



Photo: Smart Banda, with thanks to SBC Theatre

IMPACT REPORT

2021/22



SUPPORTING AND
EMPOWERING
REFUGEES

“ It’s been an extraordinary period for us at the Refugee Council. Certainly, like no other in recent times. ”

ENVER SOLOMON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, REFUGEE COUNCIL

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Refugee Council's 2021/2022 impact report is in memory of the 32 men, women and children who tragically lost their lives in the Channel on 24th November 2021.

INTRODUCTION

BY ENVER SOLOMON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, REFUGEE COUNCIL



Photo: Ingrid Turner

The past eighteen months has seen the fall of Kabul to the Taliban and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, both provoking a wave of refugees. Thirty-two people, including three children, drowned when their boat capsized crossing the Channel in November 2021. Meanwhile parliament passed the Nationality and Borders Act, which punishes people seeking asylum who have had to take dangerous journeys to reach Britain. And the government has launched a draconian plan to ship some of these men, women and children against their will to Rwanda, without a fair hearing on UK soil.

It's been an extraordinary period for us at the Refugee Council. Certainly, like no other in recent times.

We have quickly mobilised teams to support Afghans, thousands of whom are still stuck in hotels over a year after being evacuated from their country. We have also expanded services to support Ukrainians who have arrived in the UK, providing them with what they need to navigate life in a new country, including accessing therapeutic support.

At the same time life for those living in limbo on less than £8 a day in the asylum system has become more desperate and disturbing. Our powerful analysis and reports have highlighted how tens of thousands are waiting many months or years for a decision on their claim. We have exposed the harsh reality of life in substandard hotel accommodation cut off from any meaningful support.

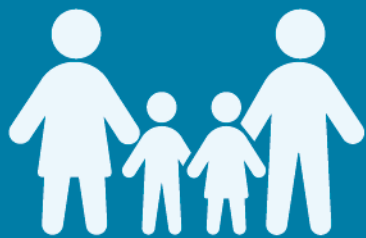
The fear, anxiety and horror of being sent to Rwanda is causing many of those we work with to greatly suffer. We know some, including children, have self-harmed as a result. We have not held back from powerfully presenting this evidence in parliament, to government and in the media.

Whilst the external world has been extremely demanding, we have also focused on developing and improving our organisation – driven by our **organisational strategy** to 2025. We launched a new service for all unaccompanied children who are seeking asylum after being awarded a new government contract for the work. Great progress has also been made developing our safeguarding practice.

We have made a first stage investment in upgrading our IT, reviewed our approach to data protection and our finance systems and processes. We have also established a whole organisation approach to the meaningful involvement of refugees in all our work and are working hard to take forward our deep commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The nature of our operating environment and the delivery of our strategy means that change is our constant companion. This is both demanding and exciting. It is all possible thanks to our incredible staff, volunteers and all our partners, supporters and funders. We know that together we can have an even greater impact.

IN 2021/22, TOGETHER, WE SUPPORTED:



12,316

women, men and children

Most clients are from five countries:

71%



AFGHANISTAN

SYRIA

IRAN

SUDAN

ERITREA



2,700

adults supported to live with dignity in Home Office hotels and provided with clothing, shoes, phones and emergency financial support



5,238

separated children were supported with vital advice and entitlements. A 54% increase on last year

2,207

refugees received integration support, including learning English, finding a home and returning to work



6,089

individual and group counselling sessions delivered to help people come to terms with trauma

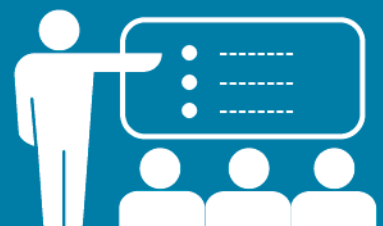
3,393

people were given support to resettle, including accessing healthcare and education, and building their life in their new community



254

professionals benefited from our specialist training sessions



OUR WORK WITH CHILDREN

Unaccompanied children – forced to flee their home countries due to war, violence and persecution – have had their lives, and families, torn apart, and often suffered unimaginable trauma and terrifying journeys to reach safety. Since 1994, the Refugee Council has been this country's only national provider of services for separated children.

THIS YEAR, OUR CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUPPORTED 5,238 SEPARATED CHILDREN



- Our Age Disputes Project supports young people who have been incorrectly identified as adults, to be accepted and seen as children. Our specialist advisors provide one-to-one support to help children overturn incorrect or unlawful age assessments and access the vital support they are entitled to. In 2021/22 we were proud to support 307 young people who had been wrongly age assessed to be accepted as children. Further to this, our Age Disputes team supported three young people who had been detained and told that they were liable to be removed to Rwanda (the Government's policy to outsource people seeking asylum, who had arrived through unsanctioned routes) – we were able to successfully challenge their age and get them removed from detention and the Rwanda list.
- Since 2009 the Refugee Cricket Project has provided a safe space for unaccompanied young people to play a sport they love amongst friends, whilst accessing casework support as they navigate the asylum system. We now have exciting plans to build on this model by partnering with specialist sports organisations who can deliver sporting sessions while our advisors focus on providing in-depth advice on the asylum system, welfare and accommodation advice, and more. This will enable us to scale our impact and reach more young people.
- Our My View Service assists separated children between the ages of 11-18 with one-to-one counselling and creative art group therapy to overcome their past traumatic experiences. We offer bespoke and unique trauma-focused psychological therapy, tailored on the specific and cultural needs of the young people we support.
- Our Youth Development Programme ensures that young refugees begin to feel settled in their new environment and go on to build fulfilling lives. The programme delivers educational, social, professional and personal opportunities.



AHMED*

“ When I am in Dover, I tell them I am 16 years, they don't believe me, they tell me 'no, you are 28' I tell them no, it's not my real age.

Maybe because I'm tired when I come from France, and I'm afraid of the police. When I come to UK, I'm still afraid, I'm really so afraid. When the police tell me I will give you this age, I can't tell him no.

Just they tell me we'll give you this age, bring me to hotel, and I'm still afraid, I stay in my room. I don't feel comfortable, I'm afraid, I want to live with people like me, I want to go to school. In the hotel I get in a bad situation...

After two weeks they sent some social worker, they visit me, and speak with me, they say this is your age, you are not 28 years, you are 16. And they left couple of weeks, come again, ask me again, and say OK, we will come to take you... It's better, when I move from the hotel, now I feel better. I will start school in September.

**Name and image changed to protect identity*



Life in hotel - the food is very bad, and no one care for you, no one ask about you, just they left you to live with yourself. Now I have someone to care for me, he asks me 'how you feel, what you want?'

I lost my family. I come to find a place to live. ”

SUPPORTING REFUGEES TO RESETTLE AND REBUILD IN THE UK

OUR AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT WORK

In the summer of 2021 as the Taliban entered Kabul to begin their takeover, masses were forced to flee in horrific scenes to save themselves from persecution.

Refugee Council mobilised an immediate response to provide crucial support to people arriving under the different Government schemes; the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and Operation Pitting, where people were assessed by the Home Office and told whether they would receive support under the ACRS scheme.

We responded with agility to grow our staff teams to provide vital Afghan resettlement services – working with a total of 1,245 Afghans since August 2021, both in hotels and out in the community.

We are supporting families across Yorkshire, Lewisham and Hertfordshire and in hotels in Scarborough and Doncaster.

Many of these families have now spent over 15 months living in a hotel environment. Our multi-layered support services are designed to ease the suffering that these conditions bring. We continue to provide emotional and wellbeing support in hotels, critical advice, activities to support transitioning into UK life, housing support to help families move into permanent accommodation and integration support for those setting up life in their new communities.



Many people, including Hamid and his son (pictured above), became separated from close family members during the evacuation.

Furthermore, our public affairs and policy work has taken place alongside the programme delivery; on this front we've provided evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee regarding the experiences of Afghan communities in order to shed light on their circumstances and advocate for fairer policies and conditions:

- In September 2021, Enver Solomon our CEO gave oral evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee which can be viewed [here](#).
- We also submitted written evidence to the same enquiry which can be read [here](#).

“ My biggest wish is that one day peace will come in my country. Some of the girls are not with their families. One of our players is fifteen years old, she is alone, without her parents, it's really sad. I want to say a big thank you to the Refugee Council who helped us in everything and they are still helping us in everything right now as well. ”

NAJMA

(pictured here kicking the ball)



“ When we are playing football, we are free... We can raise our voice for our sisters, we still can do it here, for other ladies back in Afghanistan. ”

NARGES (pictured above in goal)

AHMAD*

Ahmad and his wife arrived in the UK from Kabul in August 2021. Ahmad was an interpreter, who the Taliban believed were eyes and ears for British forces.

To start with, Ahmad and his wife were in a hotel, where they had no control over their own lives. Luckily, they were offered a house, and at this point, Refugee Council began to support them.

**Name changed to protect identity.*

“ I met Refugee Council when we reached this house. There were groceries and things when we got there. Then after that they came the next day and showed us the city, helped us with filling the forms and things. They helped us with so many practical things.

Everything is online in this country, we didn't have any idea of that. In my country there are only a few things online. It is quite helpful to help us fill forms, register us with the GP, where to buy food, it was practical help. In the beginning they helped us a lot. Still if we need help now we can call.

After living here a year we are on our feet. But still they are there to help us if we ask. ”

WIDER RESETTLEMENT SUPPORT

In addition to our resettlement support for Afghans and Ukrainians, we are receiving new arrivals and delivering much needed integration support to refugees who have come via the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS). These include families from Syria, Iraq, Sudan and Palestine.

In total we are supporting **3,393** individuals with resettlement integration support.



In November 2021 we hosted the Prince of Wales at a visit with our clients from Afghanistan.

Photo: Kensington Palace

CAMPAIGNING

FOR A BETTER REFUGEE PROTECTION SYSTEM IN THE UK

2021

MARCH

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THE NEW PLAN FOR IMMIGRATION

Government revealed new immigration plans which included an expansion of unsuitable asylum reception centres and reducing the rights of refugees who arrive irregularly in the UK.

Refugee Council responded by setting up meetings with Government officials to learn more and make recommendations for a fairer approach. [See our response.](#)

MAY

LAUNCH OF TOGETHER WITH REFUGEES

Together With Refugees launched as a coalition of more than 500 national and local organisations who believe in showing compassion to refugees fleeing war and persecution. The coalition is calling for a better approach to supporting refugees that: allows people to seek safety in the UK, no matter how they came here; ensures people can live in dignity while they wait to find out if they will be granted protection; and enables refugees to make valuable contributions to their communities.

REFUGEE COUNCIL'S 70TH ANNIVERSARY [Find out more](#)

70 years since the UK signed the UN refugee convention. Watch the film [here](#).

JULY

NATIONALITY AND BORDERS BILL

Plans for a new piece of legislation (later to be named the Nationality and Borders Act) were published in the summer of 2021. Refugee Council worked with a range of organisations to oppose the most damaging elements of the bill. This included parts that treat refugees differently depending on how they arrive in the UK, changes to how the age of young refugees is assessed, and the expansion of large-scale reception centres. Working with the wider refugee sector and parliamentarians we defeated the Government a number of times during the parliamentary voting process.



2021

AUGUST

SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES FROM AFGHANISTAN

As UK forces withdrew from Afghanistan and the Taliban took power, Refugee Council was at the forefront of pushing the Government to evacuate those most at risk in Afghanistan to the UK. The UK Government committed to resettle 20,000 Afghan refugees, many of whom were evacuated during the withdrawal in August 2021. Since then Refugee Council, highlighting vital evidence from our resettlement teams across the country, has been working with local authorities, politicians and Government to improve support for those Afghans now in the UK, and pushing for an improved response for those still at risk in the region.

DECEMBER

THE TIMES AND SUNDAY TIMES CHRISTMAS CHARITY APPEAL

Refugee Council was selected for The Times and Sunday Times Christmas Charity Appeal 2021. This opportunity enabled us to reach audiences nationwide with a number of important features – telling personal and inspiring stories of refugee's lives, sharing truths on the asylum system and refugee issues, and raising significant funds for our services.

2022

FEBRUARY

IMPROVING THE UK RESPONSE TO THE UKRAINE REFUGEE WAR

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Refugee Council worked tirelessly with MPs, officials and local authorities to ensure that Ukrainian refugees were able to escape violence and find safety in the UK. Since then we have been working to ensure that the best possible integration support is available for the tens of thousands of people who have now arrived, and also working to find solutions to possible homelessness amongst refugees who have no long-term housing option.

MARCH

FAMILIES TOGETHER CAMPAIGN

The Families Together campaign coalition is made up of more than 100 organisations, working to bring refugee families together and to safety in the UK. It is co-chaired by the Refugee Council and British Red Cross.

Together with our coalition partners, we handed in a petition with more than 35,000 signatures calling on the Government to bring refugee families together, ran a campaign with **Schools of Sanctuary** which saw children learning about refugee family reunion in their classes, and produced a new local campaigning toolkit to help grassroots networks speak to their MPs about refugee family reunion.

Our campaigning led to a landmark win in May 2022. We successfully expanded the Immigration Rules to enable adult dependent children to reunite with their parent(s) in the UK. Refugee Council has been campaigning for this policy change since 2017.

2022

APRIL

NATIONALITY AND BORDERS ACT MADE LAW

Despite the profile and strength of collective voices calling out the Bill, the Nationality and Borders Act was passed into law in the spring of 2022. Our focus now will be to monitor and mitigate the real-life effects on refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK, and to continue to campaign for a fair and humane asylum system.

RWANDA PLANS

The Government announced a new plan to outsource people seeking asylum to Rwanda. The policy is designed so that people, who have arrived in the UK through unsanctioned routes, are removed from the UK to Rwanda and not entitled to return to the UK. We know that sending people abroad will do nothing to deter them from coming to the UK, and will only lead to more human suffering. Refugee Council has been speaking out against this policy, and calling on the Government to reset these proposals. We have taken a two-track approach to our work in this area which includes:

- Supporting children, wrongly age assessed as adults and therefore at risk of being removed to Rwanda, to have a full age assessment.
- Speaking out publicly against the proposal, using our 71 years of experience in supporting people who make irregular journeys to seek protection to evidence that these plans are not only wrong in principle, but unworkable in practice.




OUR WORK IN RESPONSE TO THE UKRAINE CRISIS

As soon as the brutal war on Ukraine began in February, we could foresee the number of refugees in the UK growing significantly. With exceptional and swift support from Lund Trust, we were able to launch an emergency matched funding appeal, to enable the inevitable expansion of our services and to deploy expert support where need was greatest.

To date we have supported 919 Ukrainian clients across the following interventions:

- **Intensive integration casework:** Clients are being supported into temporary and long-term housing, able to access critical resettlement advice, register with a GP, get their children registered at school and access welfare.
- **Therapeutic interventions:** Therapy sessions delivered to manage emotional distress, as well as support with social integration to help build connections and make friends in their new community through social activities.
- **Support for hosts:** Vital advice and support administered to members of the public who are hosting Ukrainians. This includes running cultural awareness workshops and facilitating peer support and key information sharing.
- **Capacity building community organisations:** Convening groups of refugee and Ukrainian-led organisations to help build their capacity, share best practice and support as many Ukrainian refugees across the sector as possible.

Refugee Council has been helping support Marta and her son Tim, from Ukraine. **Photo:** Hannah Brown



“It’s difficult to be so far from home, especially for my son.”

NATALIIA

“ I came to Britain on 27th April. I’m very happy that I met Taitum. She really, really helped me a lot.

I was worried a lot, before our meeting, but when I saw Taitum, I saw her smile, all the fears disappeared. I was happy because she helped me with all the documents, all the issues I had.

It’s very dreadful to come to a strange country, especially when there’s war in my own country. The first thing is I was looking for safety for my son and me, and we were scared because it’s a different country, different people, a different mentality. But you know, we had a warm welcome, London welcomed us with open arms. Taitum offered psychological help which really helped to release the stress.



Photo: Sean Pollock



My son found it difficult to move to a completely different country. He also misses his father a lot. Because he has a poor level of English, he also worried about that. Luckily we found him a school, we found him activity classes like Karate, and now he is happy, because that can distract from those thoughts, now he’s settled here.

My biggest message is never give up, and look with hope into the future. Yes, it’s difficult to start a new life from scratch. Yes, it’s not that fast that you can build a new life in another country. But you can do that, with the help of good people that surround you. ”

LEFT: Nataliia from Ukraine and her Refugee Council support worker, Taitum. Photo: Sean Pollock

PROVIDING CRISIS SUPPORT

IN JULY 2022 REFUGEE COUNCIL PUBLISHED A **REPORT INTO THE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE IN HOTEL ASYLUM ACCOMMODATION, RAISING CONCERNS AROUND THE IMPACT OF PROLONGED STAYS IN OFTEN REMOTE AND CRAMPED HOTELS.**

Between April 2021 and March 2022, the Home Office increased its use of hotels to house people seeking asylum over extended periods of time, with some left languishing in hotels for months and years without sufficient access to the legal and health services they need, cut off from the rest of society and support networks, profoundly impacting their health and wellbeing.

Over this period, Refugee Council supported 2,700 adults seeking asylum in hotels with social integration and wellbeing activities, as well as advice and guidance. Activities included English conversation and befriending sessions, distribution of clothing donations, and the supply of mobile phones and SIM cards.

26,380 people accommodated in hotels across the UK at the end of 2021 (tripled over the course of the year)

More than 10,000 people seeking asylum spent longer than three months cooped up in hotels in 2021; **more than 3,000** were staying for over six months

26 days was the average time that people seeking asylum spent in initial accommodation between September 2019 and February 2020, before the dramatic increase in the use of hotels

“ You don’t feel free. It makes me feel depressed and that I am wasting my time. I am 40 years old, I am not young anymore, it is taking important time from my life. I should be in my own home having life with my family and doing a job making a difference to others like I was before. ”

(Abu* from Sudan)

*Name changed to protect identity

We would like to thank Vodafone Limited for the donation of 1,900 SIM cards and 3,055 phones which helped our clients to access digital services and allowed them to stay in touch with friends and families.

AMITA

Refugee Council Project Coordinator

“ Working in the hotels, it’s very overwhelming, and there’s just a million and one things that need doing. I do the health advocacy, but on top of that I do clothes donations, helping people access legal support – I go to three hotels, one day a week each, but if there’s an urgent need, or something that’s happened, I’ll go more.

The mood goes up and down, it can be OK, but it can be very low. I think it makes a big difference having someone come in from outside, because they don’t get any visitors, and there’s nothing to do.

Some hotels, they’re in the middle of nowhere, there’s nowhere to go, so boredom and depression, that happens. If people stay there too long, they go really downhill, I think about six months people can manage, and then after that you see a real decline, and some people, they’re there for over a year.

Accessing help is a big issue, some of the hotels are really far from a GP, or from any services. ”



Ali has spoken out about the difficulties of dealing with long delays in the asylum system. He’s living in a hotel, unable to work or move forward with his life.

Photo: Andy Aitchison

DESTITUTION SERVICE

We provided a vital safety net for **109 PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM** facing the crisis of destitution and homelessness, providing basic necessities like hot meals and shower and laundry facilities, as well as access to legal advice, casework, therapeutic support and social activities.

We are most grateful to The Linbury Trust for providing further funding for this service, from January 2022.



INFOLINE

Our freephone helpline, Infoline, connects refugees and people seeking asylum with detailed and tailored information about local and specialist support.

Over the last year, the service received **2,704 calls, emails and enquiries**, requesting information about immigration and asylum support, housing, destitution and wellbeing.

THE SERVICE SUPPORTED A TOTAL OF 1,034 CLIENTS.

Most queries were received from clients originating from five countries. The most popular request for information concerned general immigration and asylum support, followed by questions about housing, destitution and wellbeing.



HELPING REFUGEES RETURN TO WORK



Photo: Ingrid Turner

Our team of expert employment advisors understand the barriers to working in the UK and are able to support refugees through the process.

This year we supported refugees back into work by offering careers advice and guidance, employment-preparation workshops, help with CVs, job applications, interview techniques, and complementary sessions on employment law. Through partnerships with key, reputable businesses such as Ikea, Starbucks, PwC and ServiceNow, we have developed bespoke pathways to support our clients into meaningful employment.

OUR IMPACT:

BUILDING BRIDGES PROGRAMME:

This is an NHS funded partnership for Refugee Health Professionals in London. We assist refugee doctors to re-qualify to UK standards and secure employment. In 21/22 we helped **45** clients with requalification. **13** of them were supported into their first NHS job as doctors with a licence to practise in the UK.

IKEA: A total of **70** clients completed our IKEA customer service training in 21/22, 42 were successful in the interviews for 8-week paid work placements in IKEA stores (Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Doncaster, Peterborough and Croydon).

From these placements, **38** clients progressed into work on permanent contracts.

A further **49 REFUGEES INTO JOBS** participants were supported into paid work.

77% of the jobs that people accessed were professional jobs while the rest of clients entered entry level positions in the care, hospitality or retail sectors.

100 CLIENTS IN TOTAL SUPPORTED INTO WORK

FARZAD

“ Looking for work was horrible. Despite all of my experiences, whatever I knew at home, it wasn't useful here. I applied for supermarkets, I was applying for simple jobs, but there were a lot of rejections. It was very tough.

Then I thought there is no hope. I was desperate, really. It was six months or more. Then I met this guy from Refugee Council, he said there's this project, you get training. I said I'm happy to do whatever gets me into a UK work environment, I just went to that training course, it was four weeks, it was basics of interviewing, we went to Ikea.

I think it's a year and a half that I've been there. It's better and better. I'm getting acknowledged more, some staff were seeing me as an outsider, but now they gradually open up, engage me in their conversation, share information more.

I think if more companies follow suit, like Ikea, it would be great.



When refugees are coming, as asylum seekers, it's very difficult to send them back to their home countries, it's very dangerous for them to go back. Sending them to Rwanda, deterring them, it wouldn't work. To help people to integrate, give them a chance to work, even simple work, if you just let them do that, it helps them to integrate faster. Train them - many of them are very young, very quick to learn. It would be the most practical solution, I think.”

SPECIALIST HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAMMES

Refugees and people seeking asylum are disproportionately affected by complex health needs due to the traumatic experiences they have encountered.

Our sector-leading therapeutic service provides twelve weeks of trauma-informed 1-1 support as well as group sessions to overcome psychological barriers when transitioning to life in the UK. Last year we supported 724 adults, 78 families and 537 separated children. Our specialist therapists tailor interventions according to each client's needs. The service is available digitally as well as in person and provides specialist interpreters for clients facing language barriers.

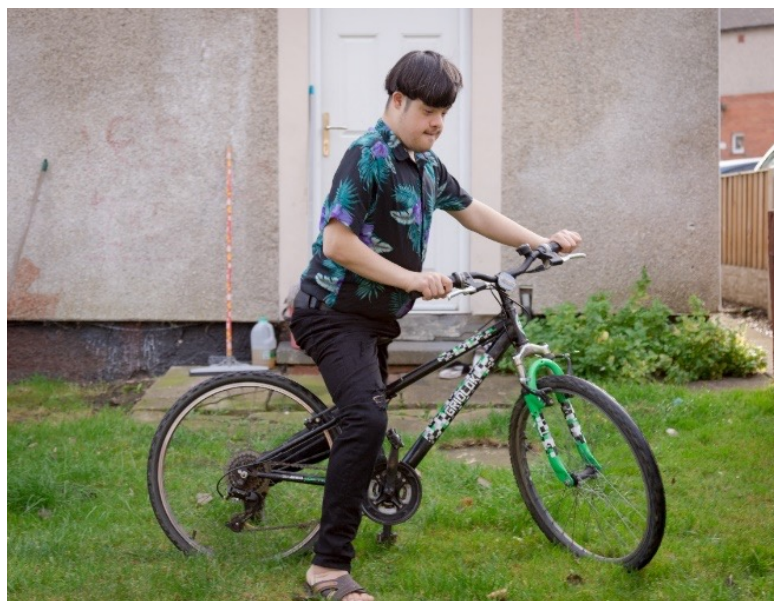
Therapeutic Services for Adults and Children:

- 85% reported improvement in mental and physical wellbeing,
- 76% reported increased social inclusion,
- 72% reported an improved ability to make informed choices.

Our Health Access for Refugees Project (HARP), funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, continues to improve health inequalities across Yorkshire, removing individual and systemic barriers to accessing healthcare. Last year 540 HARP clients received 1-1 support, and 1,777 clients attended group sessions.

Informative briefing sessions were delivered to thousands of people seeking asylum in Home Office hotels and initial accommodation – people who often suffer from poor mental health due to experiencing isolation and being unable to access basic amenities.

Photo: Ingrid Turner



DILSHAD (pictured left)

“ He has a better life. He has the right to be treated like a human being. My son now has the right school and education for him. ”

Zakia, Dilshad's mother

LEARNING MATTERS

STRIVING TO ALWAYS DO BETTER

Reporting on our impact is also being open and transparent about what we have learned, where we need to do better and what we need to do differently. Whilst we have achieved a great deal, we didn't manage to realise everything in all the areas we identified last year for improvement.

OUR NEW APPROACH TO REFUGEE INVOLVEMENT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.

We carried out a mapping exercise across all our work to date on refugee involvement and set up a staff group that produced a new refugee involvement strategy and delivery plan. The group engaged with refugees we work with and explored different approaches to lived experience and user involvement. We are confident we now have a clear plan for how we will deliver refugee involvement in a meaningful way that shares power. We must now ensure we implement it and, critically, learn and reflect as we go forward.

TAKING AN AUTHENTIC WHOLE ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI).

We have a clear EDI plan in place with an initial focus on anti-racism. Working with external support we have challenged ourselves to consider what leadership and organisational development is needed to embed EDI in a whole organisation approach that is authentic and not just a tick box exercise. We know we have further work to do to be constantly reflecting and holding ourselves to account.

DEMONSTRATING THE IMPACT OF OUR SERVICES THROUGH CREDIBLE IMPACT DATA.

We are on an impact journey for our services. Presenting data that shows the difference we make through our direct work with refugees is taking us longer than we would like.

However, we are now piloting new data collection and are committed to producing high level data on the impact of our services. Through this, we will know the difference we are genuinely making for those we work with and where we need to refine our services to have an even greater impact.

MAINTAINING PROGRESS ON IMPROVING OUR SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

We have implemented an improved approach to safeguarding and moved forward in implementing a new fundraising CRM and upgrading our IT. However, we still have more to do to ensure our digital infrastructure and associated data protection systems are fully fit for purpose. Putting in place a digital HR system is a key part of this.

Over the last year, through learning and reflection, we have identified additional areas where we need to improve:

DEVELOPING AND GROWING OUR EXTENDED LEADERSHIP TEAM AND MANAGERS TO BE GREAT LEADERS.

Our heads and managers play a critical role across the organisation. Yet we have not done enough to support them in their leadership roles. A key priority for us over the next year is investing in them by providing a tailored development programme so they have the skills, knowledge and expertise to be the very best leaders.

DELIVERING OUR STRATEGIC COMMITMENT TO ESTABLISH PATHWAYS FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE TO SUPPORT THEIR CAREER PROGRESSION AND DEVELOPMENT.

We have yet to begin implementing this important commitment and unless we consciously prioritise it, we risk overlooking it. We plan to invest in establishing a dedicated programme to support staff from refugee backgrounds to develop their career pathways.

As part of this we will look at what we need to do to support people from refugee backgrounds to succeed in different roles across the organisation. We see this as being separate and distinct from our work on refugee involvement.

ENHANCING OUR BRAND.

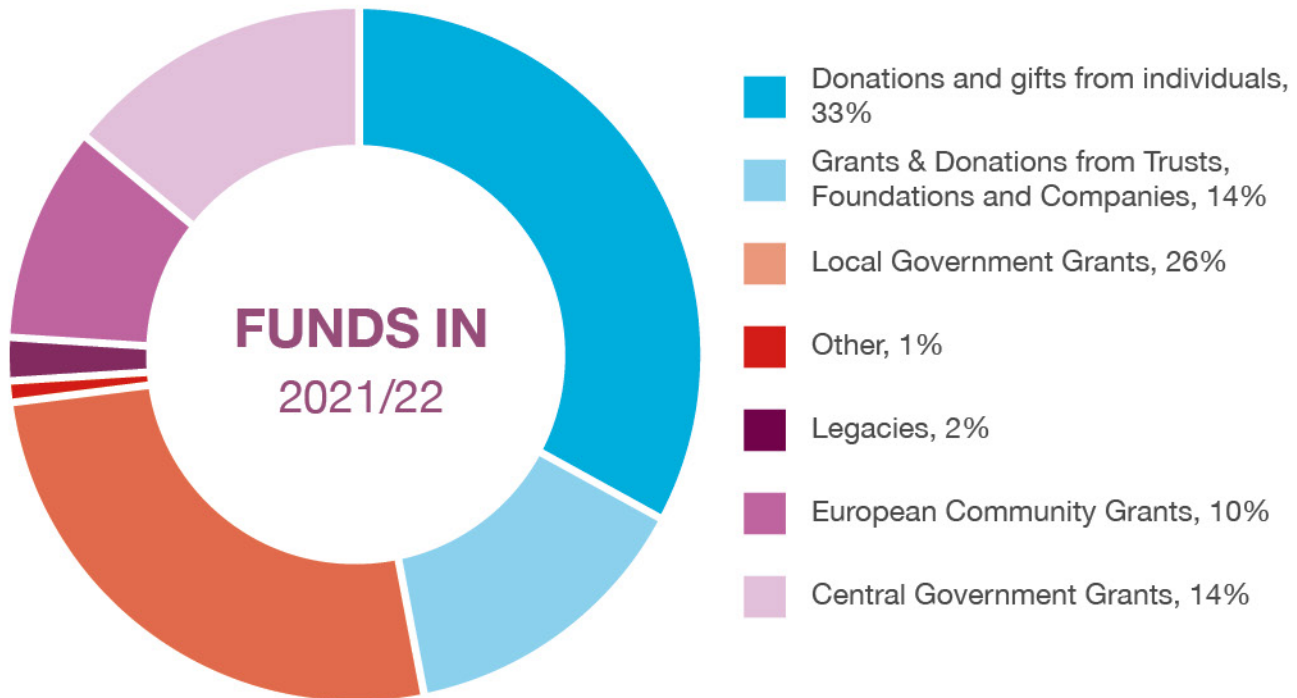
If we are to reach a wider audience and inspire new supporters and allies we know we must have a strong brand presence. It's been a long time since we reviewed and improved our brand identity, and it is long overdue. This will also be a priority over the next year.

Photo: Smart Banda (with SBC Theatre)

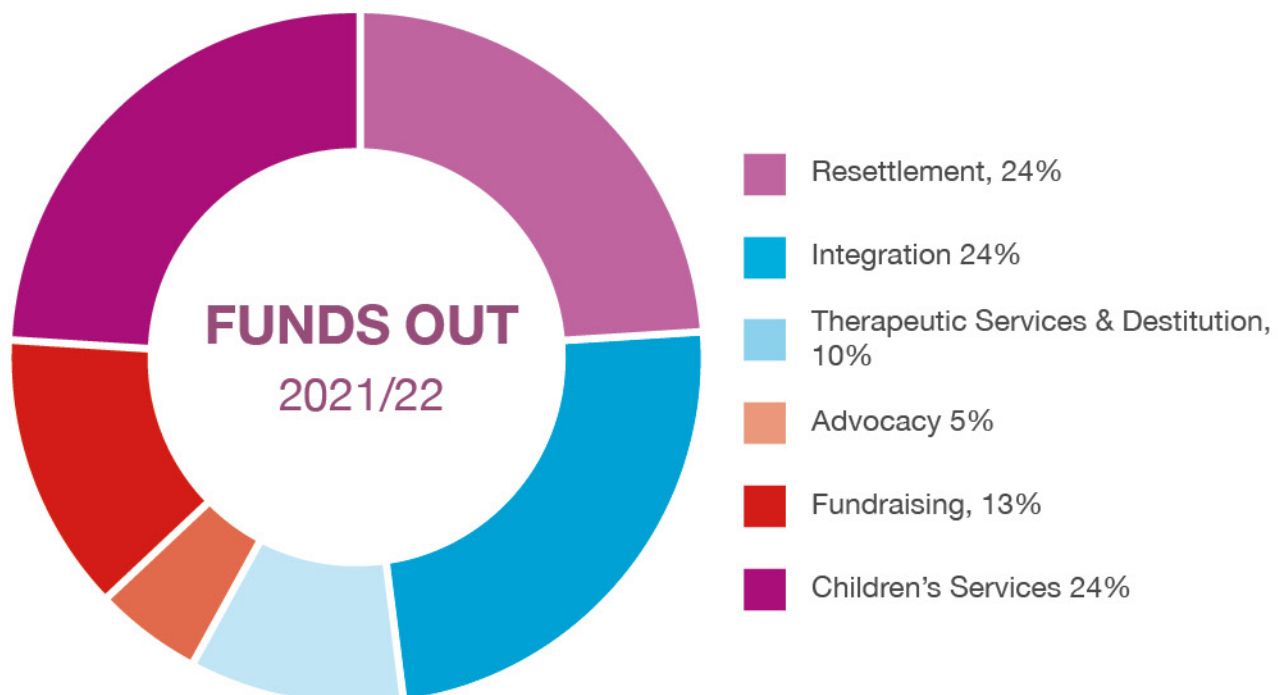


FINANCES

LAST YEAR, **49%** OF OUR FUNDING WAS FROM INDIVIDUALS, TRUSTS, FOUNDATIONS AND COMPANIES



87% OF OUR FUNDING IS SPENT ON CHARITABLE WORK



THANK YOU

TO OUR AMAZING SUPPORTERS

We hope you find the work outlined in this report reassuring and please know that your support over the last year has been instrumental in making all of this possible.

As we continue to witness the terrible effects of war and displacement globally, it brings hope to know that we can bring positive change to the lives of refugees in this country.

We are deeply grateful to you for your continued support and commitment to refugee communities.

PARTICULAR THANKS GO TO:

38 Degrees

AB Charitable Trust

The Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Foundation

Barbara Cairns

BBC Children in Need

Bloomberg

Comic Relief

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The National Lottery Community Fund


The Rayne Foundation

The Task Force Trust (Anthony D Steen CBE, Chairman)

The Times and Sunday Times Christmas Charity Appeal 2021

The Valentine Charitable Trust

Miss V L Clore's 1967 Charitable Trust



“ For me, I was welcomed. I know that some people are not very friendly with refugees. Refugees come to live in a safe country, we are here to also develop the country and feel one part of the new home. ”

Basma

Contact us at the Refugee Council,
PO Box 68614, London, E15 9DQ

supporter@refugeecouncil.org.uk
or 020 7346 1205

Please keep in touch with our work on
Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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**SUPPORTING AND
EMPOWERING
REFUGEES**