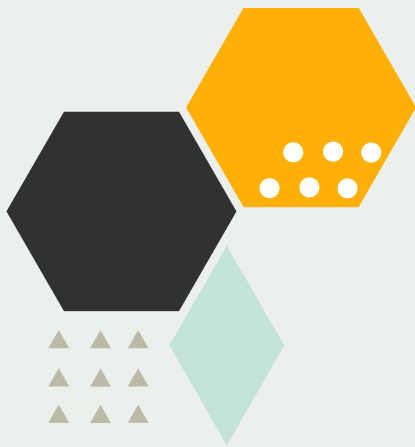




PARTICIPATION | INCLUSION | INFORMATION



This toolkit was devised and developed by COMMEET Fellowship  
for Community Empowerment

# Acknowledgements

Lead: Rosalind Wade

Editors: Sigfried Janzing & Saima Raza

Contributors:

Ayar Ata

Jos Hermans

Sumaiyah Jamaludin

Sigfried Janzing

Charles Jeurgens

Alex Mifsud

Akpezi Ogbuigwe

Saima Raza

Ahmet Sayer

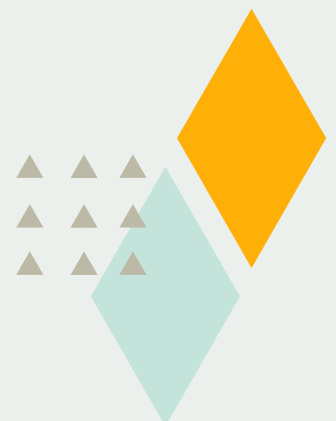
Rosalind Wade

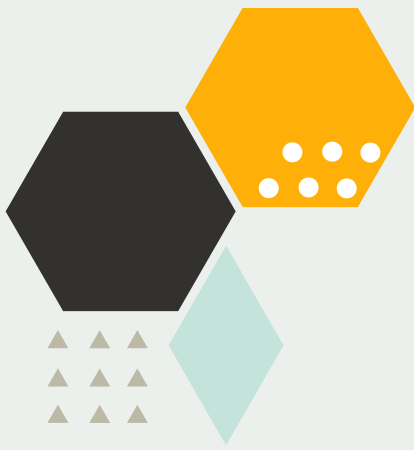
Fahmida Nilar Win

Editorial Advice: John Baines & Barbara James

Design & Layout: Saima Raza

Images by: Pixabay, Unsplash & Canva





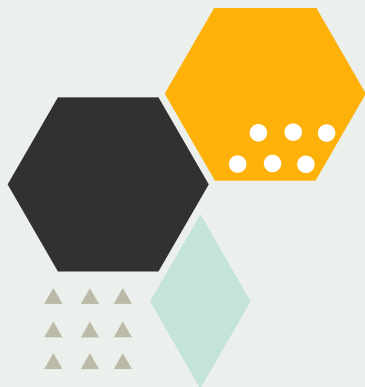
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Comments on the Toolkit are welcome and can be sent to:  
E-mail: [info@COMMEET.org](mailto:info@COMMEET.org)

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## Contributors



**Dr. Ayar Ata**

Dr Ayar Ata is a freelance researcher and linguist working for The Ministry of Justice in London. He is an active member of the Sustainability Research Group at London South Bank University and co-chair of the Croydon Refugee and New Communities Forum. He serves as an ExCom member of the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM), and serves the IASFM's Working Group as a blog commissioning author. During the course of his PhD he established the Maheen Project to aid unaccompanied minors in London: ([www.maheenproject.co.uk](http://www.maheenproject.co.uk)).



**Jos Hermans**

Jos Hermans is a former Dean of a business school in the Netherlands. He is the founder and current chair of COMMEET. He founded this Fellowship to organise support for everyone working in the field of community empowerment. COMMEET stands for "Come and Meet", the principle of bringing together people in order to create their own future. Besides his work for COMMEET, Jos is also an advisor to the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability.



**Sumaiyah Jamaludin**

Sumaiyah Jamaludin is a lecturer at the Kulliyah of Nursing, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). Her research interests and publications include both nursing education and nursing clinical practice primarily in cardiovascular and its related diseases, critical care nursing, community health awareness, information technologies in nursing education and nursing clinical skill assessment. She is also actively involved in community empowerment activities by sharing knowledge.



**Sigfried Janzing**

Sigfried Janzing is currently Director of the Regional Archives in the Gouda region of the Netherlands. In this role he initiated community heritage projects with the Moroccan community in the city of Gouda (2003–2004) and the Moluccan community in the village of Moordrecht (2011). He is advisor and connector for Bangladesh for COMMEET, advisor and trainer for the Bangladesh Archives and Records Management Society and advisor for the NGO, Oasis for Posterity, in Balagram, northwest Bangladesh. He travels frequently to Bangladesh for community and archives projects. For the Refugees' Network Netherlands ([www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl](http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl)) he works as an employment coach. Licensed in History & Mediterranean Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen, he has a special connection with Spain and Portugal where he lived for some years. He is a member of the International Rotary network.



**Charles Jeurgens**

Charles Jeurgens is Professor of Archival Studies at the University of Amsterdam and an advisor to the Dutch National Archives. He is involved in various community archiving projects. His research interests are related to understanding the diverse and sometimes conflicting meanings of archiving for individual and collective memory-making, identity formation and keeping evidence. He is in particular interested in the challenges digital media generate for sustainable recordkeeping. He frequently publishes on these subjects.



**Alex Misfud**

Alex Mifsud lectures on Environmental Education (EE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Malta and the UK, with a focus on employee engagement and training through the application of thinking skills. As a founding member of the Centre for Environmental Education and Research (CEER), at the University of Malta, Dr Mifsud developed courses and training programmes on EE and ESD to a wide range of audiences. She completed her doctoral research on Education for Sustainable Development at London South Bank University, UK.



**Akpezi Ogbuigwe**

Akpezi Ogbuigwe was former Head of Environmental Education and Training (2002-2012) and later Coordinator of the Ecosystem Management Programme at the United Nations Environment Programme (2013-2014). She is the founder of ANPEZ Center for Environment and Development, Nigeria and currently serves as Regional Advisor for the United Nations University African Regional Centres of Excellence (RCEs). She is an experienced and versatile legal education research consultant in Education for Sustainable Development and Climate Change.



**Saima Raza**

Saima Raza holds a degree in Law, an LLM Human Rights Law and an LLM International law. She has worked in international development and community engagement initiatives to promote social justice and campaigned against modern slavery and for migrant justice issues in Bosnia, Western Balkans, Greece, Indonesia, Turkey, Calais and Budapest. She is on the boards of trustees with Migrant Help and Stop Hate UK, the founder of Under One Sky, and co-chair of the Croydon Refugees & New Communities Forum. She works for Penny Appeal International, an INGO where she oversees projects in Asia and is a research fellow at the Centre for Human Rights, Multiculturalism and Migration (Indonesia).



**Ahmet Sayer**

Ahmet Sayer is a project researcher, community builder and lecturer at UCLL in Belgium. He is currently working on three European projects; EMERgenCeS (Merging Refugee Educators Competences & Skills), DISC (Digital skills for Integration and Active Citizenship) and AMEDY (Active Media Education for Disabled Youth). He is a lecturer on the Design Thinking for Community Building course for international students and a PhD candidate at the Leuven Institute of Criminology. Discovering his fascination for people and communities, he is passionate about unlocking the potential of migrants both for adding value to society and integration.



**Rosalind Wade**

Rosalind Wade chairs the London Regional Centre of Expertise(RCE) for Education for Sustainability (EfS) hosted by London South Bank University. Rosalind is a distinguished research fellow of the Schumacher Institute for Sustainable Systems. She is interested in incorporating migration as a key element of the sustainability agenda and in 2016-18 she worked on the EU funded PROMISE Refugee project to set up and support a youth support network across Europe. She was also the lead academic for the EU funded Fresh Start project on migrant entrepreneurial education from 2017-2019.



**Nilar Win @ Fahmida**

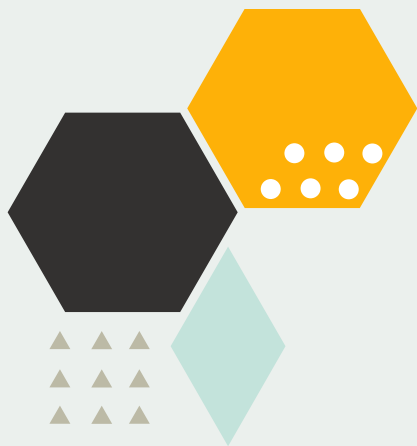
Fahmida Nilar Win is an assistant professor and an academic with clinical expertise in obstetrics and gynaecology at the Faculty of Medicine, International Islamic University of Malaysia. Her areas of interest include maternofetal medicine, psychiatric disorders in pregnancy and medical education. Furthermore, she actively participates in community services to migrant populations especially in terms of health care access and social welfare and facilitates their engagement in the local community.

“

“Refugees are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, children, with the same hopes and ambitions as us—except that a twist of fate has bound their lives to a global refugee crisis on an unprecedented scale.”

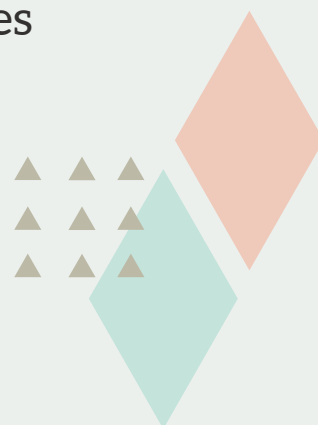
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Khaled Hosseini



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# Welcome!

## Toolkit for Community Groups: Promoting the Well-Being of Migrants & Displaced Persons

Congratulations on starting an initiative welcoming newcomers to your society. The toolkit is directed at members of communities who wish to develop a culture of inclusion for displaced persons and migrants generally. This will have huge benefits for the future wellbeing of your whole community. Migrants want to contribute and participate and you can help make this happen.

By providing you with ideas about starting points and possible first steps, this toolkit aims to help you to:

- Establish an effective community empowerment group
- Raise community awareness about the inclusion of migrants
- Organise your initiative in a way that ensures maximum success

This toolkit is intended to support you in starting up your efforts to help newcomers in your society. It does not provide ultimate solutions for all challenges. It is designed to help you to get going. As soon as you have achieved your first successes with the settlement of migrants, you will doubtless feel a great sense of achievement, but also have questions regarding next steps.

Our COMMEET Fellowship aims to help to empower you and your community. However, more advanced expertise can be found at the professional intergovernmental organisations such as UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency and IOM, the International Organisation for Migration. We will be happy to refer you to them for further support.

But for now, we welcome you to our COMMEET Fellowship and wish you the best of luck with your initiative.




# Introduction

## Toolkit for Community Groups: Promoting the Well-Being of Migrants & Displaced Persons

This toolkit is designed for communities who are trying to promote wellbeing and inclusion and who wish to celebrate diverse cultures and experience. Migration is not a new phenomenon. Humans have always travelled and if we look back far enough in our family histories we will find that we are all migrants. Of course there are many different causes of migration but forced migration as a result of conflict, persecution, climate change, natural disaster or extreme poverty is now at unprecedented levels (UNHCR 2019). Migration is a complex area where a number of different terms are used, such as refugee, asylum seeker, migrant, newcomer and there is a lot of overlap between these. Please note, therefore, that we have used a number of these terms interchangeably to cover the wide range of experiences of displaced persons. (See glossary for definitions.)

The world crisis over the Covid 19 virus has shown that there is a danger that some vulnerable communities can be sidelined or forgotten. The toolkit provides ideas and shares examples of activities which address negative perceptions and stereotypes of migrants and aims to build more positive relationships. It will provide examples of activities which can be shared and adapted for different regions.

COMMEET was set up to support communities in creating an inclusive society which puts social, economic and environmental justice at its core. COMMEET contributes to and supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are a set of commitments to promote social and environmental justice agreed by world governments in 2015.



We do this through supporting community empowerment which enables local groups to take action without waiting for governments or municipalities. The SDGs commit us to make our cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11). We believe that local communities have the expertise, knowledge of the local area and understanding of what can work. The SDGs cannot be achieved by governments alone, nor by top down directives. To achieve a sustainable and just transition we need local energy, local creativity and local action.

### **What do we mean by community empowerment?**

Community empowerment is the process of enabling communities to start to influence and make changes for the benefit of all. We see 'communities' as groups of people that are spatially connected and who share common interests and concerns. Community empowerment, therefore, is more than the involvement, participation or engagement of communities. It implies community ownership and action that explicitly aims at social and political change. We realise that people cannot 'be empowered' by others; they can only empower themselves. The role of COMMEET is to catalyse, facilitate or accompany the communities on their journey.

(Adapted from World Health Organisation 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion).

COMMEET's community empowerment process reflects local, regional, and global interests for peace, prosperity and sustainability. The public health crisis caused by the pandemic in 2020 highlighted our collective vulnerability, interdependency and also our need for our collective solidarity for rebuilding a better world for all of us.

### **Who put the toolkit together?**

This toolkit is a collaborative effort from practitioners, experts and activists from across the globe overseen by COMMEET. The toolkit team has been working with refugees and migrants over many years and has a keen interest in their wellbeing and that of the society where they find themselves. Some of us have had direct experience of being a refugee or migrant and this has enriched the process of developing this toolkit. We are a group of 11 people from a wide range of countries including Malaysia, Nigeria, the UK, the Netherlands, Iran, Malta, Turkey and Belgium.

## Why this toolkit?

A good society cannot prosper without the contribution and involvement of all its members so a commitment to diversity and inclusion is essential. There are huge benefits to be gained by both host societies and migrants in sharing understanding, cultures, skills and resources. Building inclusive communities is “about looking at differences as an enrichment, as the product of our freedom. People with different beliefs, different customs offer us alternatives, make us think about our own ideas and customs. They sometimes influence us, sometimes they reinforce our own views. Such citizenship appreciates the diversity of freedom”. (Mayor Somers, Mechelen inclusive city).

This toolkit will help you to make a start in developing a culture of cooperation and co learning and in promoting a supportive and inclusive community in your neighbourhood. It is not a linear template but the start of a process which suggests ideas for action. We welcome additional suggestions and stories from all who have tried it out.

The toolkit provides guidelines for community members to aid settlement and provide a welcome. As such it provides an overview of some of the challenges which new arrivals may face and sets out activities and tools to help them find their way. For the purposes of the toolkit ‘you’ means the community members and anyone with an interest in helping. ‘You’ is a powerful term, it connects us to humanity and it helps us remember the power of creating change is within us. In referring to ‘refugees’ and ‘migrants’ we in no way wish to enforce passivity and instead aspire to reclaim the terms ‘refugee’ and ‘migrant’ as symbols of strength and hope and re-shape them into words of action and solidarity.

Of course individual migrants and refugees certainly do not want to be perpetually labelled as ‘refugee’ or ‘migrant’. Above all they wish to be contributors and creators. Hence it is important that communities play a role in supporting migrants and refugees to turn themselves into confident members of society and citizens.

It can be quite intimidating settling in a new place. Support in the early stages to refugees and other migrants in navigating their new locality can be of enormous benefit.



## PART 1

### THE TOOLKIT - HOW CAN IT BE USED?

The toolkit is freely available to anyone who is interested. Just pick up the 10-point plan and apply it to your own context and situation. Every locality or region will have different starting points. Start with your own issues and concerns and adapt the plan to your own requirements. There is no one size fits all. The stories and case studies are there to give you an idea of some differing successful responses in different geographical areas. Be creative but make sure that you involve your local community and that all possible voices are heard. The overarching theme is to develop positive relationships between community members and newcomers. COMMEET's community empowerment process can help you to get started.

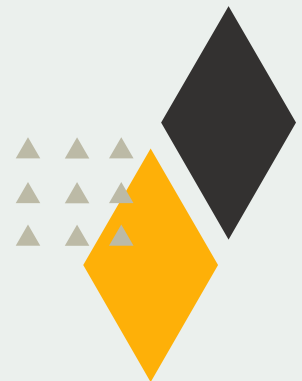
# THE TOOLKIT - HOW CAN IT BE USED?

## RULES FOR WORKING TOGETHER

- Respect team members' opinions.
- A different opinion can enrich our own.
- Dare to dream – share your dream.
- Keep in touch regularly as team members, using the agreed channels of communication.
- Challenges? What challenges? Together, as a team, we dare to go beyond our limits!
- Silence has a meaning: it tells you your team member may need you. So, after a week, give them a sign of life, make a call, send a message.
- Communicate by dialogue, not discussion.
- Hidden agendas should not exist in our community! Our agendas should be an open book for all.
- Start meetings with a positive greeting (check-in) and finish with a wish (check out).
- Answer messages. When you are busy, a simple “got your message” is enough!
- Share important and interesting meetings, conferences, documents, assignments, etc., with other team members, keeping your mutual concerns and interests in mind.

Just start from point one below. You may find that you are already carrying out some of the steps; if so, just skip them and continue with the next.

NB You may need to adapt some of the activities in the light of any social distancing rules if the Covid 19 virus is still active.



# 10 Point Plan



## 1. FORM A COMMUNITY GROUP OF STAKEHOLDERS OF 6-10 PARTICIPANTS

You are likely to start with a small group of interested people, just sharing their concerns. The next step is to set up a community group.

This could consist of:

- Local residents (including migrants)
- Policy makers
- Business leaders
- Educators
- Faith leaders
- Local innovators
- Charities & NGOs

Some tips:

It is NOT important to have a perfect representation of all groups at this stage. The community group can go on to identify and establish contact with other influencers in the community. The group is not a closed entity; if new participants present themselves, membership should always be open on the basis of their potential contribution.

Organise effective communication with all members of the group. There are different tools available nowadays for open communication, such as Dropbox, WhatsApp groups, Twitter, Facebook, Zoom virtual meetings.

## 2. AGREE ON YOUR VALUES AND WAYS OF WORKING - MUTUAL RESPECT, CO-LEARNING, CO-CREATION

Make use of COMMEET's suggested 'Rules for working together'. Agree on how you want to work (email, meetings, independently). Start to document the process: this is important so that you can learn from your experience and eventually share it with others. Keep notes of points agreed at meetings, ask a group member to record experiences in story form, take photos (where appropriate as some refugees and asylum seekers might understandably not wish to be identified).

Some tips:

Leadership and organisation are not the most vital component to start with, but it is important to:

- Agree a pro-bono co-operation
- Use your own networks
- Create a structure to meet and contribute
- Be transparent in communication with the community
- Have an open mind towards new people with valuable skills
- Organise some get-togethers
- Get to know each other and why each person is participating
- Discuss your vision, for example, on tolerance, democracy, out-of-the-box thinking (no idea should be seen as irrelevant)

### 3. DISCUSS AND AGREE ON THE ISSUES YOU WISH TO TACKLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

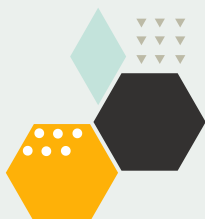
Make an inventory. Ask people outside the group for their opinion. Ensure that you are including a range of voices. What are the problems and the challenges? What are the opportunities? Are there any other organisations providing support for migrants and refugees?

Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis in relation to the level of inclusiveness in your community.

Inform yourselves about migration issues. Build your own awareness and make this a key part of your work, for example, check out the latest UNHCR report (the UN organisation for refugees and displaced people), such as the [UNHCR Global Trends](#).

### 4. THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Find out if there is a local community development agenda and check if it includes a commitment to inclusion of migrants and refugees. If so, you could build on this and form a regional partnership. If not, then check out your local municipality policy on inclusion and welcome of migrants and refugees. Find out whether there is a community engagement officer and develop a relationship. Invite her/him to join the group.



### 5. HOW ARE THE ISSUES BEING ADDRESSED CURRENTLY? WHAT IS MISSING?

Conduct an audit of support and advice services in your area. Involve local refugee and migrant organisations who may already have conducted research into local needs. Find out how these are being addressed and whether you can offer support. Invite members of relevant local migrant organisations which can help to inform you.

Find out where there are employment shortages and possible opportunities for migrants, for example, in the hospitality sector. This would be a good subject for an internship to look into such opportunities. You could also ask your local school or college for vocational training to organise internship interviews.

### 6. WHAT CAN THE GROUP DO TO ADD VALUE AND SUPPORT LOCAL INITIATIVES?

Make a plan of action with a timetable. Action points should be those activities that the community group can organise themselves. Do not wait for local government to take action - you can always ask them to support your initiatives instead. Start small, take the lead yourself and create enthusiasm.

For example:

- Organise social evenings with conversation sessions (good for language support)
- Bring people together to share food from different cultures
- Start a migrant befriending scheme that matches people with common interests
- Organise intercultural youth events for different age-levels

For further ideas, see Part 2 Developing a culture of welcome and Benefits of the natural environment.

## 7. BUILD SUPPORT AND ENTHUSIASM THROUGH YOUR NETWORKS AND REACH OUT TO INVOLVE MORE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS

For example:

- Report a success story about a newcomer in the local newspaper or on social media every month. Personalise this story as much as possible. Make them and their families part of the community
- Ask business leaders to invite their employees to find ways to create meaningful integration of migrants in their companies. Let them make clear that acceptance and participation is considered of high value in the company
- Look for inspiring examples to share, such as Zuyderland Hospital in Limburg, Netherlands. This has 8000 employees and the board publicly demonstrated their clear support for migrants. They organised an EU-funded project to educate and employ dozens of migrants for jobs and a future in the hospital.

See also the Resources section on Examples of best practice.

## 8. PUT YOUR PLANS INTO ACTION

Start with picking a project which can be easily achieved, the so-called low hanging fruit. Demonstrate that quick success is possible.

Examples include:

- Limburg, Netherlands, where JUMBO supermarket has employed migrants for a learning period of 6 months each
- FRESH START in UK, Belgium and Netherlands, is an EU-funded project which has educated dozens of migrants for entrepreneurship Initiatives.

See also the Resources section on Examples of best practice.

## 9. CREATE A 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Create a 3-year Strategic Plan with critical success factors.

Hints for successful strategic planning:

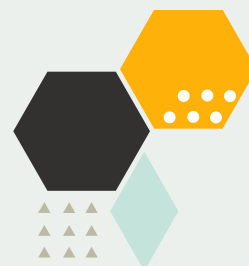
- Define your strategic goals in terms of achievements, not in terms of actions
- Make a list of 10-15 points to check your progress
- Don't plan too much and don't go into detail
- Include issues in your planning that you can influence
- For each year, write a 1-year Action Plan
- Develop a Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle
- Review and adapt your plans each 6 months
- Continue to document your work

"The overarching theme of the toolkit is positive relationships through community empowerment"

## 10. SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE AND REACH OUT!

Share some of the success stories in social media, local press or community newsletters.

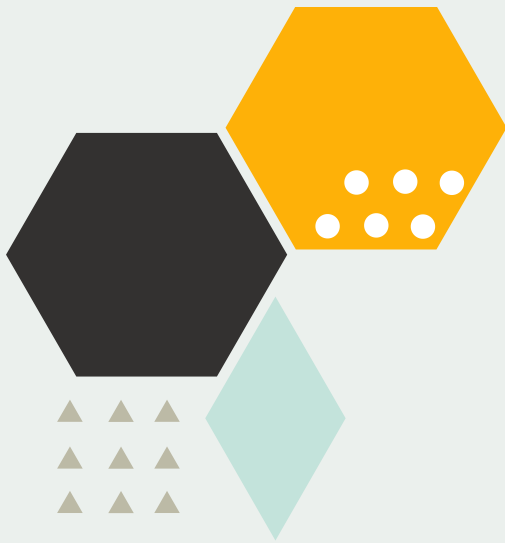
Start a website with a link to COMMEET and share it with the world.





## PART 2

The key sections below link to building positive relationships and can be threaded through the project activities. If you want to focus especially on one of these then you can check out the link to the relevant section. Some of the sections offer further information on areas such as health and law, others offer more suggestions and guidance on possible activities, such as shared stories, social and environmental aspects. These sections contain more ideas about how to respond. They are not a definitive guide but aim to offer suggestions and prompts for your community group to explore.



- A. DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF WELCOME & INCLUSION
- B. BENEFITS OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- C. PROMOTING GOOD HEALTH
- D. UNDERSTANDING LEGAL ASPECTS
- E. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES
- F. ACCESS TO EDUCATION
- G. ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND RACISM
- H. STORIES TO INSPIRE YOU
- I. DEVELOPING YOUR OWN COMMUNITY STORIES:  
DOCUMENTATION



“

**“Migrants are  
builders of  
resilience, agents  
of local  
development and  
city-makers.”**

”

IOM Director General  
William Lacy Swing



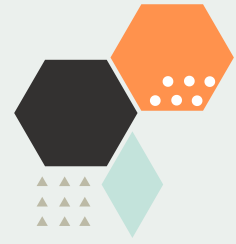
# A. DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF WELCOME & INCLUSION

The refugee inclusion approach is based on the diversity advantage concept - that any person, wherever he/she comes from and whatever background he/she has, has something to offer to the society he/she chooses to live in. Setting up spaces that support co-creation and co-production is crucial as they foster trust and understanding. Any service design, delivery, policy guidance and support activity geared toward refugees should take this into account. The philosophy of power sharing, places diversity at the heart of decision making and facilitates intercultural dialogues that lead to meaningful and equitable solutions.

**Support and guidance, you can provide new arrivals to promote a culture of 'welcome' as an activist include:**

- Give a welcome message in your native language and that of the refugees' mother tongue
- Provide a map of the local area with key features highlighted
- Provide a list of important contacts and facilities (translated if possible) including places of worship
- Accompany or direct newcomers to the nearest supermarket, cultural food shops, post office and bank
- Provide information about medical care, health centres and hospitals
- Explain how to find and use local transport as well as the costs and a timetable
- If applicable, provide information on welfare payments and government aid for which they are eligible
- Introduce them to local sport and leisure activities
- Provide guidance to local parks, green spaces and woodlands they can safely explore





- Help them understand the education system for themselves and their children
- Signpost them to local charities for donations, food and other essentials
- Explain accommodation rules, including refuse collection and recycling rules
- Create a welcome pack with relevant information

**As refugees embark upon the process of community participation, activities and support you undertake at the second stage should be tailored to the individual. Ensure you:**

- Facilitate encounters between newly arrived persons and refugees and the local community
- Create safe spaces for dialogue to include refugee voices when designing policy and local strategies
- Help them become acquainted with local cultural life such as museums and libraries
- Take actions that remove language and qualification barriers to participation
- Connect them with local businesses and social entrepreneurs to enhance the potential for refugee led enterprises
- Promote befriending and mentoring schemes for young refugees and adults alike
- Look beyond economic employment to facilitate inclusivity
- Work with local civil society and build partnerships to strengthen your work and to develop good relationships between refugees and asylum seekers and the host community
- Promote volunteering initiatives across communities
- Challenge xenophobia, racism and forms of discrimination (See section Addressing racism and prejudice for ideas)
- Encourage statutory and voluntary groups to actively engage refugees in local services and activities



## And do not forget the role established migrants can play...

Refugees and newly arrived migrants often encounter difficulties upon arrival and in the early stages of participation in a new society and community. Some of these difficulties are: adapting to a new local, social and administrative environment, building a social network, handling paperwork, dealing with authorities (public and private), finding a language course or a school for their children.

The involvement of established migrants can facilitate overcoming these difficulties. They have an important role in the inclusion of new arrivals in a host society through, for example, mentoring programmes and volunteer activities. Established migrants can share their experience and knowledge about local authorities and the local environment and deal with administrative procedures in education, health and housing. They can also provide support and coordination with key people, such as language teachers and with key organisations such as entrepreneurship agencies and municipalities. Established migrants also have a significant role in decreasing stereotyping and social tensions, and increasing new arrivals' self-reliance, employability, sense of security and sense of belonging.

EVERYONE IS  
**WELCOME**



**25.9  
million  
refugees**

**50% are children**



## B. BENEFITS OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

For the purposes of this toolkit, the ‘environment’ refers to the natural environment. This context will differ according to the place where the community is living and could encompass green spaces, parks, woodlands, mountains, savannah, shorelines and many more.

A number of studies have demonstrated the importance of green spaces in supporting mental well-being, stress relief and social integration by establishing a sense of belonging in communities. Whilst frequently overlooked in a focus on support services, the importance of urban green spaces has wider implications for understanding how asylum seekers and refugees navigate experiences of displacement and resettlement.

Refugees and displaced persons are frequently treated as numbers, clients and cases, so approaches to bring people together outdoors not only have the potential to offer wellbeing benefits, but also the potential to restore something of their identity as active members of society.

**Even for those who arrive in the UK in relatively good health, their health can rapidly decline due to multiple factors including:**

- Difficulty in accessing health care
- Lack of awareness of entitlement
- Problems in accessing mental health support
- Language barriers
- Legal barriers and processes
- Ongoing social isolation
- Post-traumatic stress

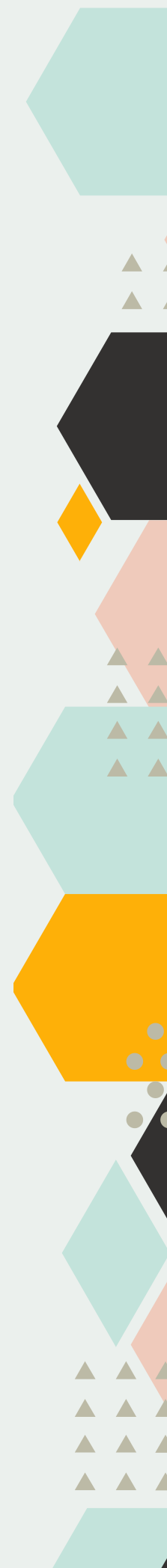
Source: <https://gardens.cityofsanctuary.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/134/2018/11/GoS-Report-FINAL.pdf>

## Benefits of the natural environment on mental health

The natural environment is a safe and cost-effective medium which affords ample opportunities for social integration. Involvement with green spaces such as community gardens, fosters social inclusion by helping migrants and refugees to build connections in their local community and providing space to preserve their cultural identity. The positive relationships between green spaces and health outcomes has been explored by the World Health Organisation which states that modern urban lifestyles can be associated with chronic stress, insufficient physical activity and exposure to anthropogenic environmental hazards, with migrants at increased risks. Urban green spaces, such as parks, playgrounds and residential greenery, can promote mental and physical health, and reduce morbidity and mortality in residents by providing psychological relaxation and stress alleviation, stimulating social cohesion, supporting physical activity and reducing exposure to air pollutants, noise and excessive heat.

Green spaces can offer a stark contrast to the enclosed and congested accommodations often reserved for refugee groups. Green spaces facilitate social interaction and cohesion with activities such as community gardening having positive community engagement outcomes for refugees that may be unavailable in their accommodation. The benefits of green spaces extend to refugee children as urban parks, woodlands and green spaces are areas where they can rebuild emotional well-being, connect with family and indulge in the restorative element of natural spaces through play and social experiences.

The benefits of fostering social links and strengthening familial relationships and a sense of belonging cannot be overlooked. Newly arrived persons and refugees increasingly face a hostile environment, their experiences characterised by uncertainty, the pressure of navigating the legal and social systems and funding cuts for services and support provision. Nature can act as healing conduit, a free and readily available resource to experience much needed respite, allowing refugees and their families to focus on becoming acquainted with everyday life in their new locality by reflecting, creating memories and engaging in shared activities such as a gardening, sport and leisure, walks and exploring a new environment.



Check out the Resources section to find some inspiring ideas, for example, look at the benefits of community gardens:

- <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/sites/farmgarden.org.uk/files/benefits-community-growing-refugees-and-asylum-seekers.pdf>
- Or see advantages of sports activities: <https://irts.isca.org/goodpractice/>

## Challenges

Green spaces and parks can also be daunting for new arrivals and can serve to amplify divisions and increase anxiety. Communities are less likely to frequent green spaces if they feel the spaces are dominated by specific groups. There are issues with safety and navigation. If spaces are poorly maintained and at risk of anti-social behaviour, they quickly become places of danger rather than havens. Linguistic shortcomings may mean that migrants are unable to navigate through larger parks or woodland areas and may lack confidence to seek directions. This may deter them from using the open spaces, adding to their already heightened sense of personal safety. However, these are obstacles that can be overcome and we will outline ways to engage refugee and migrant populations safely with the natural environment.

## Opportunities

Research with refugees and migrants shows the positive links between activities such as urban gardening and food sharing in natural environments, exploring woodlands, and establishing a sense of belonging. Community gardening and urban agriculture are beneficial in building migrants' social connections and sense of inclusion and providing mental health benefits. Parks and green spaces offer endless opportunity for informal activities, gatherings and relaxation pursuits at little cost. The refugee toolkit seeks to provide you with tools and knowledge to engage with refugees. Activities should be undertaken in partnership with refugees fostering inclusivity. Take into account their cultural needs and ensure they are involved in the consultation process for future projects. However, the green spaces of urban cities in Western and Northern Europe may look very different to the vast and diverse green spaces in other parts of the world.



**Below are a list of activities that may be tailored to suit the need of various localities:**

- Mindfulness walk
- Nature walks to walk and talk
- Meditation practice in nature
- Intercultural picnics
- Sports activities
- Storytelling
- Craft activities
- Family clubs
- Forest schools for children
- Food growing and sharing recipes
- Volunteering with local community garden

**By engaging in green spaces and activities refugees are able to:**

- Make friends
- Improve physical health
- Improve mental health
- Improve mental well-being
- Increase confidence by interacting
- Improve language skills and communication
- Reconnect with family
- Learn new skills
- Make connections personally and professionally
- Gain skills for employment and work experience

**The activities (listed) help facilitate:**

- Networking and active citizenship
- Local activism
- Opportunities for refugees to get involved
- Opportunities to learn the native language and interact with locals
- Recreation and leisure time
- Therapeutic benefits and mental well-being
- An understanding of multi-culturalism and social inclusion in practice
- Informal learning opportunities and developing new skills
- Welcoming spaces for people from all backgrounds and social strata



**84% of all  
refugees  
live in the  
developing world**





## C. Promoting Good Health

Migrant health is a complex area which is influenced by health inequities created by power differentials, inequitable policies and unequal economic conditions and opportunities. Also the available evidence may not be enough and you may need to go beyond technical challenges and address the political challenges of migrant inclusion.

Key areas you could look at include:

### Health care access

Access to health care can be very challenging for the migrant. For example, in countries of protracted crisis, migrant children fleeing conflict settings and seeking asylum with their families are more likely to have missed their vaccination targets. Where health services are available, certain migrant groups may find it difficult to express symptoms and understand treatment instructions due to language barriers. Different cultural constructs concerning mental health also challenge effective clinical management.

Migrants may also have difficulty with navigating unfamiliar health and welfare systems. They may not be able to get access to the local health care sector as they may have to pay charges or they may not have the correct documents to seek free health care. There is a great need to build support in members of the host community for policy initiatives that address migrants' health holistically, including remedying their legal status.

### Health care awareness and education

Providing health care awareness in migrant communities is crucial. Migrants and refugees will have a range of educational backgrounds. Some may be aware of health care issues and procedures while others will not.

**Example 1:** A migrant woman after giving birth will need to ensure her baby is immunised. She will also need information and advice to take care of herself during the post-partum period.



**Example 2:** A migrant factory worker who contracts a communicable disease like tuberculosis, needs sufficient information on the disease and how to manage it including medication.

### Key points to bear in mind for health workers

- Use a refugee and migrant sensitive and culturally sensitive health care approach. Be aware that many have experienced trauma and losses when forced to leave their country and community.
- Gently encourage disclosure of their main concerns, for example, refugees sometimes come to charity health clinics even though they do not have any particular complaint; they may just want to feel that they are being cared for (to meet their psychological needs). They may share some symptoms without really experiencing them, just to collect medication that they can consume in times of illness without needing to visit a doctor or clinic. This may be due to financial constraints.
- You should try to ensure that all migrants, regardless of legal status, are treated with the same rights, respect and policies. For example, some migrants do not attend hospitals because of financial issues. Illegal migrants also often have concerns that they will be detained by hospital staff who will inform the police.



- Make sure that the implementation of occupational health safety measures is inclusive of migrants as well as locals (non-discrimination as compared to locals). For example, ensure that you have trained interpreters when needed to overcome any language problems and develop pamphlets in migrants' languages.

Health care education should start from the ground level. You could research the curriculum for migrant children as health care education should be part of the curriculum. In some cases, they might not be able to access the local school due to costs and administrative barriers such as filling in forms and documentation issues. Every child should know what is a communicable/non-communicable disease when they are at the secondary level.

### **Health care system response**

The health care system depends on the policies and legal frameworks of individual States. Migrants may not be granted adequate, equitable and affordable access to health services and/or local health systems may not have sufficient capacity to manage migrant health needs. For this reason, you need to involve the local authority policymakers and health-care providers to gain up to date information.



## Health Help

- Help with forms to visit the local clinic or doctor
- Fill forms to sign up with a local doctor or health centre in countries with universal health care
- Provide information and directions to a local pharmacy, hospital and sexual health clinic
- Provide information on immunisations and access to them
- Help obtain leaflets on health issues in migrant community languages
- Give information on free clinics and health insurance procedures
- Attempt to secure translation services for serious health concerns
- Provide information on local mental health services including counselling

## D. Understanding legal aspects

*“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms outlined in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or another opinion, national or social origin, property, or another status.”*

(Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

### International and Regional Laws on Migrants

Migrants are people who move from their country of usual residence or nationality to another country. This could be for economic or educational reasons, or to escape persecution, human rights abuses, threats to life or physical integrity, war or civil unrest.

The state has the discretion to grant non-nationals entry to its territory. While states act to protect and control their borders, they must do so in alignment with their international human rights obligations. In certain cases, states may be required by international law to permit a migrant to enter and remain, such as where a migrant meets the criteria for refugee status, or complementary protection or where entry is necessary for purposes of family reunification. International human rights' law affirms states must “guarantee, secure and protect the human rights of everyone within their jurisdiction irrespective of nationality”.

Therefore, migrants, despite their many positive contributions to the development of countries of origin and destination, should be seen not solely as agents of development. They are human beings with rights that states must protect, even as they exercise their sovereign right to determine who enters and who remains in their territory.





# Human Rights

Human rights are moral principles or norms that describe certain standards of human behaviour and are regularly protected as natural and legal rights in municipal and international law instruments.

While international human rights' law recognises the right to leave one's own country, there is no corresponding right to enter another country, even for a migrant, without the state's permission. Importantly, the fact that a migrant entered or remained without authorisation does not nullify the state's duty under international law to protect his or her basic rights without discrimination, for example, against torture, degrading treatment or forced labour.

**International law seeks to protect migrants because they are persons who require special protection due to their vulnerability, being outside the jurisdiction of the state of their nationality.**

Thus, international laws provide a dual form of protection for migrants:

- General protection under human rights' treaties applicable to all persons
- Specific protection which applies to particular categories of persons

**The rights of migrants include, but are not limited to:**

- Freedom from discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion or any other status
- The right to work and receive wages
- The human rights of migrants and their families to reunification
- The human right to return home if migrant wishes
- Equality before the law and equal protection of the law
- Freedom from forced labour
- General human rights protection

**Governments are obligated to ensure the rights of migrants. The provisions of human rights law that guarantee the rights of migrants include:**

- Convention on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation No. 111 (1958)
- International Convention on the Elimination of all Form of Racial Discrimination (1965)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights



## **Rights for migrant workers and members of their families:**

- ILO Convention on Migration for Employment No. 97 (1949)
- ILO Convention on Migrant Workers No. 143 (1975)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990)


## **Leading Agencies on Migration**

### **The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established on the 14th of December 1950 and works at a global level. UNHCR has helped an estimated 50 million people restart their lives. The agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of refugees including internally displaced person, unaccompanied minors, stateless persons, asylum seekers and providing humanitarian assistance to other persons "of concern". The agency is committed to human rights mechanisms as tools for promoting tolerance and diversity.

### **The International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the leading inter-governmental organisation in the field of migration. It is the leading international agency working with governments and civil society to advance the understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration and uphold the human dignity and wellbeing of migrants. IOM promotes migration policies and legislation, examines current migration realities and encourages synergies between migration and development and poverty reduction, health, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.



Ensure you direct people to legitimate agencies for help. Legal advice plays a crucial role in securing status and too often people may be vulnerable and susceptible to poor legal advice which is costly, ineffective and given by those who are unqualified. If there is provision for legal aid, provide the information to those within your community. Please note you are NOT responsible or permitted to provide legal advice to refugees unless you are qualified in this field. Ensure you research reputable lawyers or immigration firms. If you are in doubt, please contact the IOM or UNHCR Office in your country for advice.

### **Where to seek help and advice**

Migrants, refugees, and those seeking asylum often find access to legal help is a challenge. To assist them to access legal help and understand processes for application you can contact:

- The local Home Office or government body dealing with immigration in your country
- The UNHCR Office in your country - for the full list of offices see: <https://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a324fcc6.html>
- The IOM office in your country - for the full list of offices see: <https://www.iom.int/contact-us>

## E. Economic Opportunities

Refugees bring with them a wealth of experience, skills and knowledge and these can be great resources for the labour market. Refugees can improve the ratio of active workers and also contribute to innovation, entrepreneurship and economic growth generally. They can also fill important niches in key sectors of the economy. The successful participation of refugees socially and economically has long-term benefits for society.

It is important that as community members you help and direct your new arrivals to opportunities to become self-sufficient and encourage their independence. In the early stages they need guidance on where to seek help, how to do so and in building confidence. They also need to manage expectations and persevere as it can take time to secure an ideal job.

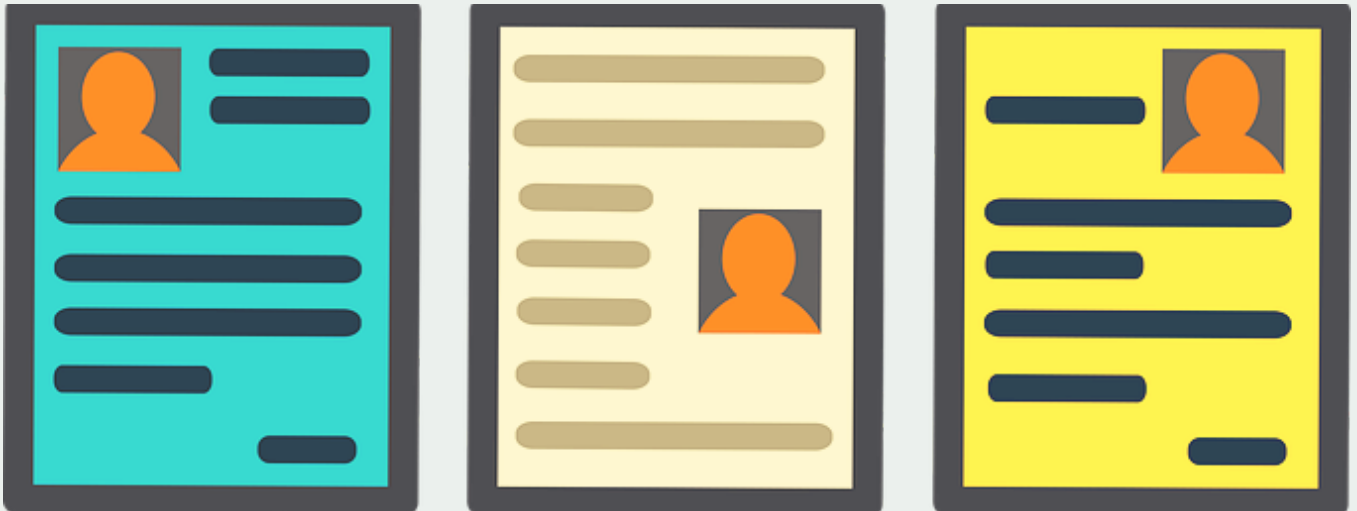
Research suggests the faster that migrants access the labour market the better their employment outcomes. Mentoring, shadowing and explaining local recruitment methods can significantly enhance a person's likelihood of securing employment.

Refugees face additional barriers and grapple with periods of employment and unemployment as well as undertaking work that may be below their skill level and qualifications.

They also face additional barriers such as access to affordable housing, childcare responsibilities, lack of a driving licence, absence of support networks, discrimination and racism. These pressures may force them to accept any employment, suitable or not.

### Barriers

- Language
- Loss of status
- Mental health, trauma and/or PTSD
- Lack of confidence to enter the job market
- Fear of documentation and form filling
- Anxiety due to family separation
- Loss of official documents and qualifications
- Recognition of skills and qualifications
- Disappointment and demotivation about job availability
- Lack of knowledge of local recruitment methods
- Lack of finance and support to become self employed
- Lack of understanding or compassion shown sometimes by employment agencies
- Lack of opportunities to network for jobs
- Gender disparity - women may face further barriers to enter the job market
- Confusion about where to start



As a community group you should gently encourage refugees and help them gain confidence. You may wish to tap into existing personal and professional networks to help them gain voluntary work, advice, knowledge and experience for work. Remember that most refugees are keen to contribute and become active citizens but they initially need additional help navigating the labour market. It is not your role to ensure they secure paid work. However, as you have a better awareness of the local job market and recruitment processes, these insights would enhance their chances of securing employment.

**Below is a list of activities you could help them access or direct towards:**

- Befriending and mentoring schemes
- Careers fairs
- Self-employment (see [peopleperhour.com](http://peopleperhour.com))
- Translation of existing qualifications
- Volunteering, internship and work experience opportunities
- Entrepreneurial schemes which can provide skills, knowledge and finance
- Apprenticeship schemes to develop skills and gain experience
- Translation services
- Information on forming a business or social enterprise
- Connect with professional networks
- Make use of online platforms such as LinkedIn
- Vocational and professional courses
- Higher Education courses and scholarships
- Training and re-training schemes



**As community members, you can utilise some of the tools and ideas below to help refugee groups access the labour market:**

- Help them understand recruitment methods in your locality
- Help conduct job searches, for example, learn about the main platforms
- Encourage entrepreneurship
- Arrange work shadowing to gain experience
- Share knowledge on basic or minimum wages to avoid exploitation
- Direct them to learn about employment and labour laws, rules and regulations
- Point them to a career advice service
- Provide access to good quality language learning initiatives
- Create opportunities for conversation and language exchange
- Sign post to voluntary opportunities
- Help them with interview preparation and creating a CV and Cover letter
- Seek employment mentors
- Direct to local colleges or university and help them make enquiries
- Connect with local charities who work with migrant groups
- Encourage employers to understand refugee rights

## F. Access to Education

Very often newcomers in your community will ask these and other questions below. A knowledge of local educational opportunities will help you to answer them:

“I have a Diploma in Computer Science. I have a Bachelor Degree in Tourism and Hospitality Management. Where can I have my diplomas verified so I can apply for a job in the host country?” “When we fled from home, my daughter had to leave school. Now I am in my new homeland and I want my daughter to continue her school-education. But she doesn’t speak the language of the host country. So how to continue her education?”

Many countries maintain legal obligations for migrants. If newcomers are adults, aged 18 and above, there is usually an obligation to learn the local language and to have an understanding of the host society and its most important norms and values. Systems are different between countries. You can, as a community group, help newcomers by going to the civic offices and asking for information, such as a list of the registered schools which offer training on local language courses, local cultural norms and which assist participation in the host community.

As a community group you can prepare for the many questions you will receive from newcomers, maybe by developing an easy-to-understand brochure with relevant information. In general, the earlier that newcomers acquire a reasonable ability to speak and understand the language of their host country, the more successful their participation will be.

The refugee networks in the host countries are important organisations for getting information on education. For example, the Dutch Council for Refugees will provide you with all necessary information on the local education system, training opportunities for asylum seekers, study finance and study cost allowance,

see: <https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/forrefugees/onderwijs?language=en>

Some of these organisations also have temporary programmes to give refugees or migrants personal help to find jobs with the support of a coach or buddy.

Finally, don't forget to seek collaboration with local service clubs like the Rotary, migrant or activist groups and charities. Some clubs organise education programmes with local partners, others provide job application support, help to find internships and to gain entrance into business and institutions. Additionally, they may be able to help with small amounts of funding.

It is best to help migrants and their children enter into mainstream education as early as possible to avoid under achievement and prevent exclusion (socially). Below we list challenges you may face in doing so:

### **Challenges in accessing education for adult and child migrants:**

- Lack of clear guidance on access to compulsory education for children based on their status, for example, do they have a residence permit, protection status
- Access to education may vary from region to region in a country
- Migrant families may move from one accommodation to another meaning they miss deadlines for registration for the academic year and vocational courses
- Families and children may not be able to cover the cost of materials such as books and stationery or the cost of travel to an education centre
- Local authorities may have limited places for courses, guidance and catch-up classes for adults and children
- Education centres may not have provisions for psychosocial support or language learning
- Migrants between 15-17 years of age face further challenges as some have passed the legal age limit for compulsory education and without the relevant or equivalent qualifications find it harder to access further or vocational training
- Learners may face discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping and also may experience bullying and unfair treatment
- Concentration may be affected by trauma and stress due to pending legal application for asylum or refugee status
- Schools and education settings may lack teaching strategies for pupils from different cultural backgrounds or know how to communicate regularly with immigrant parents due to a lack of experience, tools, mediators and interpreters
- Difficulties in transferring existing skills, qualifications and competences
- Migrants may not be able to secure funding for further or university education

Many countries have systems to welcome and include children into their regular schools and classes. Inform yourself about international preparatory classes for children of migrants and refugees in the schools and colleges in your neighbourhood, village or city. Depending on the country and on the level of the child involved, it can take a few months to over one year for enrolment into the standard education system of the host society.

### **How you can support new arrivals and migrants:**

#### **Adults**

- Encourage cultural and language exchange sessions
- Help them access services to convert their qualifications
- Direct them to free or government funded learning
- Engage parents and discuss the education system and school environment in your country
- Provide guidance on diploma evaluation and help with accreditation. In many cities the relevant information is available at the civic offices
- Support them in enrolling for courses
- Utilise local networks to help access courses, language learning and professional development

Adults may access a number of free courses on a range of subjects from Science, IT, Languages to Health. See the links below:

- <https://www.coursera.org>
- <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>
- <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/>
- <https://www.thinkonlinetraining.com/english>
- <https://uklearns.pearson.com>
- <https://alison.com/courses/health>

#### **Children and Young Persons**

- Research free pre-school programmes
- Help to access free language courses and exchanges
- Direct them to local homework clubs
- Encourage schools to run welcome classes and after-school support
- Raise awareness in schools and further education about the challenges migrants face
- Work with schools and further education centres on capacity building of teachers and lecturers to equip them with knowledge and confidence to support their new students
- Invite teachers and head-teachers to your meetings to help them learn about your work with migrants and refugees and to ask questions!



## G. Addressing Prejudice & Racism

Sometimes we are unaware of other worlds besides our own, not seeing, not knowing, not feeling what is happening outside ourselves, our homes, our villages, our cities, our borders, outside our own world, the world we designed. Prejudice and racism are often caused by fear and lack of understanding about persons we perceive are different to us. They may have different cultural backgrounds and speak different languages, they may be from different ethnic or class backgrounds. Why do our societies often have an intrinsic fear of migrants and refugees? How do we start welcoming them instead of fearing them?

Studies indicate that by developing a culture of welcome and inclusion, these barriers can be broken down. This is good for all of us as it enables us to learn from each other and harness the wide range of resources, knowledge and expertise in each community. As humans, we are a social species and, by getting to know each other better, we create bonds and a renewed sense of community. That is why your initiative is so important and you will find that many of the suggested activities in Part 2 A will help to break down barriers and address fears.



You may also like to build awareness and empathy in your community group by doing the following activity:

### **WHY DO PEOPLE FLEE?**

On your own or in a group, take some time to think about what it would take for you to flee from your home, country or family, taking only what you can carry with you. What possessions would you take? Would you know where to go if you were no longer safe in the place you call home, or how to seek asylum in an unfamiliar country?

#### **Common reasons to flee your home and country:**

- Fear of persecution or repression because of your ethnic/social group, religion, sexuality, political belief
- Fear of death due to war (ethnic, civil, military) and/or organised violence
- Abuses by the security forces or armed opposition groups (rape, beating)
- Massacres or the threat of massacres
- Death penalty for political opposition
- Conscription into the army
- Unjust systems, including detention without trial or unfair trials, such as persecution because of other family members
- Torture and inhumane treatment
- Gender-based human rights abuses, such as honour killings, forced marriages, FGM, sexual slavery and trafficking



# We Refugees


by Benjamin Obadiah Iqbal Zephaniah

We can all be refugees

Nobody is safe,  
All it takes is a mad leader  
Or no rain to bring forth food,  
We can all be refugees  
We can all be told to go,  
We can be hated by someone  
For being someone.

I come from a beautiful place  
Where the valley floods each year  
And each year the hurricane tells us  
That we must keep moving on.

Or listen: <https://vimeo.com/150889743>



It can be very hard to be a migrant or displaced person. Bear in mind the words of the poets, Nadia Faydh or Benjamin Zephaniah, in the extracts from their poetry:

### Things I miss by

Nadia Faydh

When I wake up to the cloudy sky  
Of London,  
I feel overwhelmed:  
A fit of yearning.  
It is not that I want to go back,  
but simply miss the way it was:  
The sunny mornings,  
The fresh smell of Cardamom  
My mother used to make with tea  
Or the smell of fresh bread,  
When my father is back from the bakery

Racism is primarily about power and privilege and the most powerful groups in each country and society will differ. If we are unaware of this, prejudice will impede us in acting as equals in the construction of new environments of belonging. Creating communities requires us, the host society, to deconstruct our mindset. De-learning as well as new learning. The privileged world can sometimes be our jail and this has been highlighted during the Black Lives Matter protests. In oppressing or colonising others, we oppress and colonise our own thinking.

Perhaps, read 'Becoming anti-racist' adapted from the book, 'How to be an Anti-Racist' by Ibram X. Kendi or discuss Eula Bliss' ideas 'About Whiteness'.

See <https://onbeing.org/programs/eula-biss-talking-about-whiteness/>. You can also check out the Resources section Xenophobia and racism where you will find references which help in this learning process of ours, of our communities.

And now start re-designing yourself, your community, with a journey from fear -> to learn -> to growth.



## H. Stories to inspire you

Stories from 5 continents: Australia, America, Europe, Asia and Africa. Below are some stories from around the world which help migrants talk about their lives and the community-based approaches in their new countries. Hopefully they will give you ideas and inspiration.

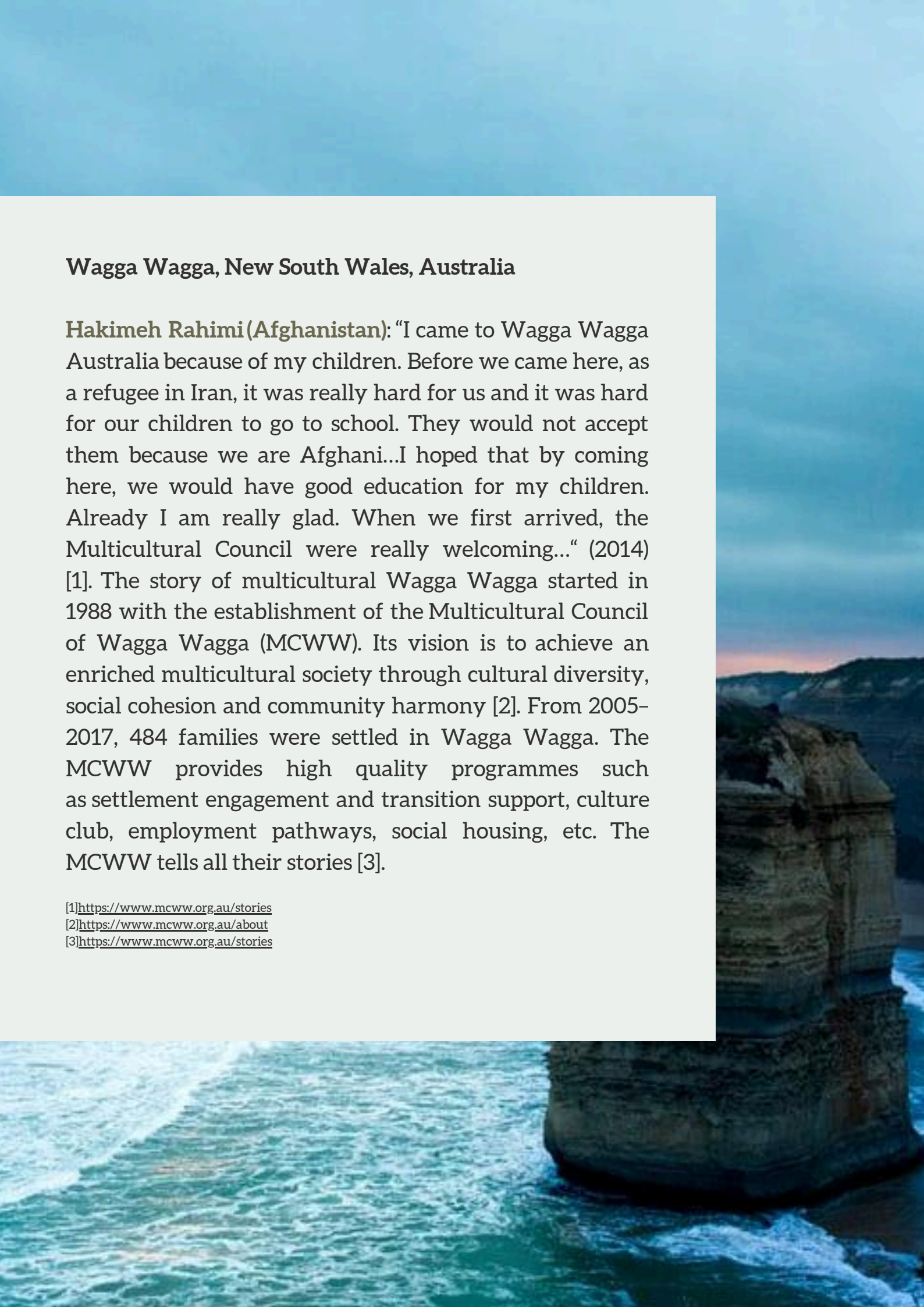
## Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia

**Hakimeh Rahimi (Afghanistan):** “I came to Wagga Wagga Australia because of my children. Before we came here, as a refugee in Iran, it was really hard for us and it was hard for our children to go to school. They would not accept them because we are Afghani...I hoped that by coming here, we would have good education for my children. Already I am really glad. When we first arrived, the Multicultural Council were really welcoming...” (2014) [1]. The story of multicultural Wagga Wagga started in 1988 with the establishment of the Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga (MCWW). Its vision is to achieve an enriched multicultural society through cultural diversity, social cohesion and community harmony [2]. From 2005–2017, 484 families were settled in Wagga Wagga. The MCWW provides high quality programmes such as settlement engagement and transition support, culture club, employment pathways, social housing, etc. The MCWW tells all their stories [3].

[1]<https://www.mcww.org.au/stories>

[2]<https://www.mcww.org.au/about>

[3]<https://www.mcww.org.au/stories>



A misty forest scene with tall trees and a banana plant in the foreground. The background is a dense forest of tall, thin trees, partially obscured by a light mist. In the foreground, a large banana plant with broad green leaves is prominent on the right side. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

## Maringá, Paraná, Brazil

**José Alfredo (Venezuela)** talks about his search for a dignified life in the film *Além do Refugio* [1]. He fled from the Venezuelan humanitarian catastrophe to Maringá in 2018, where he started a new life with the help of friends who went there before him. Maringá, in the State of Paraná in southern Brazil, is proud of being “uma cidade acolhedora” a welcoming city. Its openness to the people of the world is at the heart of the city and of the Brazilians living in Maringá. Migrants and refugees from Venezuela, Haiti, Syria, Dominican Republic and Nigeria have travelled to this welcoming space. An outstanding example of collaboration between the Brazilians of Maringá and its migrant population is the programme of the Instituto Sendas delivering help to refugees in the city during the Covid-19 pandemic [2].

[1]<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HfJFWriHts>

[2][https://sendas.transforme.tech/doiagora/240#secao\\_44](https://sendas.transforme.tech/doiagora/240#secao_44)

## Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India

**Hindu Singh Sodha (1956)** is from a Pakistani- Indian background and has lived in Jodhpur, State of Rajasthan, India, since 1971. He is a life long activist for the cause of Pakistani (Hindu) refugees in India, having been a Pakistani immigrant himself living in settlements in the India-Pakistani border lands. His focus groups are the Meghwals (lower cast and untouchables) and Bhils (tribal people). For their cause he established the two community-based organisations, Pak Vishthapit Sangh (1999) and Seemant Lok Sangathan (2005). In 2008 he established the NGO Universal Just Action Society(UJAS) [1]. His greatest accomplishment was in 2005 when he successfully pressured the Indian government to grant 13,000 Pakistani refugees citizenship [2].

UJAS' work advocates for Pakistani immigrants in India who are fleeing religious persecution and are settled throughout Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh. They are still denied basic human rights in India, including the rights to citizenship, rehabilitation, livelihood, and education. UJAS' promotes: "communal harmony in border areas by highlighting shared traditions and encouraging collaboration in the preservation of culture ..... because the scope of problems facing refugee populations is not limited to government and legal issues, UJAS also works to improve relations and living conditions in border areas shared by refugee and non-refugee populations of both Hindu and Muslim faiths.

UJAS seeks to encourage communal harmony in these areas by promoting shared traditions, cross-border peace initiatives, economic development opportunities, and cultural preservation" [3].

[1][https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu\\_Singh\\_Sodha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_Singh_Sodha)

[2]<http://slsujas.org/index.php?mod=founder>

[3]<http://slsujas.org/index.php?mod=mission>

## Ima, Beira Alta, Portugal

**Ghalia Taki (Syria)** is involved in the LAR Project in Ima village near Guarda in Portugal. She is from Damascus where she studied English to become a translator. From a young age she was involved in humanitarian work. She decided to join the community LAR Project in Portugal with the objective to integrate four refugee families in their new land through farming and agricultural production [1]. The LAR Project is a pilot project which aims to help refugee and migrant families start a new life in the host society after fulfilment of their 18 months' government programme. The second objective is the rehabilitation of rural areas with low population density. In Ima it focuses on farming and agricultural production of goji, saffron and currants. Metaphorically it is a strong concept as it gives opportunities to plant seeds in the soil of their new land.

[1]<http://www.larproject.com/#video>

## Geneva Camp Mohammadpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Rina (14), Shabnam (20) and Putul (24) (Bihari background) live in Geneva Camp, Mohammadpur, Dhaka. They tell about their lives as a housewife, student and teacher in the Camp. Geneva Camp, established in 1972 by the Red Cross, is one of the 116 settlements in Bangladesh where Urdu-speaking Biharis live. In 2008 they received their national ID card of Bangladesh which gave them access to education, employment, a birth certificate, freedom of travel, political involvement and the right to vote. Rina, Shabnam and Putul picture their daily reality in a short documentary Inside Geneva Camp by Maria Litwa [1]. The Council of Minorities (CoM), a human rights organisation, helps Urdu-speaking people, Biharis, (like the people in Geneva Camp in Mohammadpur), obtain birth certificates, passports, trade licences, national ID, bank accounts. It aims to empower the linguistic minority to realize their citizenship rights in Bangladesh. Community-based paralegals are drivers in the legal empowerment of the community in obtaining access to rights and opportunities in society [2]. CoM also organises the National Urdu-speaking Youth Leadership Summit. The objective is the training of Urdu-speaking youth from all the camps in Bangladesh on minority rights, leadership, community activism, personal skill development, and rights to housing, health and education. They become community leaders themselves and as paralegals start working in their own communities.

See also: <https://www.facebook.com/dhakagenevacamp/>

[1] <https://www.marialitwa.com/film-inside-geneva-camp>

[2] <https://www.com-bd.org>

An aerial night photograph of a city, likely Utica, New York. The image shows a dense urban landscape with numerous buildings illuminated by city lights. A prominent feature is a large highway interchange with multiple overpasses and ramps, brightly lit with white and blue lights. The surrounding areas are filled with smaller buildings and streets, creating a complex pattern of light and shadow. The overall scene conveys a sense of a bustling, modern urban environment at night.

## Utica, Upstate New York, USA

**Ibrahim Rosic (Bosnia)** stepped on a landmine during the Bosnian conflict becoming 100% disabled. He lost his left leg while his right leg was severely damaged. He came to Utica and works as full-time director at Mohawk Valley Community College and as an adjunct instructor at SUNY Poly. "I am not a burden on the community. I am not a burden on social services. Yes, community helped me to get this, but now it's my time to pay back. And I would say most refugees do the same" [1]. The city of Utica is "the town that loves refugees". One out of every four citizens is a refugee and they are helping revitalise Utica, a downtrodden post-industrial city. Bosnians arrived in Utica after the Balkan conflict in the early 1990s, and have successfully integrated into the community, buying and refurbishing hundreds of homes. Their stucco work has brightened up parts of the city. Besides Bosnians, Utica includes Burmese, Iraqis, Syrians and other nationals. After decades of decline Utica is now growing again and is back up to 62,000 people, thanks in part to its reputation as a welcoming space. Some tension exists but the community has largely embraced the influx. The Utica community attended rallies opposing Trump's hard line on immigration [2]. Mayor Robert Palmieri has adopted 'refugee' resettlement as a policy for revitalisation.

[1]<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/happened-struggling-city-opened-arms-refugees>

[2][https://www.tampabay.com/news/politics/national/In-struggling-upstate-New-York-cities-refugees-vital-to-rebirth\\_162688301/](https://www.tampabay.com/news/politics/national/In-struggling-upstate-New-York-cities-refugees-vital-to-rebirth_162688301/)

## Kalobeyei, Turkana West Sub County, Kenya

**Akech, (from Ethiopia)** was 11 years old when relocated with her mother from the Dadaab Refugee Camp to Kalobeyei, northwest Kenya [1]. She is a minor asylum seeker from South Sudan fleeing from conflict in the Maiwut region. She first went to Gambela in Ethiopia and was transferred to Dadaab Camp in Kenya. Akech was a class 4 student at Friend's Primary School in Dadaab before being relocated. "I left my best friends Maria and Basel in Dadaab but I am hopeful to be reunited with them this week," she said when relocated. **Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement in Northern Kenya** is a community-based approach promoting self-reliance for refugees and the host population, while delivering integrated services for both [2]. It is considered by UNHCR as a leading global example of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in practice [3]. Its key objective is the idea that refugees should be included in the communities from the very beginning. "When refugees gain access to education and labour markets, they can build their skills and become self-reliant, contributing to local economies and fuelling the development of the communities hosting them. Allowing refugees to benefit from national services and integrating them into national development plans is essential for both refugees and the communities hosting them, and is consistent with the pledge to 'leave no one behind' in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [4]".

[1]<https://www.unhcr.org/ke/2045-optimism-and-hope-as-refugees-relocate-to-kalobeyei-settlement.html>

[2]<https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/the-kalobeyei-model-towards-self-reliance-for-refugees>

[3]O'Callaghan, Sorchia (a.o), The Comprehensive Refugee Response Network. Progress in Kenya (2019), p. 12. See also: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/12940.pdf>

[4]<https://www.unhcr.org/comprehensive-refugee-response-framework-crrf.html>

# I. Developing your own community stories: documentation

Feeling comfortable, starting a new life, looking forward and not behind, is an essential step for migrants and displaced persons. Storytelling is an important part of the process towards belonging but should be viewed as a two-way activity of co-learning and sharing, co-creating a new narrative. It is important to wait until relationships and trust have been established within the community and migrant group. People need to be ready to tell their stories, this cannot be rushed.

One example of how to start is following Rene Diekstra's method of a child 'Interviewing his or their parents' which is a simple but effective tool to document life stories. The kind of documentation should include general factual information, such as the date / place / community where the person involved was born, the structure of family, the housing situation.

As highlighted by the quote below, newcomers are often pleased to share their story:

"I was so concerned about my family having a new future, myself having a job to support my family, my children having a good education for their future life in the new land, that I forgot someone is interested in my story. I am so happy you asked me to tell it to you and I am happy to tell you my story."

Take note that not all information is needed for the story. Some will be private. But the method of a child interviewing his or her parents as a facilitator can sometimes be an eye-opener. These can be adapted depending on the age of the child or young person.



**Documenting in the form of storytelling could start with questions such as:**

- With whom did you play as a child, what kind of games did you play, what stories and tales were told when you were a child? What did you like most living with your family as a child?
- Where did you learn skills such as reading, farming, driving? Have you been to a school? Which school did you attend? For how many years? What did you learn? What did you like most? Did you have the same opportunities as your brothers and sisters
- What dreams for the future did you have as a child or teenager?
- Which jobs have you done ? How did you earn your living since you started to work? Were there different expectations of you as a boy or a girl?
- Which important family and community activities do you remember in the past and in the present? Can you describe why these are important to you?
- Where did you meet mother or father? When did you marry and where?
- What role has religion played in your life? Have you been a member of a political, social, religious organisation? What was your role in there?
- Life changing events: what was life changing (what has changed), why did this happen? How did you deal with these changes? What are your major concerns?
- Which of your life-stories, life-events, family traditions are so valuable to you that you want these to be protected and sustained by your children / grandchildren?

Other components of documenting include creating, collecting and keeping pictures, video, blogs, Facebook stories and Tweets. Storytelling is archiving. It is collecting, storing, preserving and sharing these stories for future generations. Not forgetting them! You can start your community archive or join existing initiatives. There are many inspiring examples of these archives available, with tools, archiving techniques, and outreach events.



### Some inspiring initiatives:

- Syrian Archive: <https://syrianarchive.org/en/data-archive>
- Vox Populi: <http://tahrirarchives.com>
- History of Forced Migration and Refugees, An International Working group for archiving and documentation: <http://iasfm.org/adfm>
- Living Refugee Archive: <http://www.livingrefugeearchive.org>
- Facebook groups like Maluku Moordrecht started on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Molucca neighbourhood in the village of Moordrecht, Netherlands



2020

# RESOURCES

## **BENEFITS OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **Case Studies of Refugee Involvement in Green projects**

<https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/sites/farmgarden.org.uk/files/benefits-community-growing-refugees-and-asylum-seekers.pdf>

### **Engaging Children & Families**

[https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/system/files/engaging\\_schools\\_children\\_and\\_families\\_0.pdf](https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/system/files/engaging_schools_children_and_families_0.pdf)<https://www.earthrestorationservice.org>

### **Garden of Sanctuary Resource Pack**

<https://gardens.cityofsanctuary.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/134/2018/11/Gardens-of-Sanctuary-Resource-Pack-portrait.pdf>

### **Refugees Welcome in Parks**

<https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/refugeeswelcome-in-parks-resource-book.pdf>

## **CHILDREN & LEARNING**

### **Inclusion through Sports**

[https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Projetos/Agenda\\_Europeia\\_Migracoes/Documentos/inclusion\\_in\\_sport\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Projetos/Agenda_Europeia_Migracoes/Documentos/inclusion_in_sport_guidelines.pdf)

### **Learning English**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/childrens-stories>

### **Stories for Children**

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk>  
<https://www.freechildrenstories.com>

### **Youth solidarity through Drama**

<https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/blog/room-community-drama>

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

### Breaking Barriers

<https://breaking-barriers.co.uk/refugee-support/>

### Create a CV with templates

<https://www.cvhelpp.co.uk>

### Interview Training

<https://www.how2become.com/free-online-interview-training-course/>

### Interview Success

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/interviews>

## EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

### Canadian Government on Refugees & Asylum Seekers

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees.html>

### Inclusive city: Mechelen

[https://citiesofmigration.ca/ezone\\_stories/the-new-normal-interview-with-mechelen-mayor-bart-somers/](https://citiesofmigration.ca/ezone_stories/the-new-normal-interview-with-mechelen-mayor-bart-somers/)

### Migrant Stories

<https://iamamigrant.org/stories>

### On immigrants' positive effects in moving to rural areas

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2018/09/02/455269/revival-and-opportunity/>

### Revitalization Schenectady New

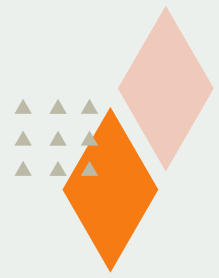
York <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/07/26/nyregion/for-schenectady-guyanese-strategy-mayor-goes-all-out-to-encourage-wave-hardworking.html>

### UK's First City of Sanctuary

<https://sheffield.cityofsanctuary.org>

### Welcoming Spaces revitalizing shrinking regions

<https://www.uu.nl/en/news/revitalising-shrinking-regions-by-attracting-migrants>



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### All things Refugee

<https://www.refworld.org>

### Child Migrant Stories

<https://childmigrantstories.com>

### Migration Data Portal

[https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=stock\\_abs\\_&t=2019](https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=stock_abs_&t=2019)

### Refugee Week (Annual Event, UK)

<https://refugeeweek.org.uk>

### Sustainable Development Goals

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

### This Land is Our Land: An immigrant's Manifesto

<https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/111/1117202/this-land-is-our-land/9781787331426.html>

### Toolkit for Welcoming, Supporting and Empowering Resettled Refugees

<http://www.resettlement.eu/page/share-city-curriculum>

### UNHCR Stories

<https://www.unhcr.org/stories.html>

## PARTICIPATION, CHARTERS & RESOURCES

### Cities for Local Integration

**Policy** <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/clip-european-network-of-cities-for-local-integration-policies-for-migrants>

### Cities of Migration

<http://citiesofmigration.ca>

### EU Funded Projects on Inclusion

[https://www.mirovni-institut.si/data/tinymce/Projekti/comide\\_lana/CoMiDe\\_European%20Good%20Practice%20Study-screen.pdf](https://www.mirovni-institut.si/data/tinymce/Projekti/comide_lana/CoMiDe_European%20Good%20Practice%20Study-screen.pdf)



### **European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City**

<https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/right-to-the-city/european-charter>

### **Europe's Guide for Resettlement**

<https://www.resettlement.eu/resource/welcome-europe-comprehensive-guide-resettlement>

### **Global Charter Agenda for Human Rights in the City**

<https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/right-to-the-city/world-charter-agenda>

### **International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities**

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/fostering-rights-inclusion/iccar>

### **Local Responses to Integration**

<https://switchboardta.org/resource/podcast-how-local-voices-can-help-us-understand-refugee-integration/>

### **Resettlement and Integration Assistance**

<https://www.ritaresources.org/resources/library/information-sharing/>

### **UNESCO and UN-HABITAT, World Charter for the Right to the City**

<http://hic-gs.org/document.php?pid=2422>

### **URBACT Network: Arrival Cities**

<https://urbact.eu/arrival-cities-network-iaps>

## **LAW**

### **Refugee Law Project**

<http://www.refugeelawproject.org>

### **UK Immigration System**

<https://righttoremain.org.uk/toolkit>

### **UNHCR**

<https://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a324fcc6.html>



## STORIES

### Community Archives

<https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/>

### Documenting the Undocumented: Archiving and recording the refugee experience

<https://ncph.org/history-at-work/archives-series-refugee-experience>

### Documenting untold resilience and moving memories with displacement: Narratives of asylum-seekers and refugees in Britain

<http://www.livingrefugeearchive.org/documenting-untold-resilience-and-moving-memories-with-displacement-narratives-of-asylum-seekers-and-refugees-in-britain/>

### Made into America

<https://madeintoamerica.org>

### Muck Ruck

<https://muckrack.com/drrumanahashem>

### Refugee Stories

<https://www.refugeesupport.eu/refugee-stories/>

### Refugee Voice

<https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/refugee-voices/>

## WELL BEING & MINDFULNESS

### Calm Harm

<http://www.stem4.org.uk/calmharm/>

### Mindfulness Exercises

<https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>

### Mental Health Resources

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-your-staff/useful-resources/>

## XENOPHOBIA & RACISM



**Afropean: Notes from Black** (2019) by J. Pitts

**Between the World and Me** (2015) by T.N Coates

**Critique de la raison nègre** (2013) by A. M Bembe

**Het Vacuüm van de kosmopoliet** (2008) by W. Lotens

**Homo Sacer** (1998) by G. Agambe

**How to Argue with a Racist** (2020) by A. Rutherford

**How to be an Anti-Racist** (2019) by I.X Kendi

**Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny** (2006) by A. Sen

**Nobody Wants Them** (2019) by L. Polman

**On race, Identity and Belonging** (2018) by A. Hirsch

**Peau noire, masques blancs** (1952) by F. Fanon

**This Land Is Our Land: An immigrants's Manifesto** (2019) by S. Mehta

**The Lies That Bin: Rethinking Identity, Creed, Country, Color, Class, Culture** (2018) by K.A Appiah

**The Ordinary virtues: Moral order in a Divided World** (2017) by M. Ignatieff

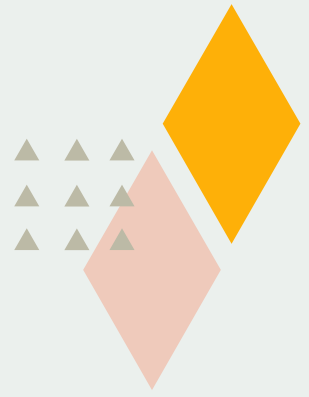
**Two Blankets, Three Sheets** (2016) by R. Al-Galidi

**White Debt** (2015) by E. Bliss

**White Innocence. Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race** (2016) by G. Wekker

**Why I'm no longer talking to white people about Race** (2017) by R. Eddo-Lodge

# Did you know...



**48%**  
MIGRANTS

ARE WOMEN

**3000**  
MIGRANTS  
(2018)

DIED OR WERE  
LOST ALONG  
MIGRATORY  
ROUTES

**EVERY 3  
SECONDS**

A PERSON IS  
FORCED TO  
FLEE THEIR  
HOME

# Did you know...



**600**  
BILLION \$

EARNINGS  
SENT TO  
HOME  
COUNTRIES

**AFRICA**

IS THE CRADLE  
OF HUMAN  
CIVILISATION

**4 OUT OF  
5**

REFUGEES STAY  
IN THEIR  
REGION OF  
DISPLACEMENT



# Glossary

## **ASYLUM**

An individual who is seeking international protection. An asylum seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every recognized refugee is initially an asylum seeker.

## **COUNTRY OF ORIGIN**

Country of nationality or of former habitual residence of a person or group of persons who have migrated abroad, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly

## **DISPLACEMENT**

The movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, to avoid armed conflict, generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.

## **EMIGRATION**

The act of moving from one's country of nationality or usual residence to another country, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

## **FAMILY REUNIFICATION**

The right of non-nationals to enter into and reside in a country where their family members reside lawfully or of which they have the nationality in order to preserve the family unit.

## **IMMIGRATION**

From the perspective of the country of arrival, the act of moving into a country other than one's country of nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

## **IRREGULAR MIGRATION**

Movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination.

## **INTEGRATION**

The two-way process of mutual. Migrants are incorporated into the social, economic, cultural and political life of the receiving community. It entails a set of joint responsibilities for migrants and communities, and incorporates other related notions such as social inclusion and social cohesion.

## **LABOUR MIGRATION**

Movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment.

## **MIGRANT**

An umbrella term, not defined under international law; a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes migrant workers, smuggled migrants and international students.

## **REFUGEE**

A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. Rights of refugees are protected by the 1951 Refugee Convention.

# Glossary

## **SLAVERY/MODERN DAY SLAVERY**

Modern slavery is the severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain. Modern slavery is all around us, but often just out of sight. People can become entrapped making our clothes, serving our food, picking our crops, working in factories, or working in houses as cooks, cleaners or nannies. From the outside, it can look like a normal job. But people are being controlled; they can face violence or threats, be forced into inescapable debt, or have had their passport taken away and are being threatened with deportation.

## **SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS**

The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the irregular entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.

## **STATELESS PERSON**

A person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law.

## **TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS**

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception...to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation includes prostitution, sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

## **UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN OR MINORS**

Children, as defined in Art. 1 of the Convention on the Right of the Child, who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.

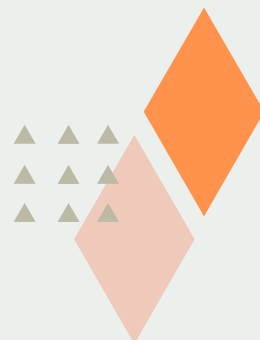
## **XENOPHOBIA**

Attitudes, prejudices and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity.

### **Source(s)**

<https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

<https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/>



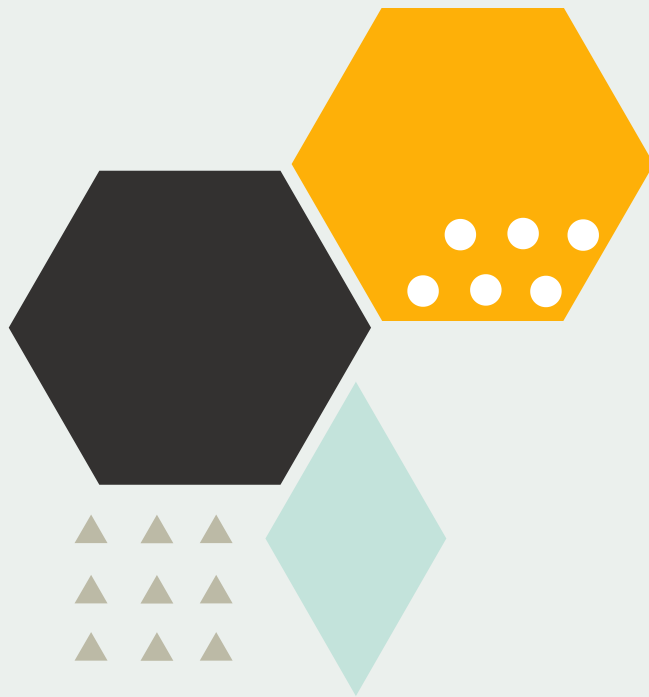
“

The simple truth is  
that refugees  
would not risk  
their lives on a  
journey so  
dangerous if they  
could thrive where  
they are.”

”

Melissa Fleming, UNHCR





[www.commeet.org](http://www.commeet.org)  
[info@COMMEET.org](mailto:info@COMMEET.org)