

Employment and Training Advice for Refugees: What Works?

learnirect is a network of online learning and information services. It was developed by Ufi (University for Industry), working in partnership with the government to deliver workforce development and lifelong learning. Ufi works in partnership with a broad range of public and private providers to deliver mainly online courses and information through a network of learning centres.

What kind of advice really helps refugees achieve their ambitions, as well as contribute their full potential to the UK economy? Some are able to integrate rapidly with the help available, but research shows that refugees are at particular risk of social exclusion. This is exacerbated by the difficulty they have in finding employment at all and, if employed, the likelihood that initially at least this will be below their skill level. They also have a higher than usual risk of exploitation in the informal economy.

This is a complex problem with many contributing factors but there is scope for the mainstream agencies that offer employment and training advice to be more involved in supporting refugees, and for specialist refugee advice services to forge stronger links with the mainstream, thereby profiting from existing training, quality measures and professional networks.

This Briefing:

- identifies the agencies that offer advice to refugees;
- explores the main elements of good practice in work with refugees;
- identifies action points both for mainstream information, advice and guidance services and for specialist refugee services.

The Briefing is based on an enquiry carried out by Ruth Hawthorn and Charles Jackson, NICEC Fellows, in the autumn of 2004 for learnirect. Fuller accounts of examples of good or interesting practice and of useful materials are available at www.crac.org.uk/nicec/research/refugeereseach.



NICEC

National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling

The National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling is a network organisation initiated and sponsored by CRAC. It conducts applied research and development work related to guidance in educational institutions and in work and community settings. Its aim is to develop theory, inform policy and enhance practice through staff development, organisation development, curriculum development, consultancy and research.

CRAC

The Careers Research and Advisory Centre is a registered educational charity and independent development agency founded in 1964. Its education and training programmes, publications and sponsored projects provide links between the worlds of education and employment. CRAC has sponsored NICEC since 1975.

Sheraton House, Castle Park, Cambridge CB3 0AX
Tel: 01223-460277 Fax: 01223-311708
E-mail: enquiries@crac.org.uk

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADVICE FOR REFUGEES: WHAT WORKS?

WHO IS A REFUGEE?

The 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as someone who ‘has 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 they belong to or normally reside in; and is unable or unwilling to return home for fear of persecution.’ In the UK, once an asylum-seeker is recognised as a refugee, he or she is given leave to remain in the UK and is then eligible for work and training in the same way as other residents.

This Briefing focuses on the employment and training advice needed by people with refugee status, that is, awarded humanitarian protection, discretionary leave to remain or exceptional leave to remain (this last was discontinued in 2003 but still applies to some individuals). Some asylum-seekers who have not yet obtained such status may have a right to work, but most are constrained over employment or publicly-funded training: for current regulations look at www.refugeecouncil.org.uk. Many of the agencies that help refugees also help asylum-seekers. There are also many migrants to the UK who are neither refugees nor asylum-seekers. Individual specialist advice services may be open to them, depending on the conditions of their funding. Many of the issues raised in this Briefing are relevant to all migrants.

WHO OFFERS EDUCATION AND TRAINING ADVICE TO REFUGEES?

A. REFUGEE SPECIALIST ORGANISATIONS

- Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) generally help people at the most local level with all aspects of settling into their new country. This can include help with employment or training, but every agency is different: they respond to their members’ needs. Funding is often insecure and much help is provided on a voluntary basis. The RCO offers a strong foundation of help, usually in its members’ mother tongue.
- Umbrella refugee or ethnic Community Organisations (UCOs) exist at a local level in some areas. They enable RCOs and other community groups to collaborate and can also represent member organisations on mainstream statutory bodies. They may be partners in advice service provision.
- Job-Brokering services for Refugees (JBRs) focus on matching local refugees to local skill shortages. Funding may come through local economic regeneration budgets or Local Authorities. They may work with individuals or groups.
- Agencies offering Specialist Employment and Training Advice for Refugees (SETARs) may operate only locally; but others have expertise which is recognised and shared nationally.
- Employment or Training Regional or sub-regional refugee Networks (ETRNs) have sometimes raised funding to provide a SETAR or a JBR. Some have commissioned specialist research, such as regional skill audits of the refugee population.

Check for agencies, or recent relevant research, of this kind through your Regional Development Agency (RDA); your local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); your local Council (try Education and Economic Development sections); or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through Jobcentre Plus. If networking has worked well, and if they exist, one of these public agencies should know of them.

B. MAINSTREAM EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADVICE ORGANISATIONS

- Jobcentre Plus (www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) offers jobsearch help, training and work experience options as well as access to government benefits.
- Connexions or other careers service partnerships provide training and employment advice and more in-depth careers guidance to young people under the age of 19 (some also see adults).
- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services for adults are co-ordinated at a local level by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) through ‘IAG Partnerships’ (the Partnership offers training as well as help in achieving the IAG quality mark, matrix). Local service names may include brands such as IAG or nextstep.
- *learndirect advice* (www.learndirect-advice.co.uk) is a free national telephone helpline providing information on courses, funding, career planning, apprenticeships, childcare and CV writing. NB: The service is available in five minority languages – details at: www.learndirect-advice.co.uk/helpandadvice/dmr
- University (or higher education, HE) careers services provide in-depth careers advice for their own graduates. HE careers services are usually separate from a university’s advice service for applicants. Local refugees may not be eligible to use a HE careers service directly, but local or regional networks could seek their help in supporting a service to refugees.
- Further Education (FE) colleges offer careers advice to their students which may be separate from the advice offered on admission. Advisers involved at admission are often part of the local IAG network.
- Professional associations (e.g. for doctors, engineers, teachers) may be the only source of detailed knowledge for people with overseas training on how to enter a professional field in the UK. Both mainstream and specialist refugee advice providers need to work more closely with them.

OTHER SOURCES OF CAREER SUPPORT

Much valuable career advice and support is also available informally. This requires the development of networks to tap into the specialist expertise needed for specific occupational areas. Good starting points are:

- Employers who can provide information about how they recruit, develop and train staff;
- Lecturers in Universities or FE Colleges who know about career and training opportunities in their field;
- Private employment agencies which can provide direct links to employers;
- People in employment who can talk about skill and training requirements as well as job opportunities;
- Trade Unions, through Trade Union Learning Representatives.

THE IMPACT OF GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

There are real differences in the UK in the distribution of refugees. This partly reflects:

- Where established communities of migrants have settled (sometimes near ports of entry, sometimes where families have already found housing and work);
- Where asylum seekers have been dispersed on arrival by the Home Office. Paradoxically, although this may be to areas where housing is cheaper, many of these are more deprived areas where there are fewer jobs.

Specialist services are more common in areas with most refugees. But there are still very many individual refugees who find themselves outside those areas. Even within them, they may not be able easily to find or reach a SETAR or JBR. It is very likely, however, that they will be near several of the mainstream agencies listed opposite.

ISSUES FOR MAINSTREAM SERVICES

If a refugee client seeks help from an advice service with little experience of working with refugees, what is the best way of helping? We asked a wide range of specialist services what they found worked well.

M1. Never generalise about refugee clients. The only thing they have in common is that they were forced to leave their homes. Refugees come from a vast range of countries, often with one or more different mother tongues (and their nationality may be different from the country from which they fled). They vary in educational level, employment experience, ambition, health, ability and family arrangements, in just the same way that other clients do. As with all clients, get to know the individual.

M2. Language. Not all refugees need interpreting and translation services, but some may. Seek out community interpreting and translation services already available locally, for use in primary health care, for example. Consider possible political differences even where the language is the same. Some localities offer training programmes for refugees to act as interpreters or translators for their own communities. A client may come with a friend or family member to act as interpreter. This is helpful for an

introductory session, but arrange professional interpreting for future visits.

CASE STUDY: MANOR GARDENS ADVOCACY PROJECT COMMUNITY INTERPRETING TRAINING

Refugees receive accredited training in community interpreting and health advocacy, then join a pool of volunteers to help their community with access to primary health care services.

www.manorgardenscentre.org/projects

M3. Cultural, social and recent historical background. Individuals from the same background are still different from each other. But a little research into what has shaped their understanding of the world will repay disproportionately – you may be able to do this before you see your client again. Where (actually on the map) is the client's country of origin? What was the nature of the civil or other disturbance that brought them here? The education system in the country of origin: does it have similarities with the UK system or not? Was it disrupted during your client's school years? The Refugee Council (www.refugeecouncil.org.uk) provides information about individual countries at the 'info centre' section of its website.

M4. Young refugees (under 19) are eligible for help from Connexions (and for a good practice guide see Connexions, 2003), but may value support from mentors (see M11, Mentoring) or someone from their RCO when attending for appointments. While still asylum-seekers they will have built up strong links with the local Social Services team, especially if they arrived as an unaccompanied minor, and it may help to find out from Social Services what they were, or are still, able to offer.

M5. Previous employment experience. In some cases this will have direct relevance to the present-day UK economy; in others the economy will have been so different that the job cannot be matched here (so the guidance task will be to look for transferable skills). However, refugee clients may have difficulty in describing their experience because of poor general language skills, or lack of specialist vocabulary, or incomplete understanding of the UK labour market. They need time to explore these issues. Do not jump to conclusions and where possible seek help from someone familiar with an appropriate occupational area (not just the initial entry requirements).

CASE STUDY: THE WARDLOW ROAD CENTRE in Nechells, Birmingham, offers many different services to refugees under one roof in a community centre on a housing estate. Services cover housing, benefits, ESOL, health, employment, education and training offered by the voluntary and statutory providers that in other places are spread over a wide area. They include Refugee Action (offering help on setting up RCOs), NHS and Connexions. The premises are provided by Birmingham City Council Housing Department.

M6. Employment opportunities in the UK. In areas and times of high demand for labour it will be easier for everyone; in other times and places, refugees are not alone in finding it difficult to get employment at a level that corresponds to their education or training. Even when

someone positively seeks a job below their apparent qualifications because they want to explore new fields it can be difficult.

Refugees share these problems, but may have additional ones. For example, the word 'refugee', or even a foreign name, may suggest to employers potential problems to do with:

- prosecution of the employer if an applicant's papers are not in order;
- difficulties resulting from possible poor English;
- possible unfamiliarity with expectations of a UK workplace such as dress codes, interaction with colleagues and clients etc.

The challenge is to convince employers of the benefits to them of considering refugees. Check with your local Jobcentre Plus or Chamber of Commerce if there is a Job Brokering service for Refugees (JBR) near you. At a national level, the Employability Forum provides information for employers through research, conferences and materials (www.employabilityforum.co.uk).

In some occupational fields with national skill shortages (such as health, public transport or construction) recruitment programmes aimed at refugees are being developed at local or regional level. Some areas have programmes to help refugee doctors; in some locations the NHS has set up positive arrangements to recruit other refugee health workers (see, for a combined example, the NE London website, www.rose.nhs.uk). Some places are developing pre-recruitment training specific to individual employers or trades, either specifically for refugees, or offering places to refugees. Employer-based ESOL would help many groups. (See also M8, Sustainable Employment and M14, ESOL.)

M7. Aspirations. As for anyone, these may be unrealistically high or overly modest, but for refugees possibly more so. New arrivals may suffer from severely damaged self-esteem. Like UK-born counterparts who have been ineligible for work or training for some time (one result of a long-drawn-out process of obtaining asylum), it can be hard to believe in oneself again or to motivate oneself to action. Others, coming from countries where professional or vocational training automatically led to a job, may be puzzled by the different arrangements in the UK where well-qualified and experienced people must still compete with others to find work. Achieving a balance between encouragement and realism is particularly important.

While many will want to stay in their original field if at all possible, some young refugees may be formulating their work interests for the first time. Other older ones may positively welcome the chance to consider a new career. A full career interview would help both of these groups.

CASE STUDY: OXFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE has developed a Protocol for Recruiting Refugees in the form of an easy-to-read and digest four-page leaflet for employers.

M8. Sustainable employment at a level to match training and experience is a goal for everyone, but may take longer for refugees to achieve than for other clients. 'Starter', low-skilled jobs may be appropriate so long as clients have a longer-term strategy for building up training and seeking better work as soon as that is realistic. Starter jobs can reassure someone of their abilities, help them learn about UK workplace behaviour, improve their English and provide a UK reference. Advisers should keep in touch with clients in these types of jobs and encourage them to keep to, and where necessary, update their career development strategies.

Low-skilled jobs may be a reality for many refugees in urgent need of money for themselves and their dependants, so any career development planning you can offer could convert this necessity into something more positive.

M9. Volunteering can provide all the advantages of a starter job short of an actual wage, and is regarded by many SETARS as the right way to begin. Your own agency may be able to provide opportunities, or be able to work with a local Volunteer Bureau (www.volunteering.org.uk). In some areas there are specialist refugee volunteer agencies that can broker placements.

M10. Work-Experience and work-shadowing opportunities are particularly helpful to refugees. Even if it is not possible to arrange this in the role for which the client is qualified, an unpaid placement in the same field may give useful experience, contacts and references.

M11. Mentoring is particularly valuable for refugees seeking, or newly entered into, employment. A range of schemes have been developed at local level, with mentors in some cases coming from among longer-established refugees or migrants, in others from UK people in similar industries or in the same work-place. A national mentoring campaign, Time Together, is being run from TimeBank (www.timebank.org.uk). Befriending schemes run by RCOs or UCOs can support the sampling of education and training programmes at local colleges as well as jobsearch.

CASE STUDY: JOB PLACEMENT FOR REFUGEES IN WEST YORKSHIRE, a JBR, runs two mentoring schemes. They have trained refugee mentors, themselves now employed, to work with those still looking for work, as well as employer mentors, some of whom also provide mentoring for people starting their own businesses.
www.fairplaypartnership.org.uk/view.php?id=102

M12. Self-employment and enterprise skills. Jobcentre Plus, Business Link or the local Chamber of Commerce will advise on what training and support is available. Explore New Deal provision, and the Prince's Trust Business Programme for younger clients. Some UCOs or ETRNs may offer advice on self-employment tailored to refugees or ethnic minorities. Mentoring, for example over the preparation of business plans in order to attract mainstream support, may be especially relevant. Encourage clients to consider skills they have which others may value: services or consultancy which do not require much capital or premises may be a good first step.

M13. Training and education programmes. In addition to the ‘normal’ opportunities and advice you offer clients, it may be appropriate for refugees to consider re-training in this country in fields in which they are already qualified. For example, a Master’s degree for a professional could show them how their subject is treated in this country; familiarise them with the technical vocabulary; and provide access to professional networks. Funding is a major obstacle, but consider Career Development Loans (www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/cdl) and contact specialist refugee advice services or local RCO networks to enquire about bursaries. Bursaries will also be necessary for clients wanting to pursue level 3 courses.

Assessment of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL) is particularly relevant to refugees. Seek out local learning provision that allows for that.

CASE STUDY: THE REFUGEE ASSESSMENT AND GUIDANCE UNIT RAGU offers one-to-one advice, work placement schemes, and also an Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning programme (APEL) course for refugee professionals who want to enter university courses or suitable employment. (www.londonmet.ac.uk/ragu)

RAGU has developed an on-line information website aimed at asylum-seekers and those who advise them; much of the information is also relevant to refugees. (www.learning.unl.ac.uk/ragu/asset)

M14. English for Speakers of Other Languages. ESOL training is available through FE colleges, but is often insufficient for work situations. Additional conversation practice or more formal courses perhaps leading to qualifications can be needed. Check if the provider can offer group work for people with specific interests or backgrounds. ESOL for specific industries or trades is often mentioned in research on refugee needs and it is available in some areas, for some fields: this will require a local search.

M15. Health. Bear in mind (but do not assume) that refugee clients may have health problems associated with their time in their former country that might be relevant to current planning. It could affect mental or physical health, and may not manifest itself until some time after arrival, when their other immediate problems have been addressed. Consider how to explore this sensitively. Local RCOs or UCOs may be able to advise you on where to refer, or where to seek further advice.

M16. Advice linked to other services. SETARs tend to develop a portfolio of in-house programmes or establish referral links to them locally. Examples include:

- Jobsearch skills, interview skills training, CV writing: these are needed by ‘mainstream’ clients, but consider tailoring help for refugees individually, or as a group.
- Outreach and even home visits. If this is not possible within the resources of your agency, consider collaboration with local RCOs or UCOs.
- Equivalence of qualifications and translation of certification. The National Recognition and Information Centre (NARIC, www.naric.org.uk), and the National Reference Point for Vocational

Qualifications (NRP, www.uknarp.org.uk) provide a comparison of overseas qualifications to UK standards. There is a charge for this service but you can ask a local agency that subscribes (such as the Refugee Council, a local university admissions office, or a SETAR) to help with this. NARIC can provide free telephone advice to refugees. For informal country-specific information a local RCO may be able to help or you can look at the outline advice provided by UCAS (www.ucas.ac.uk/candq/inter/index.html). In both cases check with NARIC/NRP before confirming advice to your client. Formal accredited translation may be required for some purposes; for others, consider local translation services (see M2, Language).

- Bursaries to help with jobsearch costs or course fees. It may be possible to attach an element for this to grant proposals, or find a local donor willing to support it.

CASE STUDY: THE REFUGEE EDUCATION AND TRAINING ADVICE SERVICE (RETAS), like other SETARs, provides drop-in advice to asylum seekers and refugees (age 16+) who need advice, guidance, advocacy or information on all aspects of education, training and employment, and special services for health professionals. They offer an outreach advice service, as well as courses on Job Search and Business Start-up. They also offer a Mentoring Scheme and a Human Rights Advocacy Programme. As well as their London headquarters they have a permanent office in Leeds and projects in other parts of England. (www.education-action.org/retas)

GENERAL POINTS

- A disproportionate number of refugees have high qualifications, perhaps reflecting the profile of individuals who are able to get to the UK. A skills audit in West Yorkshire in 2003 found that one third had university-level qualifications and only 7% had no skills or qualifications.
- Individuals may be dealing with social changes that are not immediately visible. This might include loss of professional status and the material comforts and even appearance that went with it; or loss of the support of a family, or the death of family and friends.
- Once an asylum-seeker achieves refugee status, there is a transition period which can have a practical impact on training and work decisions. Some help they had as asylum-seekers (with housing, for example) may change. There may be delays in getting their National Insurance number. In a pilot scheme planned in selected areas during 2005, Sunrise case-workers, funded through the Department of Work and Pensions, will work with refugees for 28 days after they are awarded refugee status.
- Refugees may have had to move around the UK several times since they first arrived as asylum-

seekers. Find out whether they have strong preferences to stay in your area or might wish to live in a different part of the UK.

- If your agency cannot provide the help a refugee needs, careful encouragement and referral is required. It is important to keep the client in contact with the system.
- Your client speaks very impressive English considering how short a time he or she has been here. But would an employer find it clear enough to offer her or him a job? Handle this carefully but realistically, perhaps considering starter jobs at first which would allow them to develop their English even further.
- Guidance workers are properly trained to be non-directive. However, refugees are unfamiliar with the UK employment and training scene; they may lack the 'informed informal' advice networks that most UK-born clients have; and they may be unused to making decisions of this kind. You may have to be somewhat more directive than usual as well as provide rather more detailed background labour market information.

IN SUMMARY:

- Understand the client (all effective help follows from that).
- Don't panic (you can help with what you know about, and refer elsewhere for other needs).
- Take time (progress may be slower than with other clients).
- Persist.

ISSUES FOR SPECIALIST EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADVICE SERVICES FOR REFUGEES (SETARS)

SETARs have developed the specialist good practice for work with refugee clients, but they and the other specialist services (Refugee Community Organisation, RCOs, Job-Brokering services for Refugees, JBRs etc) have issues of their own. We explored with them where their own challenges lay.

S1. Liaison between SETARs and JBRs. In any area, SETARs or JBRs usually know of each other's work and are well-linked to RCOs, but they may not have time to explore the full potential of such liaison for referral, division of labour, or collaboration. Refugee advice forums had sometimes languished for lack of time to co-ordinate them. Dependency on bidding for short-term funding may also lead to unhelpful competition. The target-driven

CASE STUDY: THE REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADVOCACY FORUM (RETAF) is co-ordinated by an Employability Forum development officer based at the Handsworth Jobcentre Plus in Birmingham. The Forum consists of local RCOs. Birmingham City Council is funding training for RETAF members to Advice and Guidance NVQ level 3.

nature of some funding may make services hesitate over referring clients elsewhere. SETARs are born out of local need, so are not necessarily networked regionally or nationally. They may not be aware of people doing similar work elsewhere in the country from which they could benefit.

S2. Liaison with mainstream employment and training advice agencies. SETARs and JBRs have developed to meet the needs of refugee clients that were not being met by mainstream agencies. However, refugee clients' integration is helped through the supported use of mainstream services. Some mainstream agencies have specialist expertise which SETARs are trying to provide themselves because they cannot access them, or may not even know about them: for example, HE careers services have elaborate links with employers of graduates in all university disciplines. Many FE colleges offer pre-vocational courses involving work placement that would help refugees, or courses expressly to help people re-enter the labour market. They all offer on-going guidance to students as well as to potential students. See under B: Mainstream Advice Organisations for HE careers services.

S3. Professional development. In the UK employment and training advice is one of the professional skills of careers advisers and, in the world of work, of human resource managers, personnel experts and career coaches. For all of these roles there are professional qualifications, and within each sub-group there are professional associations that organise regional or national training and updating.

The National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in Advice and Guidance is a good start. Some SETARs and

CASE STUDY: ON-LINE TRAINING FOR GUIDANCE WORK WITH REFUGEES

is being developed by the University of Glasgow with RETAS and five other European countries under the title 'Mainstreaming vocational guidance for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants'. It will prepare advice workers to find relevant information, understand the nature of cross-cultural guidance and deliver appropriate guidance to refugee and migrant clients.

www.gla.ac.uk/rg

JBRs have brokered NVQ level 3 training for RCO staff with local LSCs. SETARs themselves should be looking for NVQ level 4 or the Qualification in Careers Guidance (QCG) for all their advice staff. Membership of the local IAG Partnership through the local LSC could offer support in achieving either of these.

S4. Quality assurance. The work of information, advice and guidance agencies for adults is regulated against a national standard (the matrix standard) which requires agencies to employ only qualified staff and to continually update their skills. Membership of the local IAG Partnership through the local LSC would offer support in achieving the matrix standard. Other guidance sectors follow similar regulations, for example through the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (www.cipd.co.uk).

S5. Evaluation of advice work with refugees.

Targets for numbers into employment have to be modest and time-frames generous. All concerned want integration as rapidly as possible, and any conscientious service would expect to be evaluated against the highest standards. But helping individuals with life stories of upheaval and trauma, and long, enforced periods of inactivity, back into work takes time and may involve more than one false start. Not all funding bodies appreciate that relevant and constructive evaluation must focus on processes and client satisfaction as much as on outcomes measured by sustainable employment, even though this is everyone's ultimate goal.

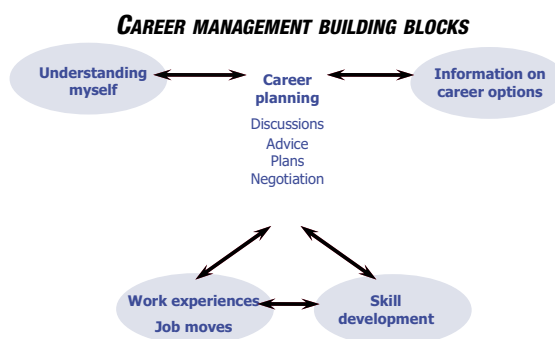
CASE STUDY: ACCESS FIRST, AN EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROJECT OF THE OXFORD-BASED CHARITY REFUGEE RESOURCE, provides job brokerage, work experience, bursaries and a work-preparation course as well as individual advice and guidance to refugees. They actively challenge negative stereotyping in the media, and run training events for employers and service providers. They have recruited medical students to volunteer help for refugee health professionals in passing English language and professional exams, and have set up a scheme with Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service that has led to work experience placements and permanent employment.

www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR20/FMR2010.pdf

MANAGING THEIR OWN CAREER

Understandably, most refugees want to get into the labour market as soon as they can, in work that reflects their experience and qualifications. But even when they do find the ideal job they will need to learn to manage their career in their new country. No one service in the UK provides this for adults – as they progress each individual has to seek out help to: understand their own values, interests and skills; what the options are (or future choices will be) in their chosen field or in possible alternatives; how they can acquire relevant work experience either through voluntary work, in their present job or by changing job; and how and where they can learn new skills.

This diagram shows how the elements of career planning – discussion, advice, negotiating and making plans – fit with the other core career management activities.



Hirsh, W. and Jackson, C. (2004)

ACTION POINTS

FOR MAINSTREAM SERVICES

- Contact other mainstream guidance services and explore the potential for joint staff development days on work with refugees.
- Identify SETARs, JBRs and ETRNs in your neighbourhood or region and set up meetings, invite them to contribute to your staff development days, and explore referral links.
- Seek out RCOs in your neighbourhood, ask about their employment and training advice needs, and involve them in relevant outreach programmes.
- Use the suggestions in this Briefing for discussion with colleagues.

FOR SPECIALIST EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADVICE SERVICES FOR REFUGEES (SETARs)

- Identify all the agencies in the locality offering help relevant to the employment and training of refugees, both specialist and mainstream.
- Make links with mainstream employment and training advice agencies for:
 - **service delivery.** Connexions, some IAG services and Jobcentre Plus have resources for outreach work or work with ethnic minorities. Partnership working is beneficial to clients and establishes stronger alliances for future funding. Developing stronger links with HE and FE careers services would help many refugee clients.
 - **staff development.** Networked training strengthens links as well as raising professional standards. Make contacts with local NVQ training organisations or university Qualification in Career Guidance (QCG) providers and explore options for training with a refugee focus.
- Identify the most appropriate guidance professional association and join it. They may not understand the particular problems of your client group, but they are there to develop and support the work of professionals serving many different client groups, focusing on generic issues that could benefit your clients.

THANKS TO:

Access First, Refugee Resource Oxford
www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR20/FMR2010.pdf

Employability Forum
www.employabilityforum.co.uk

The Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees in the UK (ICAR)
<http://www.icar.org.uk>

Job Placement Project for Refugees in West Yorkshire
www.fairplaypartnership.org.uk/view.php?id=102

learndirect minority languages helpline
www.learndirect-advice.co.uk/featured/min

London Borough of Camden Regeneration Team's Refugee Access into Sustainable Employment (RAISE) project (nathaniel.williams@camden.gov.uk)

Praxis, East London
www.praxis.org.uk/default.aspx

Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit (RAGU), London Metropolitan University
www.londonmet.ac.uk/ragu

Refugee Council
www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Refugee Education and Training Advice Service (RETAS), East London
www.education-action.org/retas

Refugees Employment Advice, Hounslow Law Centre
www.refugeeemploymentadvice.org.uk

Refugee Employment and Training Advocacy Forum, (RETAF), Handsworth, Birmingham
retaforum@yahoo.co.uk

Refugees Into Jobs, Wembley
<http://www.brent.gov.uk/regen2.nsf/61b63a407eca7a438025663c0065cadd/56268a32c377062380256e9a00596d11?OpenDocument>

Refugee Job Brokerage
(catherine.froggatt@cite4jobs.org)

Somali Development Services, Leicester (telephone 0116 285 5888)

And to: The Institute of Careers Guidance (www.icg-uk.org) and Careers Bradford (www.careersb.co.uk)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further copies of this Briefing can be obtained from NICEC on receipt of the costs of postage. For single copies, send a stamped (30p) self-addressed envelope to: NICEC, Sheraton House, Castle Park, Cambridge CB3 0AX. For multiple copies, contact NICEC on 01223 460277

© NICEC 2005

USEFUL MATERIALS

Department of Work and Pensions (2004) Working to Rebuild Lives: a Preliminary Report Towards a Refugee Employment Strategy. Sheffield, DWP.

Hirsh, W. and Jackson, C. (2004). Managing Careers in Large Organisations. London, The Work Foundation.

Home Office (2004) Integration Matters: a national strategy for refugee integration.
www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/laws___policy/refugee_integration0/a_national_strategy.Maincontent.0002.file.tmp/COI_NATI.pdf.

Hurstfield, J. et al. (2004) Employing Refugees: Some Organisations' Experiences. Brighton, Institute for Employment Studies.
www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/01550ef.pdf.

Kirk, R. (2004) Skills Audit of Refugees. Home Office Online Report 37/04.
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/rdsolr3704.pdf.

Reports on individual nationalities or groups, such as:

Centrepoint (2004) Young refugees in the labour market. www.centrepoint.org.uk.

Harris, H. (2004) The Somali Community in the UK: what we know and how we know it. London, ICAR.

Guidance work with refugees:

Connexions Service National Unit (2003) Emerging Practice/Working Together - Connexions supporting young asylum seekers and refugees. www.connexions.gov.uk.

Marshall, T. (1992) Careers Guidance with refugees. London, Refugee Training and Employment Centre.

Mulcahy, M. (2005) 'Working with refugees – dynamics for careers practitioners' Newscheck February 2005.

RETAS: The Refugee Flexible Learning Common Training Programme (REFLECT). A CD ROM for advisers.

Sinkil, A. (2002) Quest for Quality: Educational Guidance for Refugees in Europe. London, Refugee Education and Training Advice Service (RETAS).

The websites listed opposite include details of many other useful studies and reports carried out by individual agencies.