

Women's ASYLUM NEWS

Refugee Women's Resource Project - Asylum Aid - Issue 36 Sep 2003

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HO country information '*dangerously inaccurate and misleading*' says IAS

A detailed report published on 1st September by the Immigration Advisory Service (IAS) reveals highly selective use of source material in the country information reports produced by the Home Office (HO),¹ with a '*positive "spin" (...)* often put on reports by Non-Governmental Organisations that are in reality very critical of the countries concerned'. The report also records many examples of '*misquotation, inaccuracy and out-of-date information being presented as current*'.

According to Natasha Carver, Senior Research Officer at IAS and editor of the report, the CIPU reports are '*widely relied on by Home Office caseworkers, asylum lawyers and judges, so it is deeply worrying that the information is consistently of such poor quality. Refugees could be sent back to face death or torture because of the deceptively positive picture painted of countries (...) where human rights violations are widely accepted to be endemic.*'

The IAS report is published on the same day the HO released one of its own reports evaluating the content and internal use of

Country of origin Information² in which it asserts: '*The Country Information and Policy Unit aims to produce consistent and unbiased information on the countries from which asylum seekers come*'. The evaluation also reveals the extent to which HO caseworkers rely on what IAS described as '*flawed country information*'.

Based on the findings of its research, IAS urges the HO to create an independent country documentation centre, a measure consistently recommended by Asylum Aid following its own research on the quality of HO decisions on asylum claims.³ In the summary report '*Findings 211*' published by the HO, the authors conclude: '*If a decision is taken not to proceed with the establishment of an independent documentation centre, measures should be taken to ensure information produced is impartial and objective. The research recommends that CIPU should clearly*

² Home Office, '*Information on asylum seekers' country of origin: an evaluation of its content of usefulness*', London, September 2003. Summary (Findings 211) available at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/r211.pdf. Full report entitled '*Country of origin information: a user and content evaluation*' available at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hors271.pdf.

³ See 'No Reason at All', 'Still No Reason at All' and 'Only Crooked Words: HO decisions on Kenyan women's asylum claims' [provide dates].

¹ Known as 'CIPU' (Country Information and Policy Unit) reports.

divide responsibility for providing objective country information from that of providing policy advice'.

Parts of the 240 page report, 'Home Office Country Assessments: An Analysis', can be downloaded by clicking on the following link: [IAS Analysis of CIPU Assessments](#). The full report is available from IAS priced £17.50 (£15 plus £2.50 postage). Details and order form on the IAS website at www.iasuk.org.

UK Events/Projects



RWA offers free training for refugee women across London

All courses are free, women only and run during school hours. For individuals Refugee Women's Association (RWA) will pay travel expenses and contribute to childcare costs. The programme includes the following courses:⁴

● 'Accelerated English' is an exciting new programme designed for professional refugee women which combines intensive language skills with basic IT and skills that can be applied in a work situation. It can lead to a national qualification. Dates:

22nd Sep to 19th Dec 2003.

Venues: An-Nisa Society, 85 Wembley Hill Road, Wembley, Middx HA9 8BU; Vassall Youth and Community Centre, 143-145 Brixton Road, London SW9 6LZ; African Women's Welfare Group, 594 High Road, Tottenham, London N17 9TA.

● 'Childcare' This course leads to a vocational qualification qualifying participants to work in the childcare sector. Dates: Oct 03 - Apr 04. Venue: Hackney

Community College, Shoreditch Campus, Falkirk Street, London N1 6HQ.

● 'Business Start-up' will teach you how to research your market, writing a business plan, how to finance a business, cash flow forecast, taxation, accountancy requirements and putting together a publicity campaign. Dates: 17th Nov – 5th Dec 2003. Venue: RWA, Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL

● 'Job search skills' includes understanding the UK job market, writing or updating your CV, filling in application forms, confidence building, understanding equality of opportunities, interview skills and analysis of your skills and achievements. Dates: 10th – 20th Nov 2003. Venue: Grahame Park Community Centre and Barnet African Health Organisation, The Concourse, Grahame Park Estate, London NW9 5XB.

● 'Mentoring' trains employed refugee women to become mentors for unemployed refugee women. Likewise unemployed refugee women are trained as mentees. Their training includes job search skills. Dates: 6th Oct - 14th Nov 2003. Venue: The Migrant and Refugee Communities Forum, 2 Thorpe Close, London, W10 5XL.

● 'Let's Build Up' is a new capacity building training for refugee women organisations and groups: The programme consists of theoretical information and practical workshops around areas specific to setting up & managing a women's organisation. Topics will include Managing a Women's Organisation; Volunteers and User Involvement; Strategic Development and Business Planning; Project Development and Proposal Writing; Funding Applications, etc. Dates: Oct 2003 – May 2004. Venue: RWA, Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London, E8 3DL.

⁴ All details are provisional and subject to change.

For more information on any of the above courses, please contact Lucy Holdaway on 020 7923 2412, at RWA, Print House, 18 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL or email: lucy@refugeewomen.org.uk.

Refugee Mental Wellbeing

Awareness is a part of a series of regional courses organised by the Refugee Council and taking place from September onward. The course aims to demystify and develop further understanding of mental wellbeing issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers. It is intended for project, advice, outreach and day centre workers, housing staff, social services staff, primary health care staff, teachers, police, refugee community organisations, prison services staff, detention centre staff and anyone providing support services to asylum seekers and refugees who do not specifically provide mental health services. For more, contact Kathryn Walters on Tel: 020 7820 3049 or email: kathryn.walters@refugeecouncil.org.uk.

Refugees and Mental Health

Conference (Wednesday, 8th October 2003 9.30 am – 12pm Halkevi, 92-100 Stoke Newington Road, London N16) is organised by Social Action for Health in partnership with many other organisations. The key aim of the conference is to raise human rights aspects of the refugees and mental health issues. Speakers will include Malcolm Smart, Director, Medical Foundation (on Human Rights and Refugees' Mental Health), Dr. Angela Burnett, The Sanctuary Practice (on Access to services for refugees) and Dr Rizgar (on Kurdish refugees and mental health). For more, contact Ferhat Cinar by email at ferhatc@safh.org.uk or tel: Tel: 020 7247 1414.

Country Information and Research Project

The Safra Project has received some funding for this project and will research and provide (gender-specific) information on the treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in countries with a significant Muslim population. The aim of this project is to improve the availability of reliable country information in this area and to decrease bias in the assessment and processing of asylum applications.

The main outcome of the project will be the publication on The Safra project's website of 10 brief 'country information reports' that will serve as a resource pack, signposting researchers and asylum caseworkers in the direction of available country information. The reports will be largely based on secondary research and will include a critical assessment and critique of the current information used by the UK Home Office (the CIPU reports). The reports will have specific regard to information such as the availability of state protection and human rights violations. They will include information on LGBT issues in relation to religion, Islamic law, state law, practice, attitudes of state officials, attitudes in society and in the medical profession, existing support and social groups etc.

Safra will also produce a list of relevant resources and contacts and encourage further networking and exchange of information between organisations and individuals working on, or willing to work on, the issues involved. For more, write to the Safra Project, P.O. Box 35929, London, N17 0WB.

Human Rights Without Rights: asylum seekers in the 21st century is a lecture organised by the London

School of Economics' Human Rights Centre and *The Guardian* on Saturday 1st November between 9.30am and 4.30pm at the Old Theatre, Old Building, LSE.

Speakers include Pr. Stephen Castles, Director of Refugee Studies Centre Oxford, Heaven Crawley, Director of Migration and Equalities Programme, Institute of Public Policy Research and Margaret Lally, Deputy Chief Executive, Refugee Council.

The event is free for asylum seekers (£10 for others, £5 for unwaged). For more, contact 020 7955 6428, or email J.M.Whyte@lse.ac.uk.

New Drop Centre for African Refugees and Asylum Seekers

African Community Advice North East (ACANE) has launched a drop-in centre for African refugees and asylum seekers in the North East. The centre aims to provide support and assistance to Africans in terms of integration with the host community in the North East. This includes advice about British structures and systems; advice on accessing legal services, health services, employment, education and training opportunities; and assistance with the completion of application forms and translating and interpreting official documents.

For help, contact ACANE, 1 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 2FF. Tel / Fax: 0191 265 8110.

International News

Pregnant woman tortured by police in Mauritania An Africa-wide rights advocacy group, RADDHO, reported the case of a woman who miscarried her two-month-old fetus after being tortured

by the police.⁵ Although it is not known why the woman was in police custody or if she was targeted for political reasons, the organisation condemned '*the recurrence of acts of torture in Mauritania*'. In a press release dated of 21 August 2003, RADDHO also reported the death of a teenager beaten by police after being stopped for an identity check in mid-August. The organisation called for the Mauritanian authorities to open an immediate investigation into the incidents and punish those responsible; and for the State to fulfil its obligations as a signatory to the International Convention against Torture.

Bhutanese Refugee Women denied fair consideration of their asylum claims

A joint mission of non-governmental organizations who spent two weeks on a mission in India and Nepal said that '*the refugee screening process [of Bhutanese refugees] violates every international norm in the book*'.⁶ According to the international NGOs who interviewed Bhutanese refugees in camps in south East Nepal, the screening by the governments of Bhutan and Nepal is '*fundamentally flawed*'.

One of the most serious violations of international human rights and refugee standards uncovered by the mission is the fact that '*refugees were forced to recount their reasons for leaving Bhutan to officials of the same government responsible for their persecution and flight*'. Many had been forced to flee '*discrimination, arbitrary*

⁵ Source: RADDHO, Communiqué de Presse, '*Halte à la torture en Mauritanie*', 21 Aug 2003 at: www.raddho.africa-web.org/Html/torture_rim.htm.

⁶ Human Rights Watch, '*Nepal: Bhutanese Refugee Screening Seriously Flawed International NGOs Declare Process Invalid*', Kathmandu, 2 September 2003, at www.hrw.org/press/2003/09/nepal-bhutan090203.htm.

detention, sexual violence, and threats to their physical safety in Bhutan'.

The mission also found that refugee women were excluded from the asylum process and calls for the inclusion of female interviewers: *'The joint screening team only interviewed male heads of households' and 'there were no women on the joint screening team for most of the review process'*.

The organisations also criticise the *'categorisation'* process. For instance, refugees who have supposedly *'voluntarily'* migrated from Bhutan are put in category II. All those interviewed in this category said they were forced to sign so-called *'voluntary migration forms'* under duress when they were expelled from Bhutan. Also sometimes people from the same family are placed in a different category, even though they fled Bhutan for the same reasons. And in some cases children born in the refugee camps are classified as *'criminals'* (category IV which includes refugees who participated in *'anti-national' (pro-democracy) activities in Bhutan*).

Jordan women refused right to divorce and meaningful protection from honor killing A temporary law introduced by the government in 2002, which gave women the right to file for divorce, was rejected by the lower House of Jordan's newly-elected parliament in August.⁷ The law had been prepared in

⁷ Information below drawn from the following sources: BBC, *'Divorce blow for Jordan Women'*, 4 Aug 2003; *'Jordan woman "wins right to divorce"'*, 13 May 2002; *'Honor killing" laws blocked'*, 8 Sep 2003; all at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/>; *The Australian*, *'Jordan throws out female divorce rights'*, 5 August 2003, at <http://209.157.64.200/focus/f-news/957927/posts>; Committee to Defend Women's Rights in the Middle East, *'Jordan: Divorce Blow for women'* and *'Jordan: Another Woman Victims of Fathers' "Honour"'*, both in *Women in*

co-ordination with the clergy and women's groups. It had been backed by King Abdullah II who pledged to improve women's rights in Jordan. In May last year, a woman was the first to win the right to divorce her husband. Conservative Islamists claim that allowing women to file for divorce without their husbands' consent would *'destroy families'* and cause *'harm'* on homes.

Deputies also rejected another temporary legislation scrapping lighter sentences for those found guilty of honour crimes – usually carried out by the male relatives of women deemed to have insulted the family honour by her behaviour. BBC News reports that Islamists and Conservatives said the law would *'encourage vice and destroy social values'*. Both laws were upheld in August by the Senate and it is expected that they will be debated jointly by the two Jordan Chambers.

Currently, Article 97 and 98 of the Penal Code reduce the sentence of crimes committed *'in a fit of fury'* and people found guilty of honour killing crimes often receive light sentences. A man's sentence was recently reduced from 15 years to 7^{1/2} years by a tribunal *'because the defendant is a father and the victim's actions of constantly leaving the home brought her father shame and disrespect'*.

'Stop trafficking of women and children' say Asian women in public protest Over 1,000 women from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Philippines, wearing black and carrying candles, staged a silent protest in Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital, on 11 August against repression

and trafficking of women.⁸ They carried placards reading: *'Stop trafficking of women and children, don't separate daughters from mothers, and we want all marriages to be registered.'* The aim of the protest was to raise public awareness on the issue of violence against women.

The protest's organizers included the Asian Women's Human Rights Council (AWHRC) and the UN Development Program according to whom *'some 225,000 women are trafficked on average a year from these eight participating countries where some seven million people are estimated to be HIV/AIDS positive. ... The situation is worsening owing to increased unsafe and uninformed migration, human trafficking and lack of awareness about HIV/AIDS issues and the close linkage between the three.'*

Nigeria: All School girls to wear Muslim scarf, says Kano State

The government of Kano State, northern Nigeria announced on 29 August that it is compulsory for all girls attending state-run schools to wear the hijab Islamic headscarf, whether or not they are Muslim. The measure does not apply to private schools or schools run by the Federal Government. However, according to the UN Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), *'the directive has provoked protests from the one million strong Christian minority in the state'*.⁹

⁸ Source: Reuters, *'Asian Women Protest Against Repression, Violence'*, Mon August 11, 2003 10:39 AM ET DHAKA, Bangladesh, at www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?storyID=3256546, accessible via www.asylumrights.net.

⁹ IRIN, *'Kano State Directs All School Girls to Wear Muslim Scarf'*, 1 September 2003, in IRIN west-Africa Weekly 191, 30 Aug-5 Sep. For IRIN coverage of Nigeria please go to www.irinnews.org/frontpage.asp?SelectRegion=West_Africa&SelectCountry=Nigeria.

Musa Abdusalam of the Christian Association of Nigeria said: *'we cannot be forced to live like Muslims'*. Kano state commissioner for education said the order was an attempt by the state government to uphold public morals and ensure *'the teachings of Islam are applied in each and every aspect of governance'*. The state, one of 12 states in the country's predominantly Muslim north to have adopted Shari'ah law in the last four years, has a history of violent religious clashes.

Related News on Nigeria: After several adjournments, the appeal of Amina Lawal - sentenced to death in March 2002 for having had a child after having divorced - was heard by a Sharia appeal court in Katsina state, northern Nigeria on 27 August 2003. The verdict was not given but has been postponed to 25 September 2003. For more information visit www.amnesty.org.uk/action/aminalawal.shtml.

Guardian Council rejects UN Convention to Ban Discrimination against Women¹⁰ In mid-August the 12 members Council rejected a bill on Iran's joining the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). According to Iranian news agency IRNA, a spokesman for the council said: *'once Iran signs the convention, it will be obliged to accept its contents in cases that are against Islamic rulings'*. The Council also rejected a bill

¹⁰ Information below drawn from the following sources: Payvand's Iran News, *'Iran: Guardian Council turns down Majlis bills on women's rights, torture ban'*, 8 August 2003, at www.payvand.com/news/03/aug/1073.html; Iran Press Service, *'Guardians rejects motions against torture and women'*, Teheran, 13 August 2003, at www.iran-press-service.com/; Committee to Defend Women's Rights in the Middle East, *'Iran: Row over the UN Convention to Ban Discrimination Against Women'*, in *Women in the Middle East*, Number 16, Sep 2003.

banning torture, on the basis that it was against the Constitution and would *'increase public expenditure while no suggestion has been made on how the new expenditure will be compensated'*.

Explosion of violence against women in Iraq According to AFP, the Organisation of Women's Freedom in Iraq reported more than 400 women kidnapped in the country since the occupation of US troops.¹¹ The group's director Yanar Mohammed told reporters: *'More than 400 women have endured the pain and suffering of being kidnapped or sometimes sold. ... This violence is still a daily occurrence, especially on the streets of Baghdad, without attracting the least attention of the (US) soldiers'*.

As a result few women dare to leave their homes: *'The moment a woman steps out on to the street, she is an immediate target for humiliation, sexual assault and abduction. ... The assaults against women, whether organised by professional gangs or individual crimes supported by male chauvinism, and unleashed and unobserved by coalition authorities, consequently turned the streets into a no-woman zone.'*

The Organisation of Women's Freedom said it had appealed, in vain, for help from Iraq's US-appointed interim Governing Council as well as US civil administrator Paul Bremer. The organisation is also requested heavy sentences against sex offenders.

New Legislation endangers immigrant women seeking protection from domestic violence

¹¹ AFP, Baghdad, 24 August 2003 quoted by Dawn at www.dawn.com [the Internet edition of the English language newspaper in Pakistan] and *Women in the Middle East*, op. cit.

in USA According to the Family Violence Prevention Fund (USA), the Clear Law Enforcement for Criminal Alien Removal Act (CLEAR) would *'endanger many battered immigrant women and undermine federal protections that were specifically crafted in the Violence Against Women Act to ensure that immigrant women would not fear deportation if they reported abuse to law enforcement'*. It has been introduced in the House and will shortly be introduced in the Senate.

'The CLEAR Act would deputize local police to enforce federal immigration law. ... Immigrants may be discouraged from contacting local police when they need help, for fear that they or their families will be deported'. The Fund is urging women in the USA to take action by writing to their representative in the Senate. See: <http://action.endabuse.org/fvpf/issues/alert/?alertid=3439266&type=CO>.

Irish Courts get power to prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity On 11 August, Ireland's Justice Minister Michael McDowell published the International Criminal Court Bill 2003, that will allow Irish courts to investigate, prosecute, and punish individuals who commit the offences of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

The 2003 Bill, which consolidates the existing offence of genocide under the 1972 Genocide Act, creates the new offences of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ireland giving the Irish courts power to prosecute such crimes. The Bill gives effect to the Statute of the

International Criminal Court (ICC) which entered into force on 1 July 2002'.¹²

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International Action

1000 Women for the Nobel Prize

2005 is a networking organisation which aims is to ensure that in 2005 the Nobel Peace Prize should collectively be awarded to 1000 women for their untiring pursuit of peace. *'Millions of women work day in day out to promote peace, caring for survivors, helping with reconstruction and initiate a new culture of peace'* but their work is neither *'acknowledged, nor remunerated'* as it is often *'taken for granted and is usually unspectacular... With the exception of 10 women, the recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize, since it was first awarded in 1901, have been men. In negotiating terms of peace, many more warlords than peacequeens make decisions about security, reconstruction and new political structures'*.

The focus of *'www.1000peacewomen'* is not only to recognize women worldwide from all walks of life who *'devote themselves to a future free of violence'*; but also to highlight their *'thousand strategies for constructive conflict management which should provide important impulses for conflict research and peace policies'*. It also aims to create new peace networks as well as strengthening existing ones. See: www.1000peacewomen.org/eng/html/index.html or contact *'1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005'* c/o swisspeace, Swiss Peace Foundation, Sonnenbergstrasse 17, P.O. Box, CH-3000 Bern 7, Switzerland. E-Mail: info@1000peacewomen.org. Tel:

¹² Source: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Press Release, *'McDowell publishes International Criminal Court Bill 2003'*, 11 August 2003, online at: www.justice.ie/802569B20047F907/vWeb/pcRXHR5QCUBUF

Related Information Judy El-Bushra, *'Women Building Peace, sharing Know-How'* is a new report published by International Alert and written by Judy El-Bushra (London, June 2003). It includes an overview of documented evidence of women's experiences of war as well as a women's analysis of conflict and peace and a description of what women's activists actually do. To download a copy (available in pdf), click on: www.international-alert.org/pdf/KnowHowPaper.pdf.

New Publications UK Focus

Special focus on Refugee Women

in this month's issue of *inexile* (the Refugee Council's monthly publication), Issue 27, September 2003. The feature *'Refugee Voices'* gives the opportunity for refugee women to talk about their experiences and is complemented by a number of topical articles including *'refugee women and domestic violence'*, *'refugee women and employment'* and *'refugee women and health'*. For a copy, contact the Refugee Council at inexile@refugeecouncil.org.uk or subscriptions@refugeecouncil.org.uk.

'Update on Educational provision Dungavel immigration Removal center South lanarkshire'

is the latest report of the Chief Inspectors of Prison, Ann Owers, who criticise detention of children. The report published in August 2003 can be downloaded from the Home Office web site at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/justice/prisons/inspprisons/inspectionim.html.



The A-Z of Volunteering and Asylum

is a new handbook by the National Centre for Volunteering which

covers the issues and areas of concern that can arise when asylum is part of the equation - either because you're a volunteer manager in an organisation that has taken on (or wants to) refugees and asylum-seekers as volunteers, or because your client group includes refugees and asylum-seekers. It shares good practice, highlights different ideas and approaches, challenges barriers, helps build networks, and lists useful resources (Ruth Wilson, 2003 132 pages £12). You can order directly from NCV's website or by post. For more visit:

www.volunteering.org.uk/workwith/atoz.htm

New Publications *International Focus*

'**Sanctuary in a Cell**' is an update of a previous publication published in November 2000 by the Law Centre in Northern Ireland¹³ which tracks progress made on recommendations published three years ago. It reveals that since the last publication, the number of people detained at Maghaberry jail in Co Antrim has increased by 20% and found that very little has been done to improve the treatment of asylum seekers in detention. The report

¹³ Sources: BBC News, 'NI asylum conditions criticised', 11 August 2003 at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/3140673.stm and 4NI, 'Report calls for end to jailing asylum seekers', 11 August 2003 at www.4ni.co.uk/industrynews.asp?id=18946

calls on the government to end the practice of detaining asylum seekers, which it describes as '*nothing short of a disgrace*'. (See www.lawcentreni.org/ for details of the November 2000 publication).

'**Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees and Human Rights**

'**Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees and Human Rights**' explores how the process of refugee protection is one that is complex and controversial, and always more political than humanitarian. Scholars and practitioners come together to offer an intellectual bridge between the study of refugees and human rights, addressing the shortcomings of relying on an international system in which the richest countries often set the agenda, shifting attitudes among affected countries, and the difficulty of rebuilding societies in which the refugee situation continues to intensify. This publication is edited by Niklaus Steiner, Gil Loescher and Mark Gibney, published by Routledge New York, May 2003

New UK Online resources



Eaves Housing for Women is pleased to announce the launch of the POPPY Project website at www.poppy.ik.com.

The POPPY Project is a pan-London research and development project focussing on prostitution and the trafficking of women and children into the UK, and developing services to enable the women to exit prostitution and situations into which they have been trafficked.

The website contains information on the activities of the project (service provision

and research/development) as well as information on UK and International legislation on trafficking and other international instruments to combat the trade. There are also links to the main Eaves Housing for Women Website and also to the Lilith Project working on Violence against Women. The POPPY project welcomes any comments or questions that you may have. Please contact Alice Peycke on alice.peycke@eaveshousing.co.uk or on 0207 840 7141.

Poppy Project, Eaves Housing for Women Second Floor, Lincoln House, Kennington Park, 1-3 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6DE. Direct Line: +44 20 7840 7141, Fax: +44 20 7820 8907. Website: www.eaves.ik.com.

24 Hour HOTLINE for victims of trafficking:
0207 840 7129.

Information leaflets for asylum

seekers The Inter Agency Partnership has published a new leaflet for asylum seekers on how to apply for asylum support. The leaflet has been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Sorani, Somali and Turkish and is available from the Refugee Council's website:

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/publications/pub002.htm#1

NASS Telephone list NASS has published its most recent (July 2003) telephone directory only available from the NASS website at: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/default.asp?pageid=2762.

Each entry in the directory includes a brief explanation of each team's responsibility along with a phone and fax number. Also

included are general enquiry numbers for the Immigration and Nationality Directorate and addresses for NASS' offices. If you are not sure which NASS team your query should be aimed at please call the Telephone Enquiry Bureau on 0845 602 1739.

New set of leaflets for tracing family members

For further information contact your nearest local British Red Cross Office. Visit their website at www.redcross.org.uk where these multilingual information sheets can also be downloaded.

'Asylum in the UK' The Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) has published a factfile on asylum which aims to offer objective and easily accessible information on a number of issues relating to asylum seekers, including existing statistical information about the numbers of asylum seekers in the UK and Europe, the effectiveness of the procedures for determining claims and the cost of the asylum system. It is available online at: www.ippr.org/publications/index.php?book=385 or (direct link) at: www.ippr.org/research/files/team19/project158/asyff.pdf.

Home Office Asylum Statistics for 2002 and second quarter of 2003 are now available online, at (respectively): www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hosb803.pdf and www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/asylumq203.pdf.

Notice Board

Refugee Action's Directory of Services for Women The Liverpool

office of Refugee Action is currently working on a directory/guide to services for refugee and asylum-seeking women in the Liverpool area. This will be aimed at women themselves and will include summaries of women's entitlements to particular services, plus directory listings, for categories such as: health; education; keeping safe; childcare and schools, legal and advice services; social activities/ community groups and housing. As well as detailing women-only services, the guide will give information about the accessibility of mainstream services to women, e.g. the availability of childcare, whether it is possible to see a female member of staff etc..

Refugee Action Liverpool would be keen to hear from anyone who has done anything similar to this before or who is aware of any similar project. If so, please contact: Joanna Blackman on 0151 702 6318 or at: joannablackman@yahoo.co.uk.

Redbridge CAB is recruiting for a Locum Immigration Caseworker/ Supervisor (Salary: SO2 £22,358 - £24,762 plus London Weighting).

Redbridge Citizens Advice Bureau seeks a dynamic and committed individual with a minimum of 2 years recent experience in the provision of specialist Immigration and Nationality advice, registered at Level 3 OISC or exempt from this requirement (e.g. solicitor or barrister); sound knowledge of Immigration and Nationality, including preparing Immigration Appeals; knowledge & experience of working under a Legal Services Commission Franchise, including the CLS Quality Mark; the ability and vision to develop a service to meet diverse needs.

Completed applications to be received by: 12 noon, 30 September 2003. For an

application pack please contact: Tel: 020 8478 3648 or Fax: 020 8514 5700. Email: immigration@redbridgecab.co.uk. Forms can be send out and received via email. Redbridge CAB strives to be an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Vacancy notice for Information

Officer at ECRE The European Council on Refugees and Exiles is recruiting for this key position which will require the post holder to coordinate and develop a vibrant and professional information service that serves the needs of both the ECRE membership and its wider constituency. Closing date for applications: Friday 3 October 2003 (17:00 London time). For full details on job description, person specifications and job application form, check the following web link: www.ecre.org/involved/vacancies.shtml.

Jesuit Refugee Service recruits for an Outreach Worker, based in London (£21,735 p.a).

The post will include responsibility for providing service and accompaniment of asylum seekers and refugees by regularly visiting detention centres, and providing a personal service to refugees at times of need; volunteer development and co-ordination by networking with parishes, religious communities, and other groups to develop a volunteer base; representing JRS in NGO meetings and networks to defend and advocate the rights of refugees and asylum seekers; participation in outreach events such as running workshops and speaking at key events.

For an application pack, visit www.jrsuk.net or write to the JRS office enclosing an A4 SAE with 88p worth of stamps: JRS, 112 Thornbury Road, Osterley, TW7 4NN. Tel: 020-84473555. Email: uk@jrs.net.

Applications close on 26th September 2003.

Please send us any information that you would like to see published in our next bulletin by Thursday 11 September 2003 (see address on back cover).

If you want to subscribe to our free bulletin 'Women's Asylum News' by post or by email, please contact Peggy Saint-Auret, email peggyasa@asylumaid.org.uk or tel: 0207 377 5123. For details of all of our publications (to download or order) please go to: www.asylumaid.org.uk.

women's ASYLUM NEWS

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Website: www.asylumaid.org.uk



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Asylum Aid provides free legal advice and representation to asylum-seekers and refugees, and campaigns for their rights. Registered as a charity no. 328729. To support Asylum Aid's work, please complete and return the form below to Asylum Aid, FREEPOST LON18836, London, E1 6BR (however, using a stamp will save us money)

Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____

I would like to become a **MEMBER** of Asylum Aid

STANDARD

£4 / month = £48 / year

UNWAGED

£20 / year

Benefits

- Receive a copy of our annual report free of charge
- An invitation to attend Asylum Aid's AGM
- Opportunity to stand for election to the board of trustees
- Right to vote at the AGM election
- Free subscription to our quarterly newsletter
- Access to member-only section of website
- Up to date campaigning information emailed directly
- Invitations to Asylum Aid events, eg. open evenings
- Buy copies of Asylum Aid's reports at a reduced price

I would like to become a **FRIEND** of Asylum Aid

STANDARD

£2 / month = £24 / year

UNWAGED

£10 / year

Benefits

- Receive a copy of our annual report free of charge
- Free subscription to our quarterly newsletter
- Invitations to Asylum Aid events, eg. open evenings

I wish to make a gift of £ _____

Asylum Aid - STANDING ORDER FORM

To: The Manager, _____ Bank,
(Address of Bank) _____

Please pay **ASYLUM AID** the sum of £_____ each
month/quarter/year (delete as appropriate) until further notice
and debit my account no. _____

sort code: _____ starting on (date) _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

[FOR OFFICE USE] To: NatWest Bank plc, PO Box 3AW, 104
Tottenham Court Rd, London W1A 3AW. Sort Code: 56-00-31,
account no. 63401711

Gift Aid Declaration

Asylum Aid

Registered Charity no. 328729

If you are a UK taxpayer, Asylum Aid can claim back 28p for every £1 you donate, making your donation worth almost a third more at no extra cost to you. Please complete and return this declaration.

Name _____

Address _____

I would like Asylum Aid to treat my donations as Gift Aid donations (please tick)

Signature _____ Date _____

Your declaration covers all donations you have made to Asylum Aid since April 2000 and any donations you might choose to make hereafter. You must have paid as much tax (or more) in this year as we will reclaim on your donations.