

Women's ASYLUM NEWS

Refugee Women's Resource Project - Asylum Aid - Issue 26 Oct 2002

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UK shamed for detaining pregnant women and other vulnerable asylum seekers¹

Last month, Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID), in conjunction with the London Detainee Support Group and Maternity Alliance released a paper highlighting the problems of vulnerable women asylum seekers and babies in detention. The paper was published at the same time BID submitted a comprehensive report to the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, including a section on the detention of vulnerable people (Part 6).

These reports are timely as detention is set to become a grim reality for an increasing number of asylum seekers in the UK (currently any asylum seeker can be detained on the decision of an Immigration Officer at any stage of his or her asylum claim, including from the time of their arrival in the UK).

By April next year the Government aims to detain 4,000 asylum seekers - this does not include those detained at Oakington Reception Centre or those required to reside in Induction Centres when they arrive or in Accommodation Centres for the length of their stay or until their status is regulated.

Women, children and families will be detained in these new forms of 'detention':

- There are already 150 spaces of designated family accommodation, excluding Oakington, and the Home Office policy is to create more.
- There are locks and guards on the gates at Oakington where asylum seekers are detained for 'administrative reasons': to fast track their claims. The Home Office calls it a Reception Centre.
- Asylum seekers will be required to reside in the new Induction Centres as part of the asylum process. These will include single women, pregnant women and those with special needs.
- Asylum seekers will be required to reside in Accommodation Centres as a condition of their 'temporary admission'. The gates will not be locked but they will be required to stay in the centres overnight. The centres are planned for remote rural spots with poor networks of public transport and often no ethnic or cultural communities. Residents will have educational, medical and catering services on site specifically to obviate them accessing local services. If they fail to reside at the centres they will not qualify for shelter and support elsewhere in the UK.

¹ For information sources see reference details p. 6.

No matter how the Home Office categorise these centres they are either physically or practically places of detention not aimed at integration but segregation. Sir Bernard Crick, advisor to the Home Office Minister - leading the task force on citizenship -, calls them '*dispersal camps*' and disagrees with people being sent to such places rather than being dispersed in the community.²

Detention by any other name...

The Detention Centres have been re-named Removal Centres. But the majority of asylum seekers detained in these secure institutions are not at the end of the asylum process and days away from removal but at the beginning of the process or at an appeal stage. Indeed from the Home Office's own figures from December 1998 only 4% of the detained asylum-seeking population were awaiting removal. On a recent visit to Harmondsworth detention service staff were also able to confirm the majority of those detained were not '*awaiting imminent removal*'.

In 1998 the detention of families was '*particularly regrettable*', according to the Home Office. In 2002 it is acceptable and for longer periods of time. In addition, according to the Immigration Service's own guidelines pregnant women; those with serious medical conditions or the mentally ill; and those who have been tortured are not suitable for detention. Yet it is common practice.

No reason to detain vulnerable groups

The most common reason for detaining an asylum seeker is because they are 'likely to abscond'. There is no evidence that

² See Jeremy Watson, 'Expert slam abominable refugee agency', *Scotland on Sunday*, 6th October 2002 at: www.scotlandonsunday.com/politics.cfm?id=1106212002 or www.ncadc.org.uk.

families do abscond or are likely to abscond if they are granted temporary admission. Conversely there is evidence that detaining children is detrimental. And detention of single mothers means the children are taken into care. There is also evidence of negative impact on the mentally ill and torture victims:

■ '*For many detainees mental health problems experienced whilst detained may be linked to experiences of torture in the country of origin*'.³

■ '*Detention reactivates and exacerbates trauma which has been previously endured. The physical environment including the cells, uniformed security personnel, physical restrictions, searches and so on rekindle memories of previous detention and torture. Such memories may have been adequately dealt with prior to detention*'⁴

The impact on pregnant asylum seekers

According to the Immigration Service's instructions state that pregnant women are a category of people who are '*normally only considered suitable for detention in very exceptional circumstances*'. Despite such instructions, pregnant asylum seekers are amongst the vulnerable groups detained in the UK.

The practice of detaining pregnant and breastfeeding women has been condemned by the UNHCR whose guidelines state:

³ See BID, 'Submission to the UN working group...', p. 37.

⁴ A Second Exile: The Mental Health Implications of Detention of Asylum-seekers in the United Kingdom, Pourgourides, C.K, Sashidharan, S.P, Bracken, P.J, Northern Birmingham Mental Health Trust, 1996, p 66

■ *'as a general rule the detention of pregnant women in their final months and nursing mothers, both of whom have special needs, should be avoided'.*

The paper 'A Crying Shame: Pregnant Asylum Seekers and their Babies in Detention' discusses the findings of a small qualitative study in which five women recounted their experiences of pregnancy and motherhood in detention.

At the time of interview for the above-mentioned study, two of the women had been detained for more than four months, one woman for three months and one woman for two weeks. Three of the women were pregnant and two had babies. In terms of their physical health all of the women reported extreme discomfort and pain during pregnancy.

Whilst there is no existing research on the impact of detention on pregnant asylum seekers, research on pregnant women in prison has found that being in custody can have serious negative implications, for example, on diet, support networks, access to ante natal care and exercise.

All of the women experienced problems related to diet whilst in detention. Restricted mealtimes meant that the pregnant women, who are advised to eat small amounts at regular intervals, were often hungry at night. The food they received was unappetising and one woman, who had been detained throughout her pregnancy so far, was very worried that she was not eating enough. A fact confirmed when an ultrasound scan showed that the baby was small for its gestational age.

Another woman was eating so little that she was unable to produce enough breastmilk to feed her baby.

The care of pregnant and nursing women in detention centres was found to be inadequate. At one detention centre midwives came in every two weeks, although one woman reported she had not been offered the normal blood tests, perhaps because of difficulties with communication. One of the women missed an important appointment for a scan at the local hospital because the centre failed to provide an escort on time. One woman did not speak English and yet she had no access to an interpreter whilst in detention, even during her antenatal appointments.

One four-week old baby, born six weeks premature, detained with his mother, causing contact with health professionals to be abruptly broken off. The detention centres they passed through withheld the baby's medical treatment (oral vitamin K) and made no contact with local health services to provide support and advice for the mother. The health care centres within the detention centre also failed to arrange the baby's immunisations, which caused the mother deep anxiety.

In one detention centre mothers were only given three nappies and one bottle of formula milk at a time – meaning that mothers had to queue up at the office several times during the day and night to obtain essentials for their babies.

■ *'You have to go to the office every time you need nappies or milk. Sometimes the office is closed or you have a very long wait'*

The report also highlights the emotional and psychological impact of detention on these pregnant and nursing women, who often experience acute depression,

loneliness and feelings of powerlessness that can create chronic stress.

- *'I am worried what will happen if the stress affects the baby – you can lose a baby spontaneously because of stress'*

The unpredictable nature of detention - the fear of being arbitrarily moved around the country and never knowing when they were going to be released increased the stress for these women. One woman had been moved four times, and separated from her brother as a result. Another woman had been moved after three months, from one end of the country (where she had friends who visited regularly) to the other, where she knew no-one.

The report makes recommendations, including:

- Prolonged detention of pregnant women and mothers with young children inflicts physical and psychological harm disproportionate to the policy aim of immigration control and should be stopped immediately.
- Pregnant women and young children should not be placed in accommodation centres if the conditions found in detention centres are to be replicated.
- Where brief detention (a few days) is genuinely unavoidable then no pregnant woman or baby should be detained in a place where the physical conditions, food or medical care are inadequate.
- The Home Office should give proper guidance on what precisely the *'exceptional circumstances'* are which justify the detention of pregnant women.

- Automatic independent reviews of the decision to detain should be implemented immediately.

No safe environment for women

All women asylum seekers are vulnerable in detention. There is no category of detention centre which is a safe environment for women.

Detention of single women in mixed centres such as Yarlswood, Oakington, and formerly Campsfield, has, to RWRP's knowledge, led to at least one unwanted pregnancy for a vulnerable traumatised woman. She never saw the father again after her release.

Yet, there is no provision in the proposed legislation for safeguarding vulnerable groups and women from domestic, random sexual or non-sexual violence within institutions where the atmosphere is highly charged. It is not clear who will be responsible for the security of women at these centres.

As a result, women are once again bearing the brunt of a system designed for the stereotypical young male asylum seeker in mind.

- How will women, detained with their violent partners or family members, safely seek sanctuary from domestic violence?
- How will women, shamed or fearful of rejection, disclose gender related persecution, without the knowledge of their families and/or their communities?
- How will women obtain separate representation for their asylum or human rights claims?

Women asylum seekers face additional obstacles. Such as finding a caseworker to advocate on her behalf and independent evidence to support her claim. Yet there is already a shortage of legal caseworkers for asylum seekers and contacting a legal caseworker from detention is fraught with difficulties.

Obstacles in accessing legal advice from detention Taking instructions from detained clients is a time consuming and expensive procedure. Finding experts and/or doctors to see clients in detention and produce reports is costly and can take several weeks/months to arrange. And according to the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture, detention is not conducive to the disclosure of torture.

As for bail, the courts are demanding sureties of thousands of pounds from asylum seekers with no ties, relatives or friends in the UK. Additionally, many legal caseworkers, funded by legal aid, continue to use the merits test and thus exclude many detainees from representation at bail hearings.

The right to automatic bail hearings is to be repealed by the new legislation, although there is opposition to this in the House of Lords. But the difficulty obtaining a representative and the requirement for high sureties means most asylum seekers face months in detention while their claim is being processed and appealed.

Alternatives to detention such as temporary admission with conditions such as signing on every day at a local police station are rarely considered by the immigration service and almost never considered in bail proceedings without substantial sureties.

What then is the Government trying to achieve by increasing the official detention

estate to 4,000 a year and increasing the number of asylum seekers, including women and families, in institutionalised centres? The cost of detaining asylum seekers ranges from £364 per week at Haslar (male only) to £1620 weekly at Oakington. NASS is also extremely expensive with £150 million being spent on accommodation in 2001 – 2002 and £40 million on administration to cover all within NASS.

Why has the government brought in enormously costly measures such as dispersal, NASS and the increased use of detention which carries increased inherent risks and dangers for asylum seeking women both in temporary accommodation through dispersal and in any type of institution? These measures have no significant deterrent effect (one reason put forward for their introduction) and do not cut costs to the taxpayer.

However, ultimately the main objection to the arbitrary detention of any asylum seeker for any length of time, without free access to legal representation and judicial review, is a gross infringement of their basic human rights.

This is why RWRP is working with BID to hold Immigration and Bail workshops in detention centres to empower and inform asylum seekers to represent themselves at bail hearings, where they have been unable to find a representative, or to assist their representatives by identifying an accommodation address and/or sureties.

Asylum seekers will also be informed about the asylum appeal process and empowered to secure evidence from their country of origin. The first workshops will be held in Harmondsworth.

For full reports, see: Bail for Immigration Detainees, 'Submission to the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention', and BID, London Detainee Support Group and Maternity Alliance, 'A crying shame: Pregnant asylum seekers and their babies in detention', September 2002, both at www.biduk.org/

Contacts: BID, 28 Commercial St, E1. Tel: 020 7247 3590; Maternity Alliance, 42 Beech Street, London, EC2. Tel: 020 7588 8583; London Detainee Support Group, 77 Holloway Rd, London N7 Tel: 020 7700 0606.

To help asylum seekers in detention, visit: www.biduk.org/pdf/res_reports/what_you_can_do_to_help.pdf

Related News: Changes to detention policy in Australia Unlike the UK, the Australian authorities are in the process of making changes to their much criticised detention policy. The Curtin Detention Centre in North West Australia is being closed down and operations at Woomera in South Australia are being phased down. Those asylum seekers who were detained at these centres have been moved thousands of kilometres to new centres in Baxter (South Australia) and Port Hedland in the North West. A group of men have been moved into Woomera, which will no longer house families (source: JRS Dispatches No.118, September 18, 2002)

UK News

Lack of support for disabled refugees and asylum seekers in the UK New research⁵ finds that disabled refugees and

asylum seekers, including those physically and mentally damaged by torture in their home countries, face isolation and hardship in Britain, without proper support from social services and NASS.

Problems mainly stem from a lack of awareness of the presence of the disabled amongst the asylum-seeking and refugee communities. As a result, disabled asylum seekers and refugees put up with a lack of aids, unsuitable housing, unmet personal care needs and a lack of basic information about services and benefits.

Overstretched social services resources sometimes mean that the needs of disabled asylum seekers or refugees are seen as secondary to that of other disabled in the community. In addition, more than two years after the implementation of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, the study found vulnerable asylum seekers were being denied essential help because of widespread confusion among social services and other organisations, in particular NASS, about entitlements.

Yet, disabled people granted refugee status or exceptional leave to remain in Britain have the same entitlements to benefits as other disabled people. And while asylum seekers cannot claim disability-related benefits, they are entitled to an assessment of their community care needs from local authority social services - and to have those needs met.

Despite this, lack of knowledge about benefits or how to deal with the social services means some disabled refugees and asylum seekers have missed out on entitlements, sometimes for a long time.

⁵ The research was conducted by Keri Roberts and Jennifer Harris, of the University of York, in collaboration with the Refugee Council and jointly funded by the

National Lottery Charities Board and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

This also leads to extreme social isolation. A Somali woman testified: *'I do not ask for any services, I would like to, but I don't know what to request or how to initiate a request. I do not know who the service providing agencies are. I'm disabled and sitting at home'*.

In addition several interviewees in the study (which included 38 in total aged from 19 to 70 and of which 15 were women) recorded *'great anxiety about the lack of practical assistance available for essential parenting roles'*.

The report comes days before a Home Secretary's advisor on nationality openly criticized NASS as an *'abominable'* agency. Sir Bernard Crick said that *'NASS was hastily created and staffed by people who wanted better jobs in the civil service and didn't get them. (...) They are not good at community work (...), they are low paid, angry at their clients and jealous of their clients while trying to administer complex procedures'*.⁶

'Disabled people in refugee and asylum seeking communities' is published by the Policy Press (2002) as part of the Social Care: Race and Ethnicity Series (£11.99). Visit: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/news/sept2002/relea083.htm and: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialcare/962.asp.

Violence against asylum seekers in the UK reaches a new high

Recent figures on the number of racial attacks against asylum seekers dispersed

⁶ Source: Jeremy Watson, 'Experts slams 'abominable' refugee agency', *Scotland on Sunday*, 6 October 2002, accessed via National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (NCADC).

to the regions have raised further doubts about the validity of the dispersal policy. In the two years since dispersal began two thousand attacks have been reported, including the murder of the Iranian man Peyman Bahmani in Sunderland last month. The policy, which was introduced in 2000 in order to take pressure off London boroughs and the southeast, has led to many asylum-seekers being sent to northern cities such as Hull, Glasgow and Sunderland.

Approximately 100 'racial incidents' have been reported in Sunderland alone and following last month's murder the Home Office said it had stopped dispersing asylum-seekers there. Growing anger among asylum-seekers in Sunderland has led to protests in the city at the levels of violence against them and claims that they have not been given sufficient support from the police or the National Asylum Support Service.

A spokesman for the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture said that the scale of attacks showed that the dispersal programme should never have been implemented: "We warned from the outset that the likelihood was that people were going to end up in disadvantaged areas where they were likely to be greeted with hostility by local people. That has now happened in towns and cities across the country"

UK Events/Notices

'Refugees and Mental Health' is a half-day seminar organised by Social Action for Health in partnership with numerous organisations to discuss critical issues around refugees and mental health.

Topics covered will include 'Racism and mental health', 'Mental health law and its impact on refugees' and 'Refugee women and mental health'.

The seminar is taking place on Monday, 28th October 2002 from 1.30 to 6pm, at Halkevi (Kurdish and Turkish Community Centre), 92-100 Stoke Newington Road, London N16. There is no cost for the seminar but places are limited. Contact Ferhat, Jacqui or Pauline on 020- 7247 1414 or e-mail at ferhatc@safh.org.uk.

International News

Rise of Domestic Violence against Palestinian women

A poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion, commissioned by a Palestinian women's organisation, shows that Palestinian women have been exposed to increased domestic violence since the beginning of the intifada (Palestinian uprising) two years ago. 86% of respondents said violence against women had '*significantly or somewhat increased as a result of changing political, economical and social conditions in the Palestinian authorities*'.

56.7% of respondents said they knew of a woman who had been assaulted by her husband (43.3% said they did not). Physical violence involving the use of 'bare hands, a stick or a sharp tool' and verbal abuse were cited by 61.4% and 32% of respondents respectively (source: www.metimes.com/2K2/issue/2002-38/women/domestic_violence_against.htm)

Women and children slaughtered in cold blood in Burundi

According to witnesses, the Burundian army was responsible for a massacre that claimed the lives of up to 1,200 civilians on September 9, in retaliation for the

enormous losses they suffered in previous days in clashes with guerrillas forces. The Vatican diplomat, Archbishop Michael Aidan Courtney condemned the international silence surrounding the Itaba hills massacre in which numerous civilians, the majority women and children, were killed. Although more than ten year long, the conflict in Burundi has attracted little media attention.

Despite numerous attempts to bring the fighting parties to a lasting agreement, the massacre is another reminder that there is no respite for civilians in a conflict that has so far claimed the lives of more than 200,000 people, most of whom civilians.

Sources: www.zenit.org. through CCRLIST@YORKU.CA. See also www.alertnet.org/ and www.genocidewatch.org/Burundimassacre.htm

More stoning sentences in Nigeria whilst beauty contestants boycott Miss World

One week after an Islamic court rejected Amina Lawal's appeal against a stoning to death sentence for having sex outside of marriage,⁷ a man and woman have become the first couple to be sentenced to death by stoning in Nigeria. The couple, Ahmadu Ibrahim and Fatima Usman, both aged thirty, were sentenced by a court in the town of New Gawu after Fatima became pregnant with Ibrahim's child while married to another man.

Ibrahim is the first man to be sentenced to death for sex outside of marriage in Nigeria. Previously only women were prosecuted and their children used as evidence. Ibrahim and Fatima had

⁷ See WAN Issue No. 25.

previously been sentenced to five years in prison, but when they appealed against the harshness of that sentence the court ruled that it was too lenient and sentenced them to stoning. Another man is soon to be stoned to death after confessing to the rape of a 9-year-old girl.

A local government spokesman Usman Zakari Dutse stated that “In Sharia law we do not waste time” and that stoning was “the best way to get justice. Maybe they will do it anytime now. It doesn’t have to be too public”.

It is too late however for the Miss World beauty contest which was due to take place in Nigeria in November: the event collapsed after 11 contestants pulled out. Miss Switzerland declared: ‘*it is frightening what’s done to women there. The human rights situation is very poor*’ (sources: ‘*Women in the Middle East*’ Bulletin No.6, Oct 2002; *The Daily Express*, ‘*Beauties boycott Beasts of Nigeria*’, 16 September 2002).

No stop to honour killings in

Jordan Recent cases of honour killings in Jordan highlights a continuous lack of protection in a country where every year tens of women are murdered in honour crimes for which the perpetrators often serve reduced sentences.

In one case, a 28-year-old woman who had been divorced for two years was killed by her brother with an axe and knife. ‘The suspect indicated he wanted to get rid of his sister because she was divorced and was leaving the house frequently. He said he could no longer bear the rumours and gossip,’ official sources said. He was charged with one count of manslaughter. Ghazaleh’s

murder was the third in September alone and the 11th honour killing in the country since the beginning of the year, when brothers and fathers wanted to ‘redeem the family honour’.

In another case, a teenager had said that her father had tried to sexually assault her. When she told her mother, the father shot her five times but she miraculously survived. She returned to her family home after her hospital treatment only to return two months later bleeding to death. Another woman was killed in August after leaving her family home to ‘*visit other cities in the kingdom*’. Despite having undergone the compulsory virginity examination⁸ showing she was still a virgin, she was shot by her brother when released by the police. Her family had promised not to harm her.

A 17-year-old girl held administratively by the authorities for her own safety, was alleged to have been murdered by her father shortly after he signed a guarantee pledging that he would not harm his daughter. An autopsy performed on the victim indicated she died of four bullet wounds to the head and chest. The pathologists’ determinations also indicated the victim’s hymen was intact, indicating she had not been involved in any sexual activities.

Currently articles 97 and 98 of the Penal code allow reduced sentences for crimes committed in a ‘*fit of fury*’. In December 2001 an amendment to article 340 of the Penal code stated that those who commit honour crimes should no longer be exempt from the death penalty, although judges are still allowed to commute the sentences of those convicted. Such was the case recently when a 23 year-old man,

⁸ For all women found alone by the police or accompanied by a male stranger.

Mohammad Rashid, had his sentence reduced from fifteen years to two-and-a-half years for murdering his 19 year-old sister.

(Sources: the Arab Regional Resource Center on Violence Against Women, Aman, at www.amanjordan.org/english/ and 'Women from the Middle East', No.6, October 2002).

Bangladesh authorities bans latest book by feminist activist Taslima Nasreen

The authorities said the novel, '*Strong Breeze*' contains anti-Islamic sentiments and statement that could destroy the religious harmony in Bangladesh (...) and disturb the socio-economic harmony of the country'. Taslima Nasreen is still forced to live in exile after death threats followed the publication of her earlier work. More at: www.rediff.com/news/2002/aug/27book.htm

Publications/ Resources

UNHCR drafts Guidelines on

Afghans still at risk The UNHCR has drafted guidelines for governments on those categories of Afghans who still require international protection and should not be returned to Afghanistan. The document referred extensively to Human Rights Watch research on anti-Pashtun violence in Northern Afghanistan and on continuing violations of women's rights throughout the country.

According to interviews carried out by the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA, rawa@rawa.org), hunger, destitution and desperation lead many women to turn to prostitution in order to feed their children (read the Human Right's Watch report at:

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/afghan2/>
Other source: RAWA interviews reproduced in '*Women in the Middle East*', Number 6, October 2002).

Global Report says women face the greatest risk at home The World Health Organisation Global Report on Violence and Health released on 3rd October reveals that half the women who die due to homicide are killed by their current or former husbands or boyfriends. In some countries, the figure can be as high as 70%.

Violence accounts for 7% of deaths among women and girls (14% in the case of men) but the report stresses that the 'overwhelming burden' of sexual violence and domestic violence is borne by women. Most victims of physical abuse experience more than one type of abuse and multiple assaults over time.

Other findings reveal that one in 3 girls are reported to be forced into their first sexual experience whilst data from selected countries suggest that about one in 5 women and 5-10% of men suffered sexual abuse as children. It is estimated that nearly 25% of women will experience sexual violence during their lifetime. Elderly women are also increasingly at risk of violence, in particular in cultures where women have inferior social status. The violence is said to be particular to their gender (e.g. women accused of witchcraft or women from whom property is taken when they become widow).

The after-effects of violence are multiple including unwanted pregnancy; sexually transmitted diseases; gynaecological problems and/or complications; but also depression post-traumatic disorder and suicidal thoughts and behaviour (suicide is

the greatest single cause of violent death around the globe, almost equalling deaths from homicide and war combined in 2000).

The report was welcomed by the International Centre for Research on Women who said that attention to issues around violence against women were 'long overdue by a U.N. agency'. The first report to address violence as a global public health problem and to acknowledge the health implications of violence beyond injury and death, it recommends that violence be addressed by preventive public health measures and by integrating violence prevention into policies to promote gender and social equality.

For information on the report, visit www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention To order a copy of the report, contact bookorders@who.int. Other source: www.womensenews.org/article.cfm?aid=1059

HRW upgrade their Women's Rights Division website Human Rights Watch's Women's Rights Division has recently upgraded its web site. The new site features an introduction by the WRD executive director LaShawn Jefferson, descriptions of their work, documents sorted by theme and country, FAQ's, campaigns, links to resources and more. Visit: www.hrw.org/women

Practical Guide on Country Information A conference involving representatives from 26 European countries, the Council Secretariat of the European Union, UNHCR, Amnesty International and many other organisations, earlier this year has resulted in the

publication of *A Practical Guide on the Effective gathering and usage of Country of origin Data*. This guide is for use by professionals, to aid in the gathering and use of country information in the asylum determination process. A CD Rom is also available with dozens of valuable reports on the most important Countries of Origin. More information can be found at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development at: www.icmpd.org

Country information is also available at the BBC news website, with country profiles including geographic, economic and political background as well as links to media and government sites within each territory. Country profiles are available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/country_profiles/html/default.stm

Another useful link for country data can be found at: www.asylumsupport.info/links/countrydata.htm

'Refugee resettlement: An international Handbook to Guide reception and Integration' is a new resource for organisations involved in developing programmes for the integration of resettled refugees. Published by the UNHCR and Australian NGO, the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, it addresses issues such as the initial reception of refugees, ways of preparing receiving communities, language training, education, employment, and the special needs of children.

The Handbook, which developed out of an International Conference on the Reception and Integration of Resettled Refugees in Sweden last year, supports the 'Agenda for Protection' – a set of goals and objectives

women's **ASYLUM NEWS**

designed to improve the protection of
asylum seekers and refugees worldwide.

Available in English at:

<http://www.unhcr.ch> under protecting
refugees, legal protection, resettlement.

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