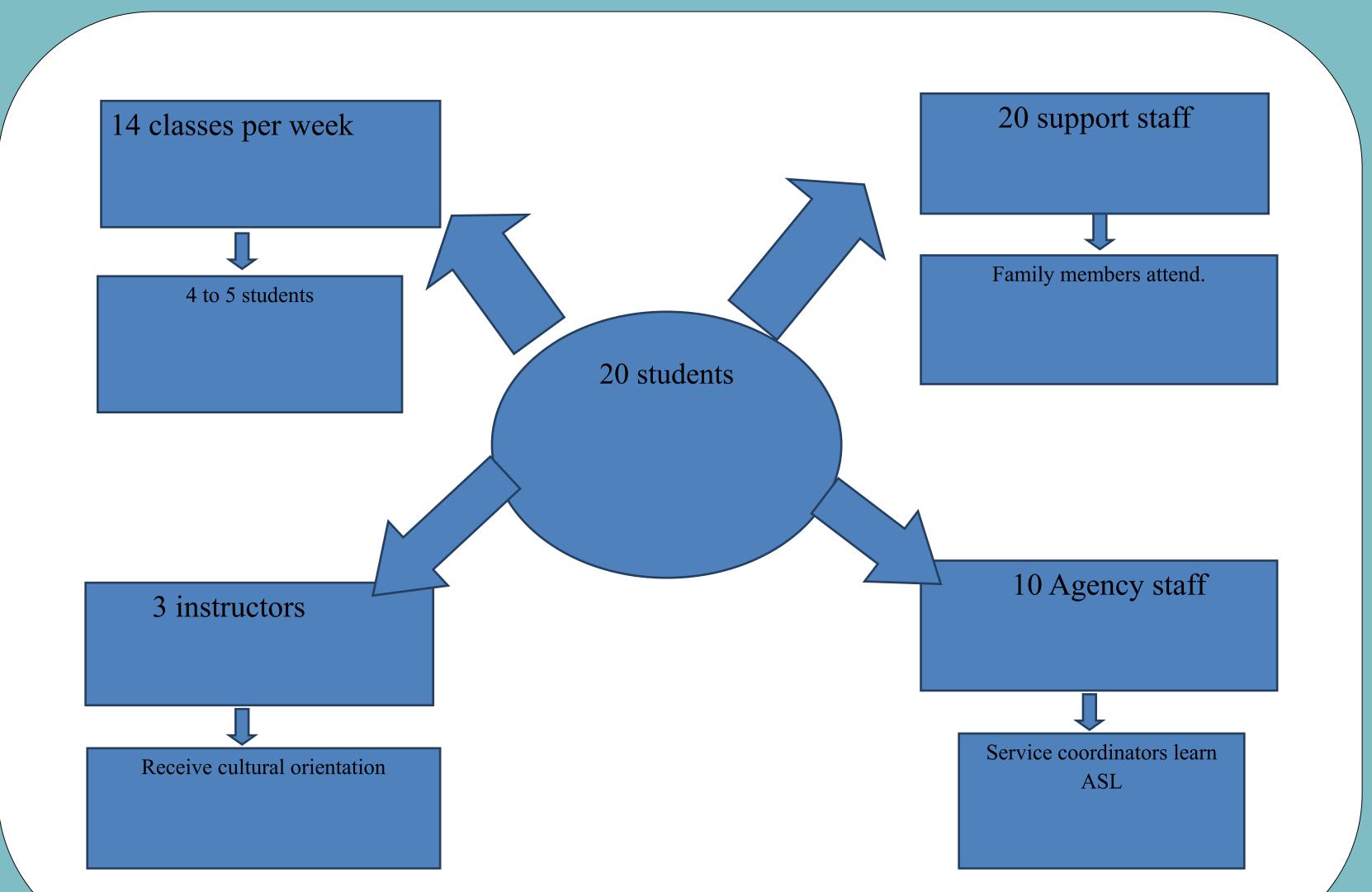
Bhutanese Nepali Refugee Community

- Lack of access to healthcare, education, and disability services.
- High Rate of Trauma and Physical Disability
- **Displacement and Statelessness**
- Basic Needs Crisis
- Food Insecurity
- Integration

Traditional Ideas about Disabilities

- Integration Challenges Lead to Lack of Community Inclusion
- Low Expectations
- Few or No Learning Opportunities for Hearing-Impaired
- Greater Dependence on Family, Often Homebound Reduced Opportunities to Learn English or Gain Independence

Class Structure



Impact of ASL Services

Before ASL

- *Homebound
- *Mistreated and/or Neglected
- *Experienced Higher Rate of Discrimination
- *Deprived of Rights
- *No Developmental Services
- *Disability = Curse
- * Karmic connections

After ASL

- Reduced Anxiety and Aggressive Behavior
- Increased Stability at Home
- ⇒Use of Video phone Independently
- Access to Community Resources
- Improved Health and Wellness
- ⇒ Self Advocacy Skills
- =>Employment Opportunities

RESULT OF SURVEY AFTER 6 MONTHS

❖ 20/20 students participated

❖ ASL interpreter was used to

Students switched between

The figure on the y-axis

Responses were obtained using **thumbs up** and

in the survey

NSL and ASL

Cooking Class

Learn Independent Living Skills

Accommodations

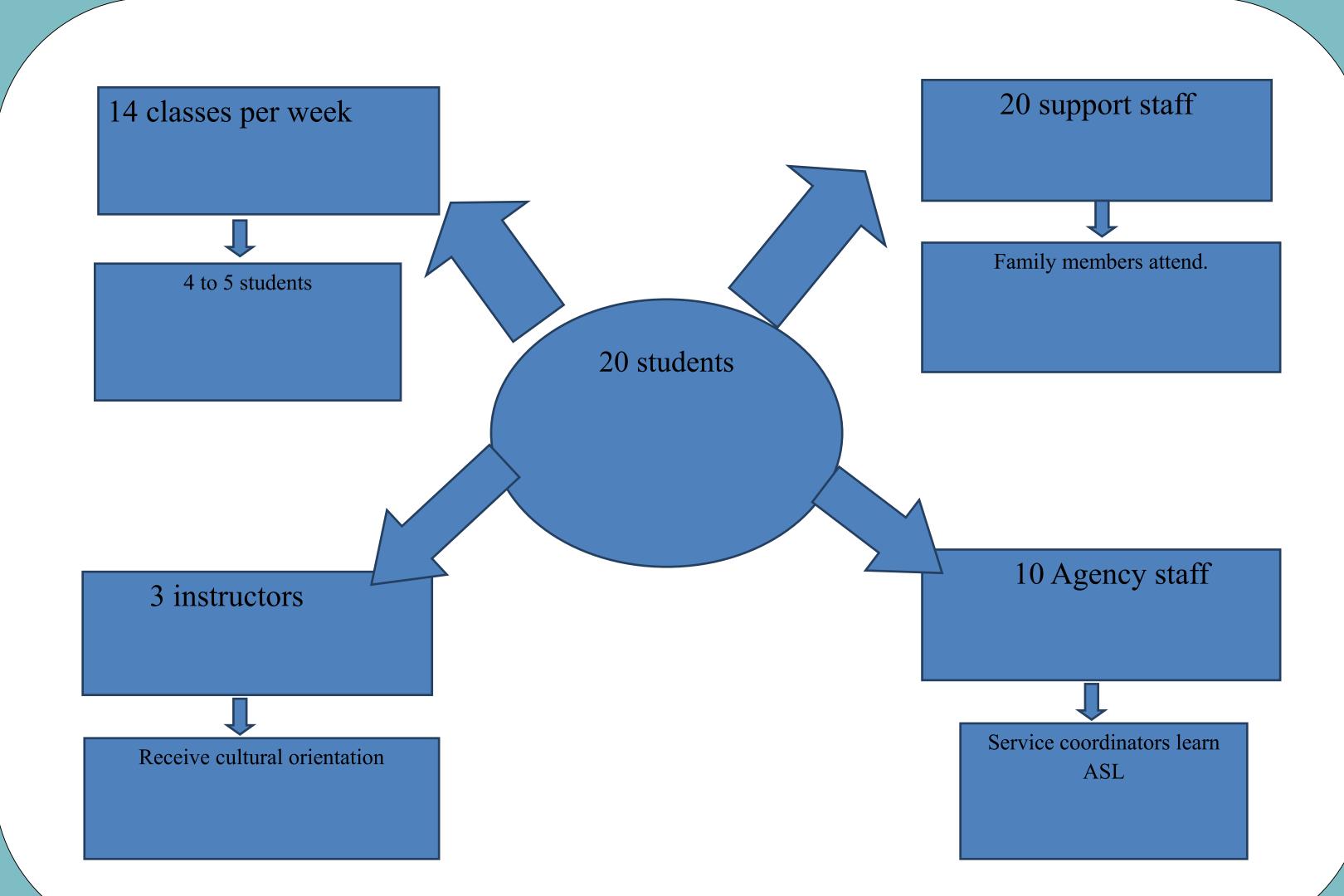
Open to ASL Participants

ASL Interpreter/Instructor

Student Driven

Practice ASL skills

- No Rush Pace of Class
- Small Groups of 4 − 5 students
- Individualized, 1 to 1 Approach
- Field Trips into Community
- Cultural Traditions Celebrated



Pictures

Bhutanese Refugee Camps in Nepal

Beldangi Camps (3) 29,500 (52,901*)

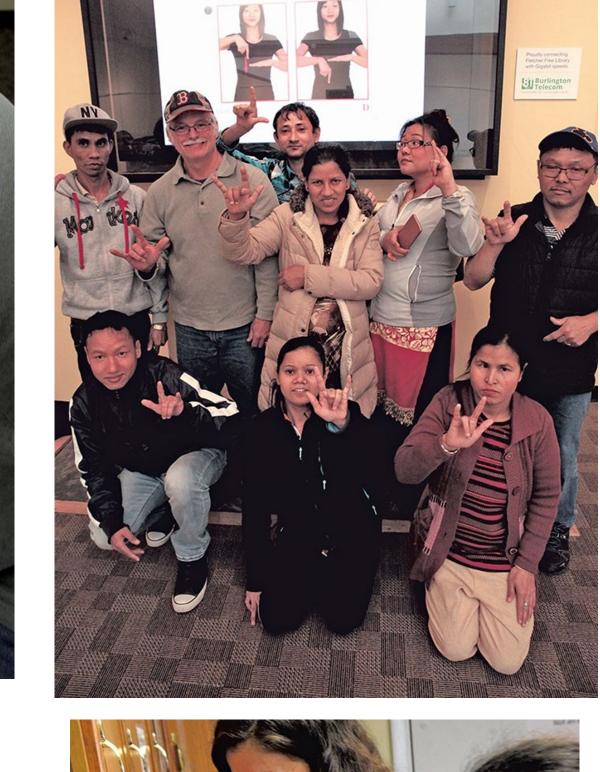
Damak Sanischare

Current refugee situation in Eastern Nepal

INDIA









Future Plans

- Collaboration with Pine Island Farms
- Gardening in summer as a group
- Arts class
- Learning by doing

ASL and Voc. Rehab

Identifying interest to work

. Referal to Voc. Rehab

Job tour

On the job training