



# RCD Women's News

Issue no 6, July 2004

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BILL AND ASYLUM SEEKING WOMEN

The Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Bill is currently going through Parliament. Women's Groups and activists for women's rights have welcomed the measures within the Bill on improving the safety and protection of survivors and holding perpetrators to account for their violence. However they have raised some concerns and argued that the Bill does not go far enough, and have asked for supporters to look at their alternative proposals and join them in lobbying the government to change their plans.

Women's Groups, especially Southall Black Sisters (SBS), are lobbying MPs to table and support an amendment to the Domestic Violence Bill that will entitle women with insecure immigration status to benefits and emergency accommodation if they are facing domestic violence.

SBS research shows that every year approximately 600 women with insecure immigration status are victims of domestic violence. These women are not entitled to public funds and therefore cannot access safe emergency accommodation, and include refugees who need rent to be paid from housing benefit. These women and their children face a stark choice - to remain with their abuser and risk further harm and even death, or leave and face destitution.

The Government has made some concessions including introducing the Domestic Violence Immigration Rule, a commitment to fast tracking these applications and a recent grant of £40,000 to the Women's Aid Last Resort Fund. However this payment will only support 23 women for a period of two months each. These concessions, while welcome, are far from adequate and still leave the vast majority of women trapped in abusive relationships.

It has been recommended that NGOs and individuals write to their MPs and Government ministers to support the endorsement. For a lobbying pack or support slips, contact Women's Aid on [e.butler@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:e.butler@womensaid.org.uk) or [sbs@leonet.co.uk](mailto:sbs@leonet.co.uk) or 020 8571 9595.

**For more information contact: Elaheh Rambarzini on 020 7820 3022  
or email [elaheh.rambarzini@refugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:elaheh.rambarzini@refugeecouncil.org.uk)**

### Asian women vulnerable to mental distress

The Sahelee Project Report identifies the gaps in service provision for young Asian women vulnerable to mental health distress and cites reasons why they are not accessing services in the London borough of Croydon. This research shows that there is a need for a culturally specific service or some form of integrated service provision in the borough. For draft copy contact Natasha Kapadia on: [natasha\\_kapadia@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:natasha_kapadia@croydon.gov.uk)

**For more information contact:  
020 8682 4350 or 07947 074 507.**

### Training booklet on self-harm

Newham Asian Women's Project has launched the training booklet, 'Silent scream', to raise awareness and provide information about self-harm, particularly where it concerns young Asian women.

**Contact: [mhp@nawp.org](mailto:mhp@nawp.org)**

### Safe for whom? Women's Human Rights in 'Safe List' countries; Albania, Jamaica and Ukraine

This Refugee Women's Resource Project (RWRP) report covers information on women's rights abuses in three countries included on the Home Office 'safe country list'. It shows that women's rights continue to be systematically violated whilst women have very little recourse to protection and/or legal redress.

According to the report, trafficked girls and women from Albania may be returned to family members who trafficked them in the first place or to the very same situation from which they were trafficked and often this leads to re-trafficking.

Lesbian women in Jamaica have been subjected to vigilante action by the community including being beaten, cut, burned, raped and shot on account of their sexuality.

Ukrainian law against domestic violence refers to a victim's behaviour in provoking outbreaks of domestic violence and this can serve as an excuse for the perpetrator's behaviour.

**A copy of the report is available at:  
[www.asylumaid.org.uk](http://www.asylumaid.org.uk)  
or contact Bethany Collier on 020 7377 5123 or  
[bethanyc@asylumaid.org.uk](mailto:bethanyc@asylumaid.org.uk)**

## TRAINING

### **Introductory Course on Counselling Refugees: Oct 04-July 05**

The Refugee Therapy Centre (RTC) is organising this course. It is aimed at young refugee volunteers and workers from refugee community organisations who have some interest in mental health and would like to help members in their community.

**Contact RTC on 020 7272 2565/4231 for more information.**

### **Women into Leadership**

Mosaada Centre for single women in London is organising 3 residential weekend courses which provide leadership training, coaching and consultation to refugee women seeking to effect change within their community and professional organisations.

Residential Dates are: 10-12 September, 26-28 November 2004 and 25-27 February 2005.

**Contact: Brenda Anthony on 020 7247 7111 or [brenda@mosaada.org.uk](mailto:brenda@mosaada.org.uk)**

### **Capacity Building Training Courses**

Women's Resource Centre is organising courses on:

**Introduction to Management** (in partnership with Voluntary Action Westminster): 12 & 19 July 2004

**Working With Volunteers** (In the Bethnal Green area): 13 & 20 July 2004

**Introduction to Planning & Developing Policies:** (in partnership with Hackney Voluntary Action) 14 & 21 July 2004

**Media Capacity Building:** 15 July 2004

**Contact Emily Sawyer on 020 7426 9636, or [training@wrc.org.uk](mailto:training@wrc.org.uk)**

### **Tackling Domestic Violence**

Women's Trust is organising 3 courses on:

**Children and Domestic Violence: 13th July 2004**

**Domestic Violence Awareness: 8th July 2004**

**Children and Domestic Violence: 13th July 2004**

It is aimed at all staff working in agencies that work with women and children experiencing domestic violence.

**Contact Heidi Sabrautzky on 020 7795 6444/6999 or [kyria@wtrust.entadsl.com](mailto:kyria@wtrust.entadsl.com)**

### **Child Contact and the Law: 15th July**

Rights of Women is organising a new course for women working with women affected by child contact issues.

**Contact 020 7251 6575/6 or [email info@row.org.uk](mailto:info@row.org.uk)**

## Funding News

### **THE SIGRID RAUSING TRUST: Funded Groups - Supporting Women**

The Sigrid Rausing Trust is a grant giving foundation based in Britain. The majority of the Trust's grants are given to organisations that work internationally. However the Trust makes a number of small grants to groups based in Britain, usually to support women or to support refugees to help themselves. Unsolicited applications are not usually accepted, but small grants are frequently made on the recommendation of a larger group already funded by the Trust, whose work and leadership is well known and valued by the trustees. For more information please see: [www.sigrid-rausing-trust.org](http://www.sigrid-rausing-trust.org)  
Deadline: Rolling

[www.cominit.com/Scholarships2004/sld-633.html](http://www.cominit.com/Scholarships2004/sld-633.html)

### **DISARM**

It is an independent charity that has been set up in response to the growing levels of violent crime within vulnerable communities around Great Britain. Funding is available to not-for-profit organisations that support victims of violent crime and their communities to enable them to work together and seek out effective ways of addressing the key issues that lead to violent crime behaviour. For more information please see:

[www.choicefm.com/Article.asp?id=14013](http://www.choicefm.com/Article.asp?id=14013)

### **Gender Specific Resource Room**

Refugee Women's Resource Project has launched a Resource Room with information about women and asylum including country origin information. The resource room is available to refugee women advocates and supporters. Asylum seeking women who want to undertake their own case research can also use the resource with support from the project.

**Contact Bethany Collier at  
[bethanyc@asylumaid.org.uk](mailto:bethanyc@asylumaid.org.uk)  
or 020 7377 5123.**

**Royal Association for Deaf  
people** offers one to one support to deaf ethnic minority women.

**For more information contact  
[Samita.paul@royaldeaf.org.uk](mailto:Samita.paul@royaldeaf.org.uk)  
or 01245257704.**