

ACTIVE VOICE

Newsletter

Refugee Week Issue

June 2011



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YOU ARE INVITED

Refugee Week Celebration

10am-3pm, 21st June 2011

Civic Suite, Lewisham Town Hall, Catford SE6 4RU

To be opened by Joan Ruddock, Lewisham Deptford MP

Light Lunch will be Provided

FREE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

African drumming, singing workshop, photographic and textile exhibitions

WORKSHOPS ON

Education, Health, Citizenship, Cultural Appreciation, Borough Resources

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE REFUGEE WEEK!

NEW TRUSTEES

LRN are looking for Trustees who have legal, social enterprise and ICT background.

To request for an application pack please contact Rosario on 020 8694 0323 or email Rosario.Mincher@lrn.org.uk

Volunteer Achievement

Our volunteer Sian Mun Khai has completed 6 training modules Lewisham Advice Providers Consortium (LAPC) has provided.

We have a facebook account!



please visit us at [facebook.com/LewishamRefugeeNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/LewishamRefugeeNetwork)

Refugee Week started in 1998 as a response to the negative image of refugees and asylum seekers held by some sections of the British public. It aims to bring about great understanding amongst all members of the community. Refugee Week is an opportunity to talk about the facts, instead of the myths, about refugees and asylum seekers, and to celebrate the huge cultural and economic contribution they make to our country.

Members of the public are invited to come along and enjoy the performances from different communities across the borough including African drumming, singing workshop, dances, photographic exhibition, documentaries, arts and crafts, fashion, massage and face painting. Key refugee organisations will be on hand to provide information and there will be an opportunity to attend workshops on Education, Citizenship, Health, Resources in the borough and Cultural Appreciation. Light lunch will also be

provided. Admission is free and open to all.

This event is not only an opportunity to recognise the contribution refugees make to our community but also to celebrate diversity. The UK has a proud tradition of providing sanctuary to refugees, and respecting different cultures and traditions. Refugee Week aims to bring the whole community together to create better understanding and promote successful integration.

Notes:

There are many myths about refugees and asylum seekers. For example, people often think that the majority of the world's refugees come to the UK, when in fact only 2% - around 200,000 people—out of nearly 10 million seek sanctuary here. * Refugee Council 2005.

Refugee Week Celebration—Our Message

எமக்கென்று ஒரு வாழ்வும், குடும்பமும், சொத்துகளும், தொழிலும், அந்தஸ்தும், தகுதிகளும், தாயகத்தில் இருந்தது. இதையெல்லாம் விட்டுவிட்டு இங்கே நாம் அகதிகளாக வந்தோம். இங்கே பல பிரச்சினைகளுக்கு முகம் கொடுத்ததோடு, நட்புறவற்ற சூழ்நிலையையும் சந்தித்தோம். ஆனால் நாம் மனம் தளர்ந்துவிடவில்லை. எமது வாழ்வை மீண்டும் கட்டியெழுப்ப விரும்புகின்றோம். உங்களுடன் இணைந்து ஒரு சமுதாயத்தை உருவாக்குவோம். நிற்பேதங்களுக்கு இடமளிக்காது, வேறுபட்ட கலாச்சாரங்களுக்கும், பாரம்பரியங்களுக்கும் அங்கே கௌரவிப்பு இருக்கும். உங்களுடன் இணைந்து பணியாற்ற விரும்புகிறோம். உங்களிடம் புதிதாகக் கற்றுக் கொள்ள ஆசைப்படுகிறோம். உங்களுடன் சேர்ந்து சிரித்து மகிழ விரும்புகின்றோம்.

இதுவே எமது தற்போதைய கனவு, இது உண்மையாகவே நிகழ்ந்து விட்டால், அதுவே நிஜமாகி விடும்.

كان لدينا حياة و عائلات و ممتلكات و وظائف و مكانة و مؤهلات في بلداننا التي اجبرنا على تركها. جئنا إلى هنا لاجئين و واجهنا الكثير من الصعوبات و الخصومات و لكننا صمدنا. نحن الآن نريد إعادة بناء حياتنا معكم و سوف نبني مجتمعاً يتواجد فيه احترام للثقافات و التقاليد المختلفة حيث لا يشكل لون البشرة المختلفة فرقا، حيث تقبل مختلف اللهجات بل و يحتفل بهذا التنوع. نريد أن نعمل و نتعلم و نضحك معكم. هذا هو حلمنا و لن يصبح واقعياً إلا إذا عملنا على تحقيقه.

Nous avons nos vies, nos familles, nos propriétés, du travail, un statut et des diplômes dans nos pays que nous avons dû quitter. Nous sommes arrivés ici en tant que réfugiés et avons fait face à des difficultés et hostilités mais nous avons réussi à maintenir une certaine stabilité. Maintenant nous voulons reconstruire nos vies. Ensemble avec vous, nous construirons une communauté où il y a respect pour des cultures et traditions différentes et où la différence de couleur n'a pas d'importance, où la différence d'accents est acceptée et où nous célébrons la diversité. Nous voulons travailler avec vous, apprendre et rire avec vous. Ceci est notre rêve et il ne se réalisera que si nous le laissons se concrétiser.

We had lives, families, properties, jobs, status and qualifications in our countries which we had to leave. We came here as refugees and faced difficulties and hostilities but we remained steadfast. Now we want to rebuild our lives. Together with you, we will build a community where there's respect for different cultures and traditions, where different colours don't matter, where different accents are accepted and where diversity is celebrated. We want to work with you, learn with you and laugh with you. This is our dream and it will only be real if we let it happen.



We said goodbye to our Student Interns.

We said goodbye to Allyson Shifley, our Psychology student intern from Boston University. Allyson stayed with LRN for 2 months and started a research on the situation and needs of refugee children and children of refugees and the appropriate services to address the gaps.

Rasha Hamid left LRN on 19th May after a six month internship. Rasha is a Social Work student from Goldsmiths College and has offered a great deal of support to the Vulnerable Women's project. We were lucky to have these two hard-working and dedicated young women even for just a short period of time. We both miss them. We wish them all the best in their personal and professional lives.

LEWISHAM REFUGEE FORUM

Lewisham Refugee Network (LRN) co-ordinates the Lewisham Refugee Forum (LRF). The aim is to have a strong forum of refugee community organisations in Lewisham, working together to represent the interests of refugees and asylum seekers, to campaign on their behalf, to highlight their concerns, and to promote a positive image of refugees and asylum seekers and the contribution they make to British society.

The Lewisham Refugee Forum welcomes new members. The Forum meets every 8 weeks. Organisations that provide services to refugees and asylum seekers in Lewisham and neighbouring boroughs are welcome.

If you are interested in joining please contact
Rosario Mincher on 0208 6940323
Email: Rosario.Mincher@lrn.org.uk

THE REFUGEE WEEK PLANNING COMMITTEE is now meeting to make plans for Refugee Week next June 2011. If you are interested in joining please contact Rosario on the above number. The more people we have, the more interesting ideas will flow.

Tea, Cakes and Karaoke!



Tea, Cakes and Karaoke!!

We had a very successful fundraising event on 14th May from 2.00 – 6.00pm held in Charlton. The children had fun singing and we lost counts on how many times we heard 'Dancing Queen' and 'Mama Mia'!! The adults stayed in the garden and had a chat in between eating lovely homemade cakes. The event made just under £200!! The money will be used to pay for some of our destitute clients' bus fares and towards the costs of celebrating the Refugee Week in June.

We would like to say thank you to all our friends, colleagues and families who supported us and bought tickets and or donated/baked cakes.

We welcome new people

We are very happy to have two new Trustees. Alison Willis is currently working as a Programme Manager for Human Rights Action Centre for Amnesty International, UK. She has worked for Oxfam before and her expertises are in campaigning, marketing and fundraising.

Rita Buhanda works for Foundation for Women's Health, Research and Development (FORWARD) as Community Programmes Co-ordinator. She has a vast experience in organising campaigns at the community level and against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). She has also volunteered for LRN before.

Ophelia Bobori, from 190 Community Centre is doing her outreach at LRN every other Friday. Ophelia helps our clients on their welfare benefits applications as well as look for sources for individual grants.

We have new volunteers who help us in many ways. Farida Ward and Lydia Gono are kindly covering the reception on Thursdays and Fridays. Nooria Rahimi is helping us with the general administration. Shweta Sayed is currently developing our database and helps in the newsletter. Hannah Carter, a recent History graduate from Manchester University is continuing the research on refugee children Allyson has started. Jo Sandi is our Finance volunteer and Yousif Sidig is enthusiastic in starting a project for refugee men that may include cycling, walking and football.

Hate Crime Reporting

LRN has now signed up to be Non-police third party reporting sites. If you have or you know people who have been targeted because of their disability, race or ethnic identity, religion or belief, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, immigration status or nationality. Please speak to one of our advisers and report this crime. You don't need to give your name if you don't want to.

New Funding!!

Awards for All has kindly approved our project to upgrade our ICT system. We are now in the process of replacing our very old and very slow server and computers.

We are pleased to let you know that we now have the full funding we need to run our Vulnerable Women's Project for another 3 years!!! Trust for London approved our proposal in March and Comic Relief has recently said Yes to the project.



Lewisham Refugee Network

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Phone: 0208 694 0323
Fax: 0208 694 6621

OPENING HOURS:
MONDAY TO FRIDAY
9.30am – 5.30pm

www.lrn.org.uk

Lewisham Refugee Network (LRN) was established in 1991, and is a longstanding provider of advice, advocacy and support services to asylum seekers and refugees in south east London. LRN provides advice on immigration, health and social welfare issues, as well as specialist services such as the Vulnerable Women's Project. We also have services such as English classes and food distribution. In addition we play a key role in supporting refugee community organisations, as well as providing support and assistance to those interested in working with asylum seekers and refugees locally.

SERVICES OFFERED AT LEWISHAM REFUGEE NETWORK



We are registered with the OISC (Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner) to provide at advice at Level 1. That means we can provide advice on some immigration matters such as:

- Notification of the United Kingdom Borders Agency (UKBA) of a change of address
- Application for an extension of Temporary Admission
- Applications for permission to work
- Travel document applications for someone granted indefinite leave to remain.



For cases that need to be taken further, we can provide clients with information on qualified solicitors that offer legal aid or give their services free.

We are recruiting for an Advice Worker to enable us to give advice at Level 2.

ADVISORY SERVICE

Our advisors give advice and information through one-to-one appointments. If we can't help clients, we signpost them to specialist agencies.

- Immigration
- Social care
- Welfare benefits
- Housing

For an appointment with Sayid Abdullahi please ring 0208 694 0323

WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES

We offer a one-to-one counselling service for refugee and asylum-seeking women who are suffering the effects of gender-based violence or domestic violence and other traumas. Appointments on Mondays and Wednesdays between 10 and 1pm, and 2 and 4pm.

For an appointment with Emma Brech ring 0208 694 0323

HEALTH ACCESS PROJECT

For information and advice about accessing NHS treatment, signposting to relevant health services and help with health-related benefits.

Appointments on Monday, Thursday and Friday between 10 and 3pm.

For appointment with Margot Lawrence ring 0208 694 0323

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESOL) CLASSES-

Classes take place every Monday Wednesday and Friday between 10 and 12pm. FREE CRECHE Every Tuesday between 10 and 12pm and every Thursday between 1 and 3pm

AVAILABLE. To book a place contact the office on 0208 6940323

OTHER SERVICES INCLUDE:

Food Parcel Service
We provide a weekly food parcel service every Wednesday between 10 and 12pm for clients that are destitute and have no other means of income.

'Time to Talk' - Lewisham Refugee Network Nurture/Health Group for Women

It includes Conversational English, and support and education around health and self-esteem.

Every Wednesday from 10-12PM.

Knitting and Sewing Clubs every Thursday between 10 and 12pm. Free crèche provided.

Please contact Margot on 020 86940323

Refugee Health Team (RHT)
The Refugee health team are here every Friday with a qualified nurse from 10-1pm.

190 Community Centre are here every other Friday from 9.30 – 3.00 to give advice on welfare benefits

Southwark CAB are here every Thursday from 12.30 – 4.30 to give advice on welfare benefits and housing