Introduction and Background
- Kent city is home to 92,411 people.
- Kent is growing into a culturally diverse city with a rapidly increasing African foreign-born population.
- Data from census bureau estimates show that Kent city has 3,322 residents from sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 3.3% of the city’s population.
- There is a fear that many of these communities are segregated from the greater community due to barriers such as language, culture, religion, background, and education.
- This raises the concerns of potential disconnect between services offered in the city and the access to these services by African immigrant and refugee communities.

Objectives
- The main objective of the project is to share resources with African immigrant and refugee in Kent and advocate local NGOs and city officials about unmet needs in order to provide community services where gaps still remain.
- Specific Aims include:
  1. Identify all resources offered to these communities within the city and which resources and services these communities have access.
  2. Determine the demographic characteristics of the African immigrant and refugee communities in Kent city, their resettlement experience, who are their community leaders, what needs are not being met, what solutions they recommend to address these gaps in services.
  3. Share the finding with relevant stakeholders with the aim of helping service providers to offer new and tailored services to these communities.

Methodology
- The project is conducted in two main phases:
  1. Phase 1: List of services available and conduct a baseline assessment of all resources and services offered to African immigrants and refugee communities within the city of Kent.
  2. Phase 2: Identifying key informants and facilitators to attend focus groups involving African immigrant and refugee women within Kent.
- This presentation will cover the first phase of the community mapping project baseline assessment of all resources and services offered to African immigrants and refugee communities within the city of Kent.
- A semi-structured questionnaire was developed and used to interview service providers.
- The questionnaire was designed to identify the nature of the services offered and demographic of the population benefiting from these services.
- The analysis of the data collected was conducted in mixed method approach using both quantitative and qualitative components.
- Epi-Info and Microsoft Excel were used for the data analysis.

Results
- The majority of agencies/organizations interviewed do not have a database of their clients broken down by country of origin, age groups or gender.
- 10.29% of the clients served by these agencies/organizations in the last 12 months were African immigrants or refugees.
- About 60% of the service providers offer interpretation services to their clients either by staff or call out services.
- 13 out the 22 interviewed service providers offer means of transportation.
- Language and communication barriers are the main challenges when serving African immigrant/refugee population.
- Other obstacles included cultural differences, acquiring urban living skills, not having enough time to be engaged in the activities these agencies/organizations offer.
- Service providers also pointed out that African immigrant/refugee are usually not punctual and lack time management skills.

Conclusion
- This project will allow the communities to acquire knowledge and be empowered to advocate for themselves with specific needs and desired solutions.
- Based on the assessment, service providers in Kent need to obtain a more detailed database to keep track of their clients and assess their needs based on their gender, age, socioeconomic status and culture.
- Considering that language and communication barriers are common challenges, all service providers in Kent should offer interpretation services to various groups involved in the city.

Funding Source
- Project conducted by: Mother Africa Organization
- Project Budget: $5,000.00
- Funded by: The Seattle Foundation Neighbor to Neighbor/Small Grants Program