

**Refugee**  
Voice Wales

Welsh Refugee Council  
Phoenix House, 389 Newport Rd  
Cardiff, CF24 1TP

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# ANNUAL-REPORT



December 2007

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## MISSION STATEMENT

- To enable refugees to build new lives, through advice and information, community development, enhancing opportunity, and campaigning for refugee rights.

### Our aims and Objectives

- To promote the development of refugee communities as distinctive parts of wider communities
- To improve access to employment and mainstream service, and enhance opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers
- To raise awareness of refugee issues, influence policy, and campaign for refugee and asylum seekers rights
- To establish high quality organizational policies and practices.
- Research and inform on issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers

## Our Values

- RVW campaigns for a society in which refugees are welcome, respected and safe, and in which they can achieve their full potential.

### Activities

- Meetings
- Publication of newsletter
- Referral and sign posting
- Provide appropriate training
- Working with other agencies to improve employment and accommodation for refugees
- Campaign, advocacy and lobbying
- Volunteering

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## Chair's Report

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the first annual report for Refugee Voice Wales. This report highlights the road that RVW has taken over the past year as it took its ground breaking work in advocacy and lobbying for refugees within Wales.

This has been the most challenging year for the organisation as it set out to build itself into a viable professional organisation that can be reckoned with.

As an organisation, we realised very early on when we came into post that we needed to put structures into place that could make us accountable to the people that we are serving and our funders respectively.

I will touch briefly on the different areas that have impacted on our organisation and how we have responded to these challenges.

The many policy changes that continue to be unravelled around asylum and immigration issues mean that our organisation constantly has to adapt to these challenges and assist members in every way possible.

The implementation of the new asylum model has impacted both negatively and positively on the organisation as to be expected. As a member organisation we are confronted with having to take on issues especially when other agencies have left them hanging. What we have done a lot of, is picking up the pieces.

RVW continues to see a number of members threatened with deportation and destitution and this gives us the extra challenge of ensuring that we can help as much as we can.

We greatly appreciate the imitative of the Legacy Case Resolution Programme, as most of our members will benefit from this.

An area of great distress for us still remains the inability of asylum seeking children to access higher education and we are currently engaging with a number of partners to try and address this problem. In line with the problems that refugees face in trying to access employment, we believe we need to expand our horizons and work with partners outside of this sector. Volunteering remains a key resource for all RCOs and we have over this past year seen a move into other yet unfamiliar territories. This can only be recommended and promoted.

As part of the expansion of the organisation, four new employees will be joining RVW in the New Year. This expansion is important in that it helps fill in gaps where ~~the~~ have been identified.

Work for this organisation can never be achieved in isolation and this has meant more participation for us at the UK level with other refugee forums where we are trying to establish one forum.

Our work has seen us gaining recognition at the European level as members of the European Refugee Advocacy Organisation, ERAD.

Changing the face of how the media sees refugees and asylum seekers still remains a big part of our business. Over the year a number of our members have been involved in moving into areas that are outside the dispersal areas to inform the public about our issues. A lot of work still remains to be done in this area.

Refugee Voice Wales strives to remain passionate about its work, even in the face of competitive funding and above all exists to work in partnership and not competition with other organisations.

Our business is still driven by the needs and demands of our members and this should always be the driving force in what we do.

I would like to pay a special tribute to all the board members who gave in their time in formulating policies for the organisation, our members who believed and shaped the organisation by attending and contributing to the development of the organisation. and more importantly our coordinator Pierrot Ngadi who worked tirelessly for the organisation..

Our consultants who believed in our vision. Our funders WAG, partners especially WRC, DPIA, Welsh Consortium, OXFAM, for all their support during this past year.

As we embark on a new year may all of us remain united in working for the empowerment of refugees.

**Themba Moyo**  
**Chair**



## Coordinator's Report

nd I I I am delighted to present this report, which covers the period from December 2006 to Nov November 2007, to the members of RVW,.

Looking back, 2006 has been filled with joy and sorrow. In one hand we have received core funding from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to consolidate the work of and run activities for RVW. On the other hand, most of our members were facing discrimination and immigration problems which led them to becoming destitute, detainees, deportees and unemployed. Being the only paid staff it was very hard to satisfy the needs of all RCOs and individual members, nevertheless I have tried the best I can and, with full support from the board members and volunteers, we overcame some difficulties. I focused on raising the profile of RVW, capacity building, training, learning–exchange visits and partnership working. As TEAM means “Together Each Achieve More“, we went from strength to strength and we have achieved more as shown in the RVW’s records from 2006-2007.

126 members were trained, 6 are registered for PGCE at Cardiff University, 1450 attended meetings, 9 out of 15 volunteers got a job, a short film and a play with Valley Arts & Sherman Theatre were released, 10 were released from detention and removal centers, RVW’s website was launched, 108 attended meeting with policy makers, 450 members took part in the RIS consultation session. A Drop In Centre was set up to help members with Job application filling, job search, interview technique and access internet. RVW was involved in “Volunteering mainstream conference, Independent Asylum Commission hearing, Refugee Integration strategy consultation, Refugee Week Wales” etc...RVW was awarded a certificate of merit from BVSNW’s Diversity Awards as a recognition of the quality of work that has been delivered.

We joined different platforms such as Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), Women’s National Commission (WNC), and European Refugee Advocacy Organisation (ERAD).

The success would not be possible without the significant help from our partners such as WAG, WCRASM, WRC, Oxfam, DPIA, VAC, SOVA, WBCC, Cardiff County Council, North-East RRF, Home Office, Aston Brook, and I would like to acknowledge their ongoing support and advice received.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board and RCOs members for their dedication, commitment and hard work in achieving this considerable progress in the first year of our operation.

RVW’s priority for the future is to have its own premises and promote areas where partnerships have not existed before, especially with non refugee sector agencies, develop a women’s programme for the organisation and policy, information, campaign and fundraising departments and volunteering will continue to be at the heart of our work.

**Pierrot NGADI, Co-ordinator**

# ACTIVITIES

## Information/Advice

- 260 Visitors
- 160 members visit the office
- 205 Enquiries
- Website: [www.refugeevoiocewales.org](http://www.refugeevoiocewales.org)



## Meetings/ Events

RVW we encourage members to attend meetings, conference or events organise by RVW, RCOs & our partners.

1. away day
2. 1450 attended meeting for RVW
3. 323 attended Refugee Week in Wrexham
4. 15 events were organised by RCOs&RVW

**“Practice makes perfect”**

## Capacity Building

In partnership with DPIA, WRC (Equal Team) VAC and WBCC we have been able to assist our members with filling applications for funding, financial support of their events, drawing up their constitutions, and training.

*“Thank you for referring me to DPIA now we have our own constitution”*

*(Aicha Kapesa, African Youth Association in Wales)*

- 5 RCOs were referred to DPIA & VAC for drawing their Constitutions
- 12 RCOs supported with their events by ( RVW, Aston Brook, DPIA, Cardiff County Council, WBCC)
- 20 Support letters & 36 Referrals
- 20 consultation sessions were run & facilitated by RVW in Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham
- 10 RVW members visited to speak during the 2 day events organised by WAG in Cardiff and Wrexham.

The training courses were aimed to empower RCOs members and individual refugees and asylum



People's Project, Newport)

seekers with tools and knowledge that will help them to understand the working environment and access employment in Wales. And also make them aware of different issues that they may affect their lives while living in Wales. These include health, ESOL, Education, child protection, equal opportunity and media.

...but now I proud for what I have achieved (Robert Mwa Mpata, South

*"The Course was good and I am ready to write our child protection policy"* (Newport Sudanese Community Association)

*"Now I understand that Equal Opportunity is an important document"* (member of RVW to VAC's Equal Opportunity Training)

236 trained (7 Courses delivered by Equal

Team, DPIA, WCRAS, RVW, Women Make Different, Newport County Council, Taff Housing Association, Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru)

67 attended RVW training on Health

Awareness, Rights of women & women mutilation

3 Accredited Courses delivered by working in partnership with Uwic, Equal Team,

6 refugees applied for a PGCE teaching

qualification at Cardiff University, all of whom were accepted and are now enrolled on the course.

#### **Drop in Centre (Progress to Work Centre)**

The centre has helped our members to access internet,

job search, developing CV's, completing application forms, training and educational courses. The Drop in centre was developed in partnership with DPIA, SOVA, Equal Team, and Race Equality First



## Volunteering

RVW has encouraged its members to do voluntary work within their own organisation and or with other agencies. Through volunteering they gain work experience, confidence with themselves, improving their communication skills, make new friends and obtaining references for job applications. This is why it was vital for RVW to encourage members to volunteer. As a result 9 out of 15 volunteers have found the job.

15 Volunteers ( Housing Associations, Fire Brigade, WRC, RVW, Bawso)

22 Volunteer attended (Volunteering opportunity conf. in Cardiff)

19 Volunteers ( Volunteering Day at WRC)

9 refugees volunteers are in full time job

*"Thank you for everything you did for me now I am working" (A member of Sudanese South Wales Community)*

*"Thank you for accepting to be my referee" (Rwandese fellow)*



## Lobby/Campaign & Awareness

Alone or with partners RVW has played an important in raising awareness of issues that affect its members.



10 members were released from detention and removal centres,

Keep Constance and Andreas in Cardiff campaign more than 100 AMs signed the refugee and asylum seekers manifesto

78 refugees and asylum seekers attended Still Human Still here

15 members slept out ( raising awareness on destitution)

A group who talks on issues affect refugees and asylum seekers

## Consultation/Research/Seminars



Since its creation RVW has been involved in different consultations and research across Wales including the RIS, Equality & Diversity scheme with Cardiff County Council, European Year of Opportunity, migration research with the Centre for Migration Policy Research, Swansea University.

#### **Consultation-Research/Seminars**

- 450 members took part in the consultation ( RIS)
- were involved in 6 researches & consultation sessions
- 49 members attended NAM seminar in Cardiff & Wrexham

#### **Advocacy**

- Migrant Right Network participation in the steering group.
- More than 90 AMs have signed the Refugee & Asylum seekers.
- 10 cases were successful advocated for asylum seekers

### **Work with UK based Refugee / Asylum Seeker organisations**



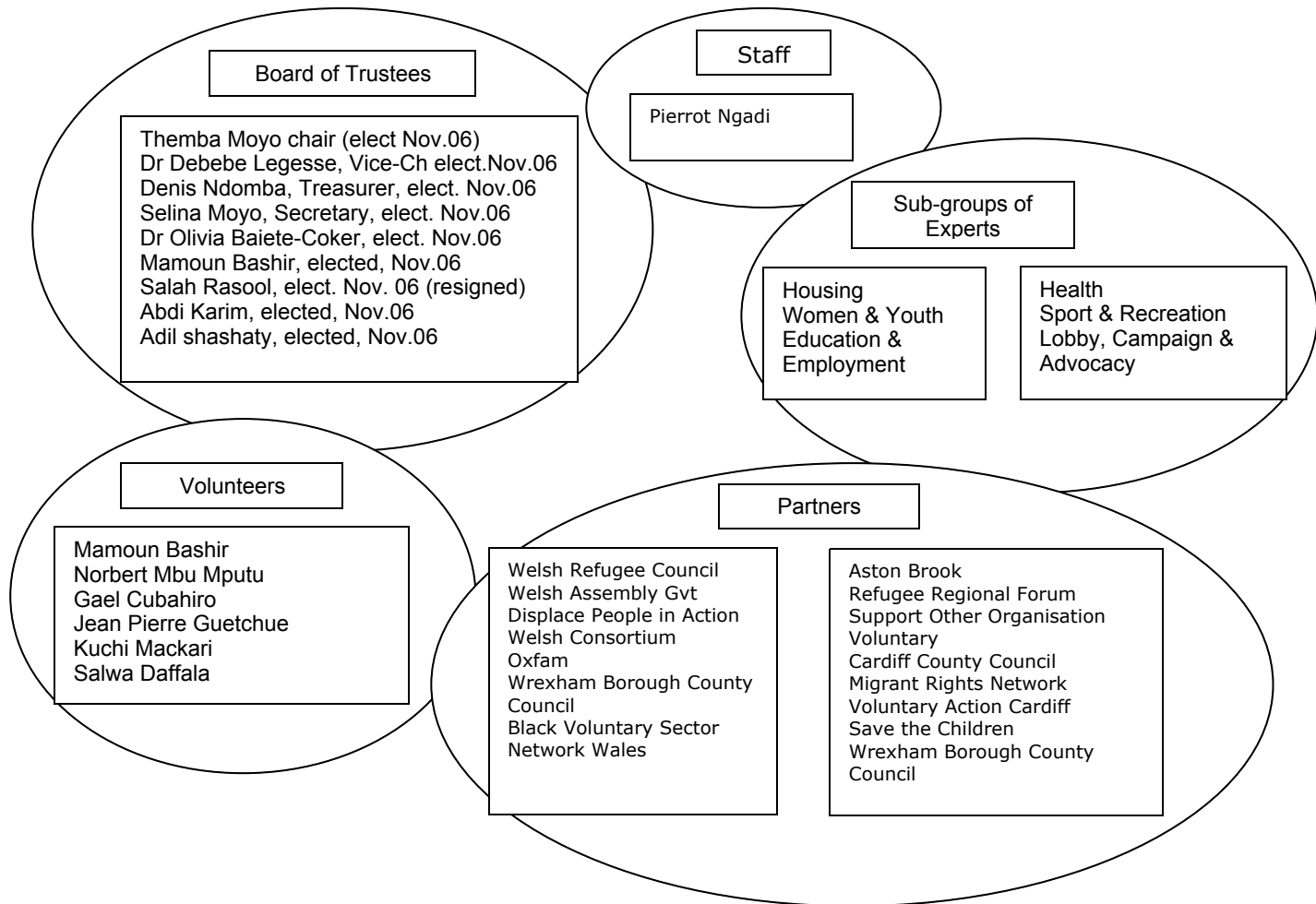
Refugee Voice has been working in Partnership with other refugee lead organizations operating outside Wales such as the North East Refugee Forum in Newcastle, Scottish Refugee Forum in Glasgow, Leeds Refugee Forum, and Refugees & Migrants Rights Forum in Manchester and others. On 7 August 2007 workshop held in Manchester, and on 7

November 2007 in Newcastle, the above partners share their experiences in dealing with statutory and other voluntary organizations as well as the media in order to promote inclusion of their respective members and address their concerns. They also discussed and agreed on priority agendas and recommend further action points, for example, to establish a National Refugee and Asylum seekers network.

Refugee Voice Wales is sharing it experiences with newly created similar bodies like Bristol Refugee Forum to develop their constitution and internal structure

- Forum participation and contribution at London's Evelyn National Conference on the role of RCOs, bridging the gap.
- 6 members attended employability Conference in London
- 22 members attended conference in Peterborough

## Refugee Voice Wales's Structure



## ORGANISATIONS MEMBERS

## **24 Refugee Community organisations in Cardiff**

### **23 Refugee Communities in Cardiff**

1. African youth Association
2. Somali Integration Society
3. Somali Progressive Association
4. Society of Afghan Refugee
5. Somali Capacity Building
6. African Support Association
7. Congolese Community of Wales
8. Yemeni Association Wales
9. Sudanese Community Association
10. Step by Step
11. Somali Society in Europe
12. Voice of Congo
13. Zimbabwean Development Support Association
14. Somali Women & Youth Association
15. Council for Refugee & Asylum Seekers Cymru
16. West Africa Community Wales
17. Darfur Community Association
18. Love Africa
19. Wales Africa together
20. African Light Association
21. South Wales Iraqi Community Association
22. One Wales Many Voices
23. Afghan Refugee Association
24. Himlo

### **7 Refugee Communities in Newport**

- 1-Newport Sudanese Community Association
- 2- South People's Projects
- 3- Newport Somali Association
- 4- Darfur Community Association
- 5-Newport Kurdish Association
- 6-Congolese Community of Wales
- 7-Newport Iranian Association

### **6 Refugee Communities in Swansea**

- 1-African Friendships Association
- 2-Swansea Sudanese Association
- 3-Congo Support project in Wales
- 4-Kurdish Welfare Association
- 5-Eritrean Community Association
- 6-Iranian Community Association

### **1 Refugee Community Wrexham**

- 1-Wrexham Refugee Forum

**TOTAL: 38 RCOS MEMBERS OF RVW**

## **Accounts for the Year 2006-2007**

### **STATEMENT OF FINACIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> March 2007**

**Schedule to the Statement of Financial Activities  
for the period from 1 October 2006 to 31 March 2007**

**Status of this schedule to the Statement of Financial Activities**

This schedule is an intrinsic part of the accounts required to comply with the 2005 Revision of the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting and Reporting issued by the Charity Commissioners for England & Wales, effective April 2005.

**Incoming Resources**

			2007 £
	Unrestricted Funds 2007	Restricted Funds 2007	Total Funds 2007 £
<b>Incoming Resources from generated funds</b>			
<b>Voluntary Income</b>			
<b>Grants, legacies and donations</b>			
<b>Non government and non public bodies</b>			
<b>Incoming resources of a revenue nature</b>			
Ashton Brook	-	4,000	4,000
Home Office	-	16,066	16,066
Welsh Assembly Government	-	7,550	7,550
Miscellaneous Income	-	325	325
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,941</b>	<b>27,941</b>
<b>Total Grants, Legacies &amp; Donations Received</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,941</b>	<b>27,941</b>
<b>Total Voluntary Income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,941</b>	<b>27,941</b>
<b>Investment Income</b>			
Other bank deposit interest received	-	63	63
<b>Total Investment Income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28,004</b>	<b>28,004</b>

**Charitable expenditure**

**Support costs of charitable activities**

Gross wages and salaries - charitable activities	-	15,917	15,917
Volunteers' Costs	-	53	53
Management fees	-	1,800	1,800
Travel and Subsistence - Charitable Activities	-	3,485	3,485
Printing postage and stationery	-	513	513
Telephone and fax	-	480	480
Internet website	-	600	600
Conferences and promotion	-	1,643	1,643
	-	<b>24,491</b>	<b>24,491</b>

Management fees were paid to The Welsh Refugee Council Limited for accounting support.

**Governance costs that are not direct management functions inherent in generating funds, service delivery and programme or project work  
(including management and administration costs)****Specific governance costs**

Independent Examiner's Fees	-	1,293	1,293
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The basis for the allocation of costs as shown above is explained in the accounting policies and the notes to the accounts