

Strategic Plan 2017-2021



SUPPORTING AND
EMPOWERING
REFUGEES

The Refugee Council has been changing refugees' lives for the better since 1951, the year the UN Refugee Convention was first signed. From the Hungarians who fled their country in the 1950s, to the Syrians arriving in the UK today, the Refugee Council has been welcoming refugees to the UK for over six decades, transforming the lives of over a million individuals, holding successive governments to account and speaking out strongly for refugee rights.

Today, when more people are displaced by violence and conflict than at any time since 1945, when public and political opinion on refugees is increasingly polarised and when the UK asylum system routinely fails many who seek our protection, the need for the Refugee Council is greater than ever.

In the face of these challenges, our duty is clear: to expand our transformative services and make them available to many more people seeking protection; to mobilise greater public and civil society support for refugees; to promote refugee voices and boost the profile of refugee-led organisations across the country; and to ensure that the UK does not shirk its refugee protection obligations.

We will discharge that duty by changing for the better the way that all refugees are treated in the UK. This means sharpening our cutting edge as campaigners – galvanising public support, challenging Government policy, promoting refugee voices – and helping many more people – young and old, women and men, people seeking protection and those with refugee status – overcome the daily obstacles and struggles they face as they grapple with the deeply flawed asylum system in the UK.

Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our Vision

The UK will be a country that respects the dignity of everyone who seeks protection, regardless of the outcome of their claims, and ensures that those granted asylum are supported to live safe and fulfilling lives.

Our Mission

To be a tenacious, resourceful and effective champion of refugee rights, transforming refugees' lives, holding governments to account and changing public attitudes for the better.

Our Values

- Empathy and respect drive everything we do, both inside and outside the organisation
- We focus on the humanity and dignity of the people we help, not their nationality or immigration status
- We believe that cooperation and collaboration are essential to achieving meaningful change
- We are resolute and creative in the promotion and defence of refugee rights
- We believe that transparency and openness are the keys to accountability

Goal 1:

To change for the better the way refugees are welcomed and treated in the UK

- We will achieve significant, progressive changes to the UK Government's refugee policy and will secure substantial operational improvements to the UK asylum system, informed by our extensive first-hand experience of working with refugees and people seeking asylum;
- We will use our service outcome and client feedback data to monitor the impact we have on the lives and prospects of our direct beneficiaries.

Goal 2:

To increase the number of refugees who access our specialist, transformative, services

- Each year we will increase significantly the number of people we help directly, whether they are seeking asylum or have refugee status, by expanding our overall service capacity;
- We will establish service hubs in London, the South East, the Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside, facilitating the expansion of our four service pillars: children, integration and employment, resettlement and therapeutic support;
- We will also develop in new areas where there is both demand and local support for our presence.

Goal 3:

To galvanise public support for refugees and be instrumental in creating a powerful, popular, movement for change

- We will increase public awareness of and support for our advocacy work by growing the number of our active supporters and the number of people with whom we engage digitally and via other channels;
- We will monitor shifts in public attitudes towards refugees to inform our supporter engagement strategies;
- Our Advocacy Network will be joined by individual subscribers, small grass-roots organisations, faith groups and NGOs, raising awareness of and widening participation in conversations about the big issues affecting refugees in the UK.

Goal 4:

To be a credible and trusted authority on the needs and aspirations of refugees in the UK

- Through our Advocacy Network, we will be in regular, two way, contact and dialogue with refugee and community-led groups across the UK, sharing information about changes that affect them and supporting them to influence policy decisions that affect their members;
- We will ensure that our priorities reflect refugees concerns and interests by engaging with Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) across the UK, including through an annual consultation process, and by systematically analysing our service user feedback.

Goal 5:

To be an independent, accountable, value-led and sustainable organisation

- We will expand our donor base substantially to ensure that voluntary income continues both to provide a major source of our revenue and to safeguard our independence;
- We will double our investment per head in supporting and developing our staff and volunteers;
- We will increase the diversity of our staff and volunteers.