

Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network



Annual Report

2012-2013

Empowering refugees, asylum seekers and migrants to improve their quality of life by providing culturally sensitive support, advocacy and capacity development to individuals and organisations.

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Message from the Chair

Alison Willis

This has been another successful year for LRMN despite the challenging economic climate, and much of this success is due to the dedication, creativity and sheer hard work of all our staff and volunteers. Both LRMN, our clients and funders have had serious challenges to face with the changes in the welfare system, and local government cuts all having an impact, not to mention the on-going uncertainty surrounding our premises. Nevertheless, we have continued to grow and develop our services, working with partners across Lewisham, Southwark and Greenwich to maximise our impact and reach. We continually strive to improve the quality of the services we offer and I would really like to encourage all our clients to let us know how we are doing - we'd love to hear what you think of our services and your suggestions about how we could improve.

As always, I'd like to thank our funders for continuing to support us, especially Lewisham Council and NHS Lewisham who have been valuable long term partners. The on-going, long term funding we receive enables us to plan more effectively and to think long term rather than constantly fire-fighting for which we are extremely grateful.

Finally, I'd like to thank the LRMN trustees for their continuing support, despite the considerable demands of work, family and life in general! I look forward to another successful year for LRMN, and to working with you all in the coming months.

Message from the Treasurer

Lydia Abu

We have had another remarkable year despite the on-going economic difficulty and funding challenges. LRMN I would say is doing very well. This year, our trading figures for 2012-13 show an excess of income over expenditure of £54,560. It should be noted however, that the excess income is mainly restricted.

Our total income was **£288,481** and expenditure was **£233,921**.

The financial report, achievements and future plans are in the Trustees report.

Full financial statements are submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission. Copies are available on request.

Message from the Director

Rosario Mincher

This year the challenges that we face have grown from big to massive! The welfare reforms that the government has initiated have put enormous demands on our welfare benefit information and advice provision. The Legal Aid reforms, where immigration advice has been removed from the scope of legal aid in most cases has put great pressure on our already over-subscribed immigration advice service. We get more homeless clients, clients who have more complex and serious cases and we have increasing numbers of women and children who need food parcels, travel allowances to attend our activities and requests for small sums from our Destitution Fund.

This year too, I have heard countless stories of how the funding cuts and the economic recession have affected many voluntary organisations locally and nationally and I've been asked several times how we are coping as an organisation amidst the economic gloom.

It is a great pleasure to let you know that despite all the economic uncertainties, pressures and challenges, we as an organisation still have so many reasons to celebrate this year.

We strongly believe in working in partnership and we continue to cultivate our relationships with like-minded organisations. This year in partnership with Southwark Refugee Communities Forum (SRCF) and Greenwich Action for Voluntary Service (GAVS) we have been successful in securing funding from the City Bridge Trust to help refugee, migrant and black and ethnic minority organisations maximise the benefit of social media technology. We also secured funding from the Henry Smith Charity, our current funder, to continue our welfare and health service for another 3 years. We were also funded by Deptford Challenge Trust to help understand the migration trends and the needs of new migrants and to support new migrants in the Deptford area. In addition to bigger projects, we were privileged to be able to secure a number of small grants to implement small but significant projects for our clients.

The Challenge Trust gave us a small grant to hold a summer sports festival and a picnic in the park for our clients and the Challenge Trust young people. Vodafone funded one of our volunteers to conduct a survey on the trends in migration in Lewisham. This year too, we received donations from our supporters and we used this as seed funding for our Destitution Fund; which for many of our clients is a lifeline. The funding from Warm - Homes project led by Lewisham CAB resulted in our most vulnerable clients being supported during the winter. The London Borough of Lewisham in addition to their main grant also provided us a small amount to celebrate Refugee Week in June. The event was opened by Joan Ruddock, Deptford MP and we were joined in the celebration by members of the public and various refugee and community organisations. Funding may be crucial in our whole operation but proper guidance is also essential! Volunteer Centre Lewisham helped us improve our volunteer policy and practice and Pilotlight, a charity which links up senior managers (Pilotlighters) from the private sector with senior managers from the charity sector worked with us tirelessly this year, discussing and dissecting our strategies, outcomes, and needs and as a result of this, our Strategic Plan for 2013-18 was born!

As in previous years, things have been tough in terms of funding, but LRMN is thriving and expanding! Thank you to all our funders particularly the London Borough of Lewisham and NHS Lewisham who continue to support us and believe in us in creating an environment where refugees and migrants are supported, integrated and respected. I am also thankful to LEWCAS for their continued supply of dried food for our clients, to Brockley Community Church for their lovely hot lunch every Wednesday, to Perry Rise Baptist church for their dried food donations every fortnight, to various individuals for their cash, clothes and food donations and to Pilotlight and my Pilotlighters for sharing their time and intelligent insights. I also would like to thank all my staff including Emma Brech, Nur Jahan Mazumder and Arianna Rondos who left this year for their selfless commitment to the organisation and most importantly to our clients. Thank you to my trustees who continue to support me in making LRMN a healthy and fit for purpose charity. And lastly and no way least, my special gratitude goes to all my volunteers, interns and students on placements who have offered their time, skills and expertise. Without you, it would have been very difficult for us to achieve what we have now.

WELFARE AND HEALTH

Margot Lawrence

This project aims to reduce inequalities suffered by refugees and asylum seekers, by identifying and addressing difficulties preventing their access to welfare benefits and health services and to prevent social exclusion by ensuring that refugees and asylum seekers are able to exercise their rights to health services, and are shown respect for their privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs. It also aims to improve their household income and alleviate poverty by ensuring they access their welfare benefit entitlement. In order to achieve these aims, the project offers the following services

1. Scheduled appointments and casework on health-related issues such as:

- Helping clients apply for welfare benefits to which they are entitled
- Helping clients find G.P.'s
- Referring clients to mental health agencies and specialist organisations for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Arranging interpreters to attend GP and hospital appointments

- Advocating on behalf of the client to relevant health and social care agencies

2. Health promotion activities:

- Weekly sewing and knitting classes

3. Hardship fund for destitute clients

Achievements

1. Casework

420 advice and guidance appointments were given over the year. Some of the cases were complex and required referrals to several agencies.

2. Working with G.P.'s.

The project works with GP's in the local area to ensure the best service for clients. This results in:

- Direct connection with G.P.'s in local practices
- More referrals from G.P.'s
- G.P.'s more willing to write medical letters as supporting evidence
- G.P.'s more ready to waive fees for writing letters
- G.P.'s more willing to make emergency referrals to mental health agencies
- All our clients attending the project now have access to G.P.'s and dentists.

3. Well-being activities

The sewing and knitting classes have been very popular with our clients, and very successful in promoting well-being and community cohesion. There have been 44 knitting classes and 42 sewing classes over the year. Each week new clients join and we now have 15-20 women attending each week. We continue to acquire a steady stream of donated fabrics and wool, and there are 8 sewing machines. The classes have proven benefits and have achieved the following outcomes:

- The participants have learnt new skills, and the items they make are not only for the benefit of their families, but also as a possible way of earning an income.
- It has helped to alleviate loneliness and isolation among our client group, which in turn has improved mental health.

4. Health Forum - Maternity services improvement programme.

The project has been working in partnership with the Maternity Service Liaison Committee (MSLC) in Lewisham to improve maternity services for our clients, and to ensure that the views of our women are used to improve maternity services in Lewisham. We have also contributed to the provision of a dedicated Safeguarding Midwife at Lewisham Hospital and refer any pregnant clients to them.

Issues/ Cases Presented by Clients

The health conditions that are commonly presented at appointments include:

- Mental and physical injuries from past torture
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- On-going mental health problems
- Chronic pain
- Immobility/disability
- Cardio-vascular Disease
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Rheumatoid arthritis, Osteo-arthritis, Vitamin D deficiency
- Sensory problems

Breakdown of welfare benefits support requested by clients:

Benefit	% of clients
Disability Living Allowance	64%
Community Care Grant	70%
Attendance Allowance	4%
Employment and Support Allowance	62%
Jobseekers Allowance	41%
HC2 certificate	40%
Child Benefit	30%
Child Tax Credit	52%
Disabled Freedom Pass	10%

Forum

The project has attended the following forums to promote the project:

Healthy Communities Collaborative
Lewisham LINK
Lewisham Health and Social Care Forum
Lewisham Homelessness Forum
Maternity Service Liaison
Committee



London Borough of Lewisham

IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM

Nur Jahan Mazumder

The project continued to evolve and thrive forward to provide specialist advice to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants; giving advice and representation in the areas of:

- Immigration and Asylum
- Nationality
- Welfare benefits
- Asylum support (NASS)
- Housing and homelessness
- Debt

The Immigration and Asylum part of the project advises and assists clients on all aspects of asylum and immigration rights including appeal matters on pro bono basis.

Achievements

Since April 2012 – March 2013, we have helped clients in relations to their asylum application, spousal and domestic violence application, applications for settlement and children's and human rights application. We have assisted clients for travel documents, and citizenships and we have also represented them at the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal and have provided several advices on appeal rights and right to appeal to the Upper Tribunal.

The other achievements of the project are:

- Around 80 % of our clients received specialist Immigration and Asylum advice because they are either unable to obtain legal aid immigration advice; they have been merit failed or they were unable to continue to pay for advice.
- The immigration and asylum part of the project had 1,000 contacts with new and existing clients and over 1,248 hours of clients work.
- We have also made number of partnerships with local organisations including Lewisham Citizen's Advice Bureau, the Southwark Law Centre, Action for Refugees in Lewisham (AFRIL) and Lewisham Social Services. This also led to outreach sessions being conduct-

Issues/ Cases Presented by Clients

Majority of our immigration clients sought advice for leave to remain on the basis of asylum, Human Rights, and the Immigration Rules. Examples of cases are: initial asylum claims, settlement as refugees, settlement as a family member of a refugee, domestic violence victim and un-accompanied minors.

HEALTH ACCESS

Shepherd Ziko

The broad aim of the project is to address health inequalities in Lewisham, and to ensure that marginalized groups such as refugees and asylum seekers have access to the healthcare they need. Most of the asylum seekers, refugees and migrants that come through our door, sometimes for something else, are already suffering ill health. This is often exacerbated by experiences before or after they come to this country and which may cause traumas. This causes them to present with significant and advanced post-traumatic stress disorder. But what compounds the physical and mental health problems they bring with them is what happens to them here. The uncertainty of their situation in terms of housing and immigration exacerbates their health problems especially as there are no timescales with the Home Office.

The Health Access Officer (HAO) offers generic support to clients according to individual needs and through this, the HAO then identifies any health needs for clients.

Achievements

The number of clients seen by the HAO has been more than 29 per month which is slightly more than the target number. The total number of clients seen under the projects is 316 cases. The number of clients seeking support particularly for Employment Support has increased as more and more people are being turned down after medical assessments. The HAO has also seen a marked increase in clients seeking housing issues support, from applications on to housing registers to homeless applications.

The HAO attended the Refugee Week at Leamore Centre as part of the LRMN Team and clients celebrations. The event was a success and attendance was great. It provided an opportunity for the publicity for the project and to engage in partnership working.

The HAO continues to partner with other organisations and liaise accordingly to improve the provision of the Health Access Project.



Trip to the British Museum Men Fit for Life Project

Lewisham Men Fit for Life (The LRMN Men's Project)

The 'Lewisham Men Fit for Life' was funded by

Lewisham Healthcare



NHS Trust

The 'Lewisham Men Fit for Life' is a platform for men to come together in a confidential environment to engage in positive activities, learn new skills and share their experiences and knowledge with one another. The Project supported vulnerable men, migrants, refugees and asylum-seeking men, who all too often have to struggle with feeling powerless, isolated and anxious, leading to poor health and wellbeing.

Who was it for?

The Project was aimed at supporting vulnerable men (above 35yrs), migrants, refugees and asylum-seeking men, who all too often have to struggle with feeling powerless, isolated and anxious, leading to poor health and wellbeing.

Our aims were to:

-To provide an atmosphere in which men from diverse backgrounds and cultures can come together and freely discuss their needs and concerns leading to a healthier private and public life in the UK.

-To encourage men to take part in fun and enlightening activities which promote a positive link between mind and body, build confidence and stimulate discussions on issues associated with a healthy and balanced lifestyle

The project introduced clients to different activities which otherwise they would not partake in on their own. Most clients have now got confidence to go out and mix with new people and take part in activities with them. Most clients engaged in Health Checks, Football, Cycling, Energetic, Walking and Swimming. The programme empowered clients to be more confident and to go about their business with enthusiasm and a sense of belonging. It also alerted them of the beauty of London and how they could explore the place more. Other clients received input on choices regarding healthy eating and cooking at reasonable prices.

Comments from the clients:

"The project has improved my confidence".

"The project has helped me to improve my fitness".

"I now think about the nutritional value of what I want to eat before I cook".

"I enjoy life more now".

"I have improved my fruit and vegetable consumption since I started the course".

"I have improved my eating habits". "I have made new friends and feel more welcomed in the society".

"I have started reducing my alcohol intake and take fewer units a week".

"Yoga was very refreshing. I had never had it and enjoyed the experience".

"I had not been to any museum in London before but seeing the mummies from ancient Egypt became a highlight for me".

"Listening to a motivational speaker who was once a new immigrant in London was very helpful for me. It made me feel like I was not the only one to have taken my path and that there is light at the end of the tunnel".

Comic Relief, Trust for London

WOMEN'S PROJECT

Emma Brech, Arianna Rondos

2012-13 constituted the second year of the Women's Project@LRMN and consolidated on our learning from the first year. Key to this was the transition from 'therapeutic support' to a fully-fledged counselling project, incorporating three counsellors on placement, two social work placements and the return of our Dance Movement Psychotherapist on an honorary contract.

The project overview, aims and outcomes for the second year are outlined below. In summary, we exceeded most of our targets, and are delighted with the success of the project so far.

The Women's Project @LRMN is a three year counselling/ therapeutic project, funded by Comic Relief and Trust for London. The overall aim of the project is to improve the health and wellbeing of refugee and asylum-seeking women who have experienced gender-based violence and trauma.

By gender-based violence, we mean any act committed against a woman because of her gender resulting in physical or psychological harm. Examples of gender-based violence affecting refugee and asylum-seeking women include torture, rape, FGM, trafficking, prostitution, forced marriage and domestic violence. Violence committed against women in this way causes trauma, with resultant loss of identity, power, self-esteem and hope.

In providing services to refugee and asylum-seeking women, we aim:

- To enable women to cope with trauma through self-healing methods.
- To reduce isolation and increase self-esteem/ self-advocacy.
- To increase knowledge in relation to women's health and human rights.

Linked to these aims, our 5 outcomes state that in benefitting from our services, refugee and asylum-seeking women will:

- Have a greater sense of wellbeing and ability to cope with trauma.
- Feel more confident in accessing support/ services.
- Be better able to deal with chronic pain, stress and insomnia.
- Have better knowledge about their health and wellbeing.
- Be skilled to support new clients within the Nurture Group.

In helping women to recover from violence and trauma, The Women's Project @LRMN has 4 main outputs or services:

- 1-1 counselling (min 5 women per week)
- A weekly Women's Nurture Group (min 10 women per week)
- 1-1 massage for trauma sessions (max 4 women per month)
- A Mentor scheme

Achievements

2012-13 was a productive year for the Women's Project, both in terms of our outputs and outcomes. The total number of unique beneficiaries (ie not counting those attending more than one service) was 81.

During 2012-13 we have seen:

- An increase in women attending more than one kind of support (counseling/ group/ drop-in/ DMP/ social work advocacy). We feel that this leads to a high number of women engaging long-term, building trust with the project as a whole and moving between services to create 'wrap-around' support that is responsive and empowering.
- Increased use of our 'drop-in' counseling service after the women's group, which helps to educate women about counseling and support their immediate distress with a solution-focused approach.
- Consolidation of the staff team into 2 clear clinical sub-teams – working on Mondays and on Thursdays to provide a wrap-around support of counselling, social work advocacy and project management. This had led to smoother referrals/ joint working between team members as well as to the advice team, and better support for staff working on the project.
- Creation of a Women's Asylum Support Journal, aimed at reaching out to other counselling/ support projects supporting RASW in a bid to share good practice.

Basic statistics for the year 2012-3 are as follows:

a) Counselling

548 sessions attended including assessments, drop-ins and on-going appointments.

67 women attended overall.

b) Women's Nurture Group

36 group sessions attended

388 attendances recorded

62 women attended overall

c) Dance Movement Psychotherapy Group

28 DMP sessions attended

5 women attended overall

Issues/ Cases Presented by Clients

Casework during 2012-13 covered a wide range; from women who had been tortured and raped in prison, to those who had endured trafficking, forced marriage and witchcraft abuse. During the year, we saw an increase in recent arrivals from Sri Lanka, necessitating urgent work around asylum applications and trauma. A minority of cases dealt with domestic violence and No Recourse to Public Funds.

BMERM Maximising Technologies Project

Cristina Zorat

The BMERM Maximising Technologies Project aims to improve Black, Minority, Ethnic, Refugee and Migrant (BMERM) organisations’ understanding, expertise and use of Social Media and Digital Technology enabling them to be more effective and efficient in delivering better services to their target communities.

The outcomes of the projects are that BMER organisations are:

- more effectively and efficiently delivering services using different types of Social Media
- more informed BMERM organisations campaigning and lobbying on issues significant to migrant, refugees and asylum seekers through accessing information and policies on the internet
- improve the image and profile of refugees and asylum seekers and BMERM organisations
- increased work collaboration between and amongst BMERM organisations through increased contact with /exchange of information with other BMERM or other relevant organisations (via Social Media Networks)
- increased knowledge and access to funding opportunities and information for BMERM organisations

This is a partnership project between Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network (LRMN), Greenwich Action for Voluntary Service (GAVS) and Southwark Refugee Communities Forum (SRCF).

The BMERM Maximising Technologies Project consists of 8 monthly workshops, in-depth weekly training mainly targeted to build websites and 3 cross-borough workshops.

Achievements

On Year one of the Project we have trained 30 organisations

(10 per borough) through a total of 8 monthly borough workshops, 3 cross-borough workshops and 21 weekly in-depth sessions per borough, covering the following topics:

- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Facebook; | Twitter; | E-newsletters; | Eventbrite |
| Photo editing; | Online fundraising; | Website building; | Online Searches |
| Linkedin | Posting videos online | Photo sharing websites | |

Success Stories

These are examples of some of our achievements:

8 organisations developed brand new websites, see for example:

- Anyadwe Children <http://anyadwechildren.wordpress.com/>
- AAINA Women Group <http://aainawomen.wordpress.com/>
- Somali Parents Network <http://somaliparentsnetwork.com/>

- Listening Ears, the Elderly Project www.feelgoodclub.wordpress.com
- Somali Community Advancement Organisation <http://somalicao.wordpress.com/>

Others added links to social media to their existing websites, just to cite a few:

- Listening Ears has opened a [Linkedin](#) page for the organisation in order to link up with peers and donors
- [Gambia United Society](#) has revamped their Facebook page and inserted their TextGiving details for online fundraising
- [Anyadwe Children](#) has opened an [online fundraising page](#) to help them raising money for their activities

The training feedback was very positive, these are some of the written comments we received from trainees:

“The BMER Maximising Technologies Project was the best ICT training that I have attended. The trainer was very experienced in her field and her flexible methods made the learning of the complex navigation through the maze of technology relevant to my individual needs. I would certainly recommend this course to all”.

Elsa from LEMP

"I am especially happy about building the website and being able to post news and videos in relation to the recent Woolwich attack. I feel that this course has improved our communication skills and has helped us to raise the profile of our organisation. We also used Eventbrite to advertise our AGM”.

Said, Somali Parents Network

“I really enjoyed my training, the teacher was approachable and empowering and you kept us focused in the right direction. The course has not only given us new skills but also put some of us on the right tract in what we are really doing in our organisations. I recommend that all organisations do this training as it is vital”.

Joyce, Freedom of Women International

The project will continue next year and will target a further 30 organisations in the three boroughs.



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Terry Adams

Funded by Deptford Challenge Trust (DCT) the main focus of the Capacity Development project is to provide capacity development support to new migrant community groups based in Deptford/New Cross area.

The aim of capacity development project is to assist with the setting up of new community groups and support the development needs of emerging community representatives and leaders from new migrant groups.

It also aims to map new migrant groups in Lewisham and identify the community needs of new migrants as well as to identify and highlight issues relevant to new community groups and share this information with local and regional stakeholders and infrastructure bodies.

Achievements

Overall the project successfully achieved the objectives set.

The type of support the project provided, i.e. working closely and frequently with the main leaders of new groups worked well in achieving tangible outcomes. The support provided enabled 2 new community groups to be set up that would not otherwise have existed. The leaders of the two new organisations all expressed their thanks and acknowledged that without the support they received their ability to set up within the timeframe achieved would not have been possible. Another area of achievement was in mapping the migrant groups and identifying their needs. Although, there were limited time and personnel resources available for these areas of work, the project produced two studies that provide a solid overview of the types of organisations working with refugee and new migrant communities across Lewisham and the community needs of new migrants. The studies can be downloaded from our website.

The benefits of the project are twofold. Firstly, those leading and setting up new community groups have benefited by the fact that they have realized their objective of setting up an organisation that will meet needs of people from their community or those they have set up to serve. These leaders have acquired new knowledge and information and are able to apply this within the context of community development. The other need was to have a representation in the community that understands their culture and is prepared and able to act or advocate on their behalf. Secondly, the new groups seek to promote and sustain cultural identity and encourage understanding and integration. Therefore, the benefits of the project can be extended to the wider community that the new groups have been set up to serve.

A long term benefit also includes the fact that they now have the potential to establish a local presence that can be seen as a valid representative for their community and main service users. In turn this presents an opportunity that they can develop influence with decision makers and infrastructure organisations on matters important and relevant to them.

CASE STUDIES

(Please note the names and backgrounds of the clients have been edited to protect the identity of LRMN clients)

Case study 1

Ms Andrew (Iranian national) was referred through the outreach partnership with AFRIL, just before her status as a refugee was due to expire. The client had a history of persecution from the government and her family. She came to the UK in 2003 and was subsequently given Refugee Status for 5 years after an appeal hearing. She was given the status with her family.

After she was referred, I worked with Ms Andrew in order to prepare her application to the UKBA for settlement with her children while also ensuring that I was managing her expectation and her stress. I worked with her to build her knowledge of the system and provide reassurance that she would not be automatically removed when her Refugee Status came to an end and that the UKBA would have to consider her application for settlement. Since referral, we spent sessions after sessions working toward her settlement applications, in order for the application to be submitted to the UKBA in the short space of time that we had before her current Refugee Status expired.

In June 2012, the client and her 3 children received Indefinite Leave to Remain, after waiting 3 months. Ms Andrew is now working toward submitting her citizenship application with her children.

Case study 2

Mr Smith (Sri Lankan national) was referred to LRMN via AFRIL in July 2012. The client came on a spousal visa to the UK to join his wife after 10 years of separation due to conflict in Sri Lanka. However, after coming to the UK the circumstances changed for him. He suffered domestic violence at the hands of his wife and was suffering from physical and emotional violence. The client sought for advice and guidance about his limited leave to remain due to his marriage breakdown and the fact that he was not able to return to his country.

During our 3/4 hours meeting, the client disclosed that he also suffered from persecution at the hands of Sri Lankan army, that he was previously detained for months and tortured by the army. Therefore, he was not able to return to that country and be safe. He was relieved to come to the UK to join his wife and was looking forward to building his family life. However, this was all taken from him when he suffered violence from his wife.

After several lengthy meetings with the client, the client and I agreed that we will help to gather the evidence on the basis of domestic violence and Article 3 ECHR and submit the application to the UKBA. After 9 long interviews with the client and numerous letters and telephone conversations (with the Refuge, police, social services), I drafted a detailed representation to accompany the application form with the evidence and agreed for the fee of near to £900 to be waived on the basis that he was a destitute client.

This application was accepted in October 2012 and the client received Indefinite Leave to Remain in November 2012. I have dedicated over 50 hours of work on this case alone, which I would not have been able to do under Legal Help or give the care and attention to the client's needs and his emotional state at the time of the referral. The client is now very happy and settled in the UK. He is now looking forward to moving on and building a future away from violence.

Case Study 3

Client E, aged 21 from Sri-Lanka was referred to the Women's Project by the Refugee Council. Following her family's involvement with fundraising for the LTTE in Sri-Lanka, her brothers and sisters had all been detained and 'disappeared'. Desperate for their youngest daughter not to suffer the same fate, E's parents send her to another city to study. However, the state police (CID) became suspicious and arrested her following allegations that she was 'helping' women who had been in prison. E was detained for over a year in solitary confinement, beaten, interrogated and raped on a regular basis by her captors. Eventually, her parents traced her and paid a ransom for her release, after which she left the country via an agent. E did not immediately claim asylum in the UK as she was frightened by news that both her parents had also been detained following her escape; she knew that if she was sent back to Sri Lanka, she would face almost certain death.

When E arrived at our service, she had made an asylum application but it had been refused. Afraid, lonely and destitute, she struggled at first to trust the service, and we worked hard to build trust by providing her with drop-in appointments on her own terms, and encouraging her to meet other Tamil women within the Women's Group. E then began to feel safe at LRMN, and engaged in further sewing, knitting and IT classes, as well as counselling sessions and social work advocacy. As the date for her appeal came up, we were able to liaise with E's solicitor in writing an in-depth counselling report, listing her experiences of torture, PTSD symptoms and risk on return. We then accompanied her to the Asylum Tribunal and gave evidence as to her credibility and level of vulnerability. As a result, E was granted Refugee Status and our report was featured in the Judge's decision letter. E continues to attend the project for support in integrating into UK society and rebuilding her life; this includes both practical support in terms of benefits + housing, and continuing emotional support in order to come to terms with everything that has happened to her.

E said recently: ' I am so happy that I found you and that you have believed me and helped me. I have no-one left in my family, but you have been like a mother to me. Now I can learn new things and maybe some day have a good job.'



Events & Photos



Refugee Week – Joan Rud-dock, Lewisham Deptford MP talking to our clients at the Refugee Week celebration held on 23rd June 2012 and participated by the public and voluntary and community organisations.

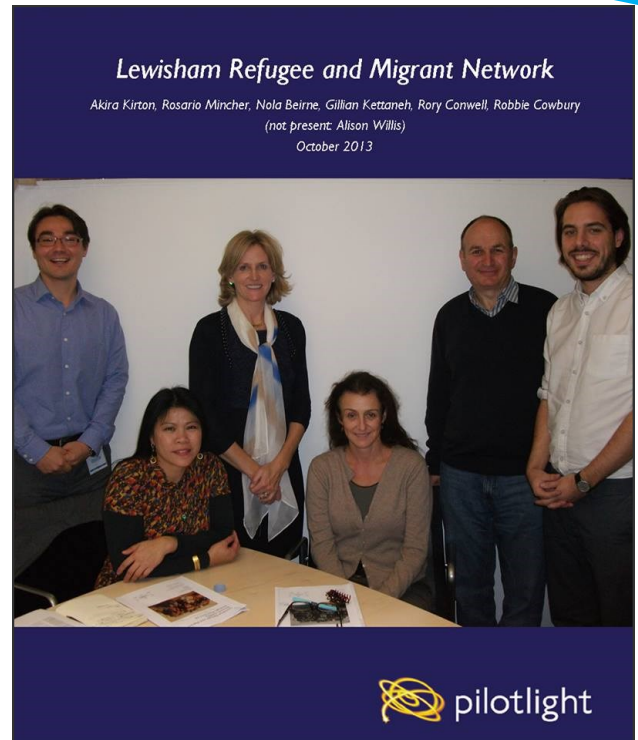
Sports Festival and Picnic in the Park – our clients and the Challenge Trust Young people enjoying a picnic in Deptford Park



Staff and Trustees
Awayday – Facilitated by Brian Wagenbach from Voluntary Action Lewisham, LRMN staff and trustees had an awayday in Nov to start setting the strategic directions of the organisation

P

Pilot Light – Our Strategic Plan for 2013-2018 was produced as a result of our partnership work with Pilotlight and our committed Pilotlighters!



E

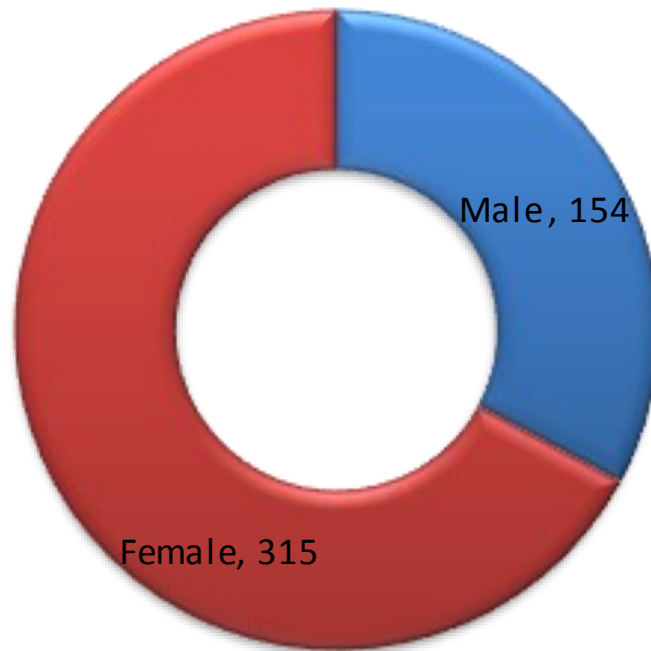
SOL Classes – Jane with her students. Jane has now left LRMN after over 2 years of volunteering. Thank you Jane!

E

End of Year Party for Clients – Brockley Community Church and Lewisham Churches for asylum seekers (LEWCAS) teamed up to provide food and presents for our clients.

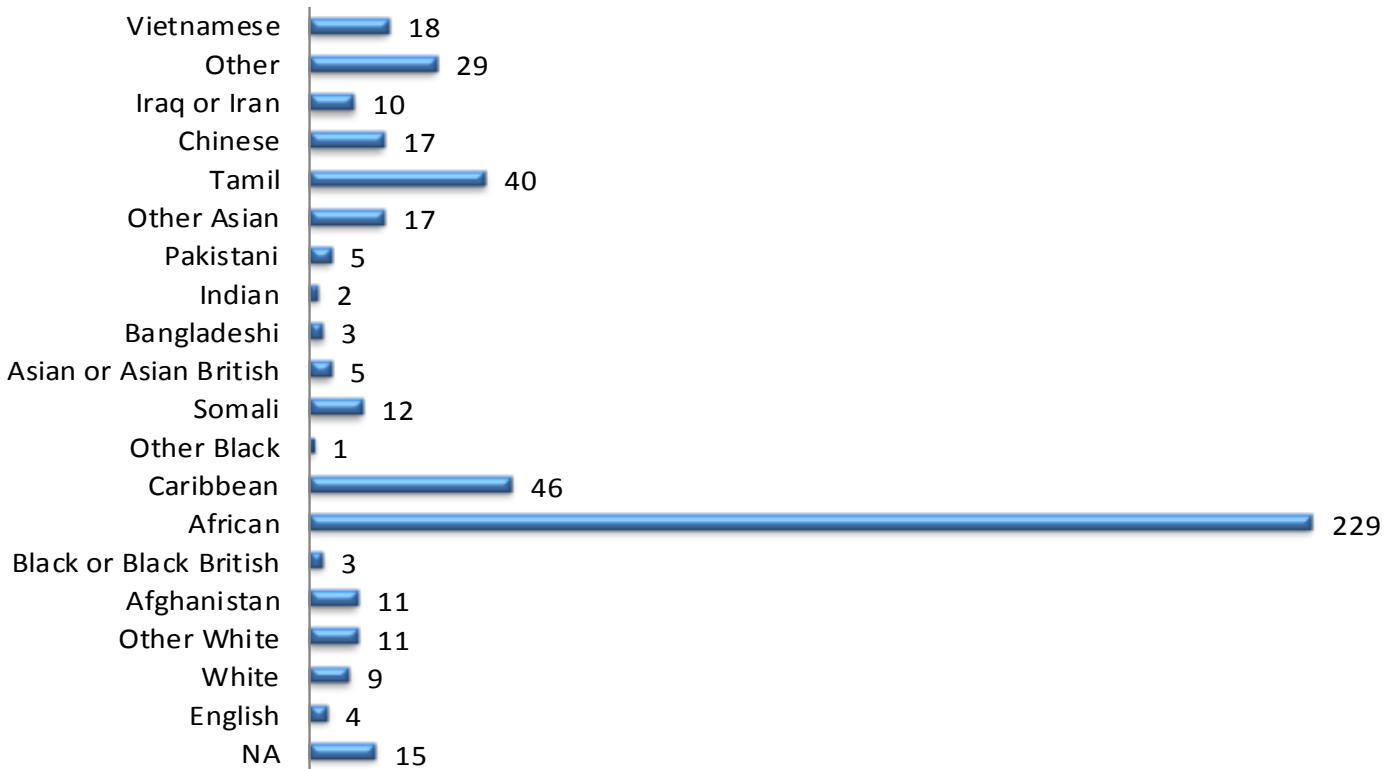


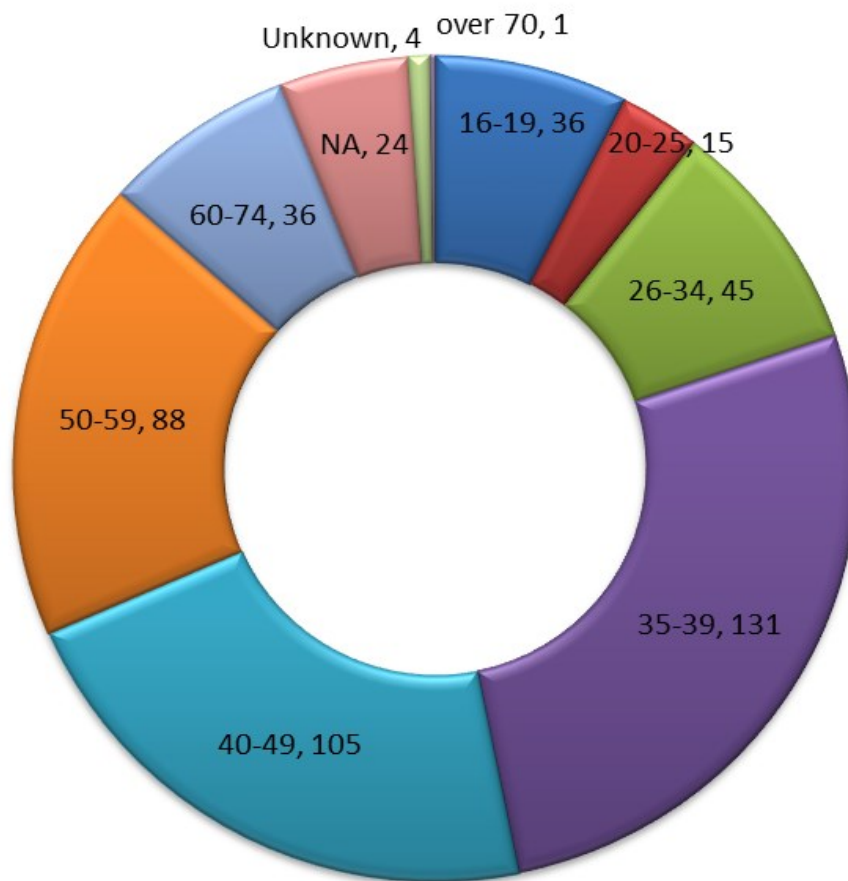
Our Clients



Gender

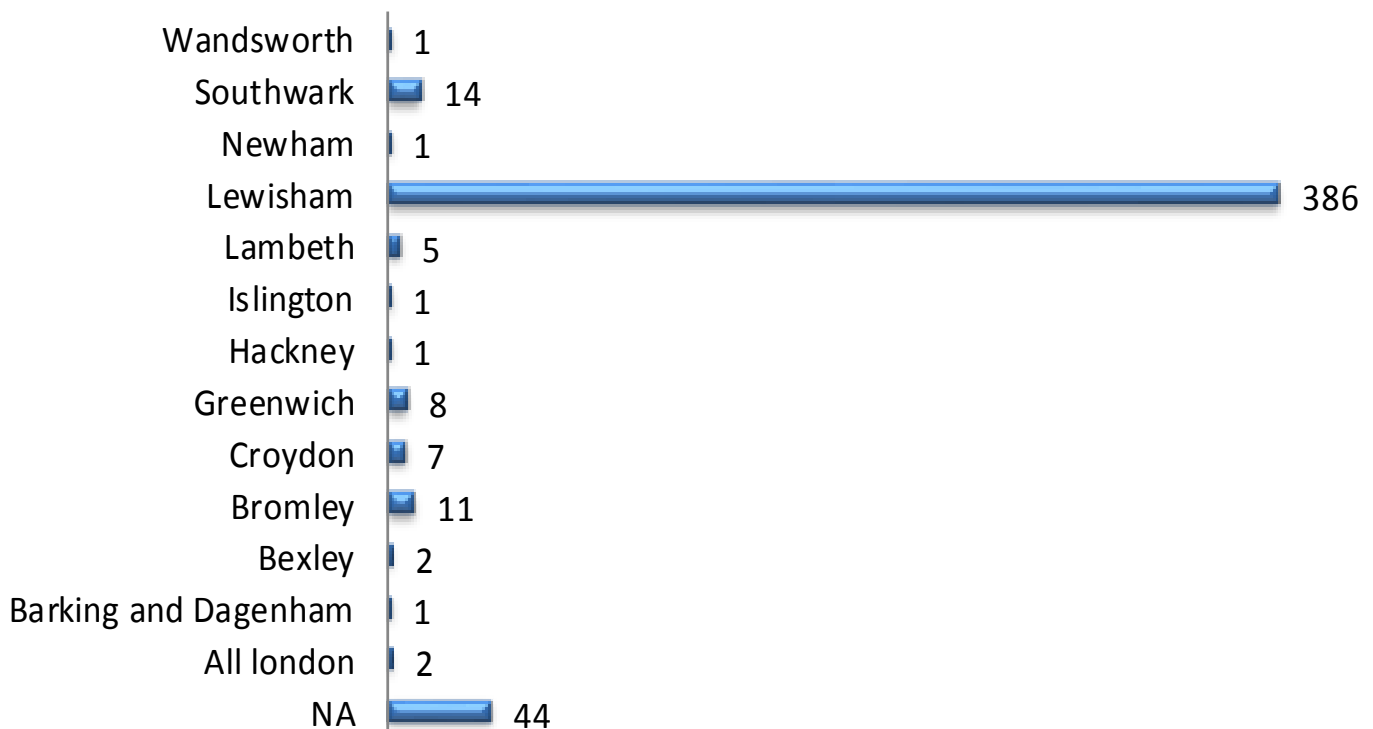
Ethnicity





Age

Boroughs



Our Partners

Action For Refugee In Lewisham (AFRIL)
AIRE Centre
CLC Solicitors (North London)
Duncan Lewis (New Cross office)
Immigration and Asylum Chambers
Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA)
LASA
Lewisham NHS trust
Lewisham Social Services
Office of Immigration Services Commission
Public Law Project
Rights of Women
Southwark Law Centre
UK Border Agency
North Lewisham PCT Health Improvement team
Lewisham Maternity Services Liaison Committee
Health Communities Collaborative
Lewisham LINK
Lewisham Health and Social Care Forum
GP surgeries
Southwark Day centre for Asylum Seekers
Medicins du Monde – Project London
Freedom from Torture; Bench Outreach
King's Church
Age Concern
Community Mental Health Team (Speedwell and Northover)
Lewisham primary schools
Housing Associations (The Sanctuary, Family Mosaic, The Hyde),
Single Homeless Intervention and Prevention Team (SHIP), Deptford Reach,
999; Red Cross NHS Lewisham
Lewisham Advice Providers Forum
Greenwich Social Network

REETA ; LVSC
National Domestic Violence Helpline
Health and Social Care Forum
Lewisham CAB
Voluntary Action Lewisham
Homelessness Forum
Refugee Legal Advisors Group
Southwark Refugee Communities Forum,
Greenwich Action for Voluntary Service
LEWCAS
Perry Rise Baptist Church
Brockley Community Church
CTDN
Action for Community Development
Family Services UK
Refuge
Community Mental Health Teams (Southbrook & Northover)
IAPT Lewisham
Lewisham College
Southall Black Sisters
Greenwich Council
Family Pathways
CSEL
Asylum Aid
National Domestic Violence Helpline
Ashiana ; 170 Community
Metropolitan Police
Immigration Solicitors
Guys and St Thomas Well Women clinic
Poppy Project ; Refugee Council
London Churches Refugee Network
WAST
Women for Refugee Women
Volunteer Centre Lewisham

Staff

- Rosario Mincher – Executive Director
- Nurjahan Mazumder – Immigration Adviser (left May 2013)
- Emma Brech – Women’s Project Manager (left May 2013)
- Arianna Rondos – Women’s Project Assistant (left July 2013)
- Margot Lawrence – Welfare and Health Adviser
- Shepherd Ziko – Health Access Officer
- Cristina Zorat – ICT Development Project Officer/Women’s Project Manager
- Terry Adams – Capacity Development Officer
- Bea Mgabi – Creche Worker
- Arezu Izats – Creche Worker
- Mercy Egbejule - Cleaner
- Elaheh Mahsoori – Women’s Project Manager (joined August 2013)
- Ed O’Driscoll – Immigration Adviser (joined August 2013)
- Alessandra Sciarra – ICT Development Project Officer (joined October 2013)

Trustees

- Alison Willis – Chair
- Amina Ismail – Vice-chair
- Lydia Abu – Treasurer
- Laurentina Risch – Secretary
- Eddie Mulumba – Member
- Mo Obadina – Member
- Jim Kanter - Member

Our Volunteers/ Students on Placement

Women’s Project

Janet Smith (left June 2013)
Denver Garrison (left May 2013)
Zoline Sonia Nakosso
Clotilde Ahouadja
Philomina Emeli
Theepa Amalraj
Toyin Dusomnu

Placement Counsellors

Mathilde Khalef (July – Dec 2012)
Jeyda Hammad (July- Dec 2012)
Danielle D’Mello (Jan– June 13)
Luisa Hoque (Jan– June 2013)

Placement Dance-Movement Psychotherapist:

Fiona Wood (Left July 2013)

Placement Social Work Student:

Jane Phillips (April- July 2012)
Jeanette Walcotte (Jan- August 2013)

Qualified social worker on placement:

Sinotu Lawal (Jan—July 2013)

ESOL Volunteers

Jane deRome (left September 2013)
Joe Beale (left July 2013)
Nimo Abdi (left Sep 2012)
Clare Maclure
Charles Williams
Genie Harvey
Izhar Eissadi (left May 2012)
Cophia Yau (May 2012)

IT Volunteers

Javed Sadeghi
John Walker

Sewing Volunteer

Monika Häußler-Göschl (left August 2012)

Reception/Admin Volunteers

Pamela Moncrieff
Sian Munkhai
Adriana Oliveira
Christopher Cullen (left June 2013)
Dola Akinobosun (left June 2013)
Andrew Hanson (left June 2013)
Eulicia Horne Nguta (August 2012)
Lisa Truong
Emmanuel Pyne
Monica Wagner (left June 2012)

Advice

Iqvinder Kmalhi (left May 2013)
Aisha Gupta (left Sep 2012)

Research

Andreja Mesaric (left July 2013)
Lisa Haagensen (left October 2013)

CONTACT DETAILS

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Fax: 020 8694 6621

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/LRMNetwork

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LRMNetwork>



Our Current Funders



DEPTFORD CHALLENGE TRUST

A B Charitable Trust